



DESIGNEUROPA
AWARDS 2026



Rules of the DesignEuropa Awards 2026



EUIPO
EUROPEAN UNION
INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY OFFICE

The DesignEuropa Awards are organized annually by the European Union Intellectual Property Office (EUIPO), which is the office of the European Union responsible for trademarks, designs and geographical indications for craft and industrial products.

European Union Designs (EUD), which are all registered at the EUIPO, have been providing design protection at EU level since their introduction in 2003.

The aim of the awards is to raise awareness of the design protection system in the EU and to promote design as a valuable intellectual property right that underpins our economy and supports jobs.

Industry and Entrepreneurs and Small Companies Categories

1. Candidates and eligibility

Candidates are required to submit their entries in accordance with the terms and conditions given below:

- The competition is open to any natural person or legal entity of any nationality, either individually or as a team, provided that they own a valid EUD that is also marketed and sold (in any country).
- All designs submitted must be valid EUD at the time of sending the application, with no pending invalidity proceedings. The designs must not infringe or otherwise violate any intellectual property rights of third parties, to the best knowledge of the EUD owner.
- Designs entered for the competition must be marketed by the owner of the EUD or a licensee.

2. Categories

Entries must be submitted under one of the following categories:

- **Industry:** EUD owned by companies with 50 or more employees or with a balance sheet total of EUR 10 million or more.
- **Entrepreneurs and small companies:** EUD owned by natural persons, designers or companies with fewer than 50 employees and a balance sheet total of less than EUR 10 million and/or established within 5 years prior to 1 January 2026.

3. Submission of entries

- Entries may be submitted either on the candidate's own initiative, at the behest of the Awards' promoters or by any other natural person or legal entity that wishes to propose a candidate.
- Candidates must submit their entries using the online application form accessible on the DesignEuropa Awards website ([DesignEuropa Awards 2026](#)).
- The form must be completed with the following basic information provided:
 - EUD number, EUD owner's contact details, designer's contact details where different from the EUD's holder.
 - complementary information on EUD owner (year of creation of company, sector, number of employees, turnover and balance sheet total).
 - complementary sales information on the proposed design.
 - confirm that the design is sold on the market
 - confirm that the design is valid and does not infringe or violate any intellectual property rights of third parties, to the best knowledge of the EUD owner.
- There is no entry fee.

- The period for submission of entries is from 10 November 2025 to 20 February 2026 (both dates inclusive).
- Entries that do not include the required information specified in the rules will not be accepted.
- By submitting an entry, the submitter accepts all rules fully and unconditionally.

4. Awards

Candidates are required to submit their entries in accordance with the terms and conditions given below:

- The panel of judges may nominate up to three finalists in each category. A list of these finalists will be published on the official competition website and in other publications related to the awards.
- The nominated finalists will be asked to confirm their acceptance of the nomination.
- The awards for each category cannot be split between two entries.
- Finalists will be invited to the DesignEuropa Awards ceremony in Ljubljana, Slovenia, in September 2026.
- Travel and accommodation costs will be covered by the EUIPO. The winner of each category will receive a trophy and a certificate.
- Finalists and winners by accepting the nomination, consent that they will be featured on the DesignEuropa Awards website, in newsletters, and in other promotional and multimedia material published for disseminating information about this event. Information on the company, the designers and the selected designs will also be included in press dossiers for specialized press and media and may be used for other promotional activities organized by the EUIPO.

5. Jury

- The jury will be suitably qualified and will have, collectively, ample experience in business, design and intellectual property.
- The jury will be selected by the EUIPO.
- The responsibilities of the jury will be as follows:
 - to judge the entries and take a decision on the finalists and on the winner of each category.
 - to act collectively (the winner must obtain a majority of the votes).
- **Judging criteria:**
 - Compliance:
 - Sound marketing and management of design and other intellectual property rights.
 - Demonstrable impact on the market.
 - Design Performance (a balanced outcome of the following applied criteria):
 - Aesthetic value and visual appeal.
 - To support the overall performance of the design, appealing to users' emotions and experience in a meaningful way.
 - Usability/functionality:
 - Understanding the needs of diverse user groups and interpreting the needs to create a design that is easy, safe and comfortable to use.
 - Innovation:
 - The design should be used as a tool to reach a new or an improved solution.
 - Design Ethics:
 - Sustainability and environmental impact
 - The design should add to the positive environmental impact and thus to the value of the design, by being either an ecodesign or by the application of, regenerative and circular design principles and regulations.

- Factors considered to evaluate the environmental impact of the design claimed above, a non-exhaustive list of factors will be taken into account: materials used, processes, durability and reuse.
- o Social/Human impact
 - Design should add value by supporting the inclusion and diversity of users of a design and understanding the cultural context.
- The jury's decision is final.
- The EUIPO will act as secretariat for the Jury.

6. Calendar

- The period for submitting applications and nominations will be from 10 November 2025 to 20 February 2026 (both dates inclusive).
- The finalists will be announced on [DesignEuropa Awards website](#).
- The winners will be announced at the awards ceremony in Ljubljana, Slovenia, in September 2026.
- The jury's decision will be published on the DesignEuropa Awards website.

7. Cooperation and additional information

- The EUIPO may request evidence of the complementary information included in the entry form.
- The EUIPO may ask finalists to submit high resolution images that show the design from various perspectives. Explanatory texts, detailed plans and samples may also be requested.
- In the event of being selected as a finalist, participants agree to cooperate with the organizers of the DesignEuropa Awards by

providing access to the press and other media for interviews or for the photographing or filming of their design or premises.

- The EUIPO reserves the right to publish finalists' and winners' designs and related information on its website and in promotional material (publications, exhibition media, etc.) without remuneration for the participant.
- The EUIPO does not provide payment for reproduction or licencing of any rights related to the documents submitted for the awards, either during the selection procedure or in relation thereto.
- The EUIPO also reserves the right to record and publish videos and pictures from the award ceremony without remuneration for the participant.

8. Change to, or cancellations, of the DesignEuropa Awards

In the event of force majeure or if circumstances so dictate, the EUIPO reserves the right to suspend, postpone or cancel the Awards at any time and without prior notice; in this event, participants will not be entitled to claim compensation.

9. Data protection

The protection of your privacy is of the utmost importance to the European Union Intellectual Property Office ('EUIPO' or 'us' or 'the controller' or 'the organizer'). The EUIPO is committed to respecting and protecting your personal data and ensuring your rights as a data subject. All data of a personal nature, namely data that can identify you directly or indirectly, will be handled fairly, lawfully and with due care.

This processing operation is subject to Regulation (EU) 2018/1725 the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2018 on the protection of natural persons with regards to the processing of personal data by the Union institutions, bodies, offices and on the free movement of such data, and repealing Regulation (EC) No 45/2001 and Decision No

1247/2020 EC. For further information please download the [DesignEuropa Awards privacy statement](#).

10. Waiver of responsibility

By submitting an entry, the submitter accepts all rules fully and unconditionally. All enquiries should be sent to the EUIPO's DesignEuropa Awards team: designeuropa@euipo.europa.eu.

Next Generation Design Category

1. Candidates and eligibility

The Next Generation Design category is a special award for young designers up to 29 years old.

Candidates are required to submit their entries in accordance with the terms and conditions given below:

- The competition is open to any person between the ages of 18 and up to 29 years old by the date of the application period. All designs submitted must be valid EUD owned by the candidates themselves or any other company or individual (in any country). In the latter case, proof of the designer involved should be provided.
- All designs submitted must be valid EUD at the time of sending the application, with no pending invalidity proceedings. Finalist designs must retain their validity throughout the selection and award period.

2. Submission of entries

- Entries may be submitted either on the candidate's own initiative, at the behest of the awards' promoters or by any other natural person or legal entity that wishes to propose a candidate.
- Candidates must submit their entries using the online application form accessible on the DesignEuropa Awards website ([DesignEuropa Awards 2026](#)).
- The form must be completed with the following basic information provided:
 - EUD number, EUD owner's contact details, designer's contact details
- There is no entry fee.

- The period for submission of entries is from 10 November 2025 to 20 February 2026 (both dates inclusive).
- Entries that do not include the required information specified in the rules will not be accepted.
- By submitting an entry, the submitter accepts all rules fully and unconditionally.

3. Awards

- The winner will be asked to confirm their acceptance of the nomination and consent to the award.
- The winner will be invited to the DesignEuropa Awards ceremony in Ljubljana, Slovenia, in September 2026.
- Travel and accommodation costs will be borne by the EUIPO. The winner will receive a trophy and a certificate.
- The winner will be featured on the EUIPO's website (in the DesignEuropa Awards section), in newsletters, and in other promotional and multimedia material published for disseminating information about this event. Information on the designer will also be included in press dossiers for specialized press and media and may be used for other promotional activities organized by the EUIPO.

4. Jury

- The jury will be suitably qualified and will have, collectively, ample experience in business, design and intellectual property.
- The jury will be selected by the EUIPO.
- The responsibilities of the jury will be as follows:
 - to judge the entries and take a decision on the finalists and on the winner of each category
 - to act collectively (the winner must obtain a majority of the votes)

▪ Judging criteria:

- Compliance:
 - Sound management of intellectual property rights (EUD)
 - Design Performance (a balanced outcome of the following applied criteria):
 - Aesthetic value and visual appeal.
 - To support the overall performance of the design, appealing to users' emotions and experience in a meaningful way.
 - Usability/functionality
 - Understanding the needs of diverse user groups and interpreting the needs to create a design that is easy, safe and comfortable to use.
 - Innovation
 - The design should be used as a tool to reach a new or an improved solution.
 - Design Ethics:
 - Sustainability and environmental impact.
 - The design should add to the positive environmental impact and thus to the value of the design, by the application of ecodesign, regenerative design and circular design principles and regulations.
 - Factors considered to evaluate the environmental impact of the design claimed above, a non-exhaustive list of factors will be taken into account: materials used, processes, durability and reuse.
 - Social/Human impact
 - Design should add value by supporting the inclusion and diversity of users of a design and understanding the cultural context.
- The jury's decision is final.
 - The EUIPO will act as secretariat for the Jury.

5. Calendar

The period for submitting applications and nominations will be from 10 November 2025 to 20 February 2026 (both dates inclusive).

- The winner will be announced at the awards ceremony in Ljubljana, Slovenia, in September 2026.
- The jury's decision will be published on the DesignEuropa Awards website.

6. Cooperation and additional information

- The EUIPO may request evidence of the complementary information included in the entry form.
- The EUIPO may ask finalists to submit high resolution images that show the design from various perspectives. Explanatory texts, detailed plans and samples may also be requested.
- In the event of being selected winner, participants agree to cooperate with the organizers of the DesignEuropa Awards by providing access to the press and other media for interviews or for the photographing or filming of their design or premises.
- The EUIPO reserves the right to publish winners' designs and related information on its website and in promotional material (publications, exhibition media, etc.) without remuneration for the participant.
- The EUIPO does not provide payment for reproduction or licencing of any rights related to the documents submitted for the awards, either during the selection procedure or in relation thereto.
- The EUIPO also reserves the right to record and publish videos and pictures from the award ceremony without remuneration for the participant.

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8. Data protection

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This processing operation is subject to Regulation (EU) 2018/1725 the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2018 on the protection of natural persons with regards to the processing of personal data by the Union institutions, bodies, offices and on the free movement of such data, and repealing Regulation (EC) No 45/2011 and Decision No 1247/2020 EC. For further information please download the [DesignEuropa Awards privacy statement](#).

9. Waiver of responsibility

By submitting an entry, the submitter accepts all rules fully and unconditionally. All enquiries should be sent to the EUIPO's DesignEuropa Awards team: designeuropa@euiipo.europa.eu.

Lifetime Achievement Category

1. Candidates and eligibility

The Lifetime Achievement category is a special award for designers whose work demonstrates:

- a significant contribution throughout their career.
- design excellence.
- work of aesthetic value.
- a considerable impact on the market.
- use of the EUD system (optional).

2. Nominations

Any natural person or legal entity that wishes to propose a candidate can do so through the nomination form.

Nominations must be submitted using the online form accessible via the DesignEuropa Awards website ([DesignEuropa Awards 2026](#)). The form must be completed with the following basic information:

- Designer's name, and website link with basic information about the designer or his/her designs
- Proposer's contact details
- EUD number (optional).
- There is no entry fee.
- The period for submission of entries is from 10 November 2025 to 20 February 2026 (both dates inclusive).
- Entries that do not include the required information specified in the rules will not be accepted.
- By submitting an entry, the submitter accepts all rules fully and unconditionally.

3. Awards

- The winner will be asked to confirm their acceptance of the nomination and consent to the award.
- The winner will be invited to the DesignEuropa Awards ceremony in Ljubljana, Slovenia, in September 2026.
- Travel and accommodation costs will be borne by the EUIPO. The winner will receive a trophy and a certificate.
- The winner will be featured on the EUIPO's website (in the DesignEuropa Awards section), in newsletters, and in other promotional and multimedia material published for disseminating information about this event. Information on the designer will also be included in press dossiers for specialized press and media and may be used for other promotional activities organized by the EUIPO.

4. Jury

- The jury will be suitably qualified and will have, collectively, ample experience in business, design and intellectual property.
- The jury will be selected by the EUIPO.
- The responsibilities of the jury will be as follows:
 - to judge the entries and take a decision on the finalists and on the winner of each category.
 - to act collectively (the winner must obtain a majority of the votes).
- **Judging criteria:**
 - Significant contributions throughout a career
 - Design excellence
 - Work of aesthetic value
 - Impact on the market
 - Use of the EUD system (optional)
- The jury's decision is final.
- The EUIPO will act as secretariat for the Jury.

5. Calendar

- The period for submitting applications and nominations will be from 10 November 2025 to 20 February 2026 (both dates inclusive).
- The winner will be announced at the awards ceremony in Ljubljana, Slovenia, in September 2026.
- The jury's decision will be published on the DesignEuropa Awards website.

6. Cooperation and additional information

- The EUIPO may request complementary information about the designer or their work.
- Entries that do not include the required information specified in the rules will not be accepted.
- In the event of being selected as a winner, all participants agree to cooperate with the organizers of the DesignEuropa Awards by providing access to the press and other media for interviews or for the photographing or filming of their design or premises.
- The EUIPO reserves the right to publish information about the winner on its website and in promotional material (publications, exhibition media, etc.) without remuneration for the participant.
- The EUIPO does not provide payment for reproduction or licencing of any rights related to the documents submitted for the awards, either during the selection procedure or in relation thereto.
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