



**About the Design Awards**

The ASLA San Diego Excellence in Design Awards are the ultimate recognition of design achievement for landscape architecture firms and projects in and outside of the San Diego region. These awards celebrate innovation, creativity, and quality of life.

**Eligibility**

Project entries will be accepted from any individual, firm, non-profit organization, public agency or academic institution if one of the project's participants includes at least one of the following:

- San Diego Chapter, ASLA Member and Licensed Landscape Architect in the State of California (Projects at any location)
- ASLA Member and Licensed Landscape Architect in any state (San Diego County projects only)
- Non-Member Licensed Landscape Architect in the State of California (San Diego County projects only)

**Judging Criteria**

Submitted projects should advance, educate and promote the profession. The projects will be judged by the following criteria:

- Quality of the design or study
- Functional and Artistic merit
- Relationship to context
- Integration of ASLA's Climate Action Plan goals, elevating the role of landscape architecture in environmental stewardship and decision-making
- Overall relevance to landscape architecture, to the public and the environment. The project should clearly increase the public's awareness of the role landscape architecture plays in sustainable design and development.
- Projects that portray the highest level of skill and proficiency in the profession.
- Projects that demonstrate new technologies, methodologies or approaches.
- Provides a social function and benefits to the local community.

**Jury – To be Determined**

**Design Awards Entry Form & Payments  
Due: Monday, March 16, 2026**

**Entry PowerPoint Submittals Due:  
Thursday, April 30, 2026**

**Late Entry Form & Payment Due:  
with same PP submittal date.  
Monday, April 6, 2026**

**Design Awards Categories –**

*Jury has discretion to move entries to different category.*

Communications	Single-Family
Commercial (<=1 acre & >1 acre)	Parks/Rec/Trails
Construction Detailing	Planning /Analysis
Environmental	Pro-Bono
Historic and/or Landmark	Public/Municipal
Institutional	Public/International
Landscape Art	Un-Built Works
Multi-Family	

**President's Award** - Highest Award Given  
(1) One award decided by Juror majority vote.

**Honor Award**  
(1) One award to the most outstanding submission in each category. Jurors have discretion to award more than one.

**Merit Award**  
Any number of awards may be given in each category to recognize superior professional accomplishment.

**Green Ribbon Award**  
(1) One award decided by Juror majority vote.

**Equity Award (NEW)**  
(1) One award decided by Juror majority vote.

## **ENTRY FORM**

Complete the official Entry Form located on page 3 of this document – **one for each entry**. Return the completed Entry Form to [ASLASD@asla-sandiego.org](mailto:ASLASD@asla-sandiego.org)

## **ENTRY PAYMENT**

Upon Submission, an invoice will be sent with 2 payment options. Credit card link (card fees will apply) or bank transfer.

**Entry Payment Deadline – Monday, March 16, 2026**

**ASLA Members: \$250  
Non-ASLA Members: \$330**

**Late Payment Deadline – Monday, April 6, 2026**

**ASLA Members: \$500  
Non-ASLA Members: \$660**

## **SUBMITTAL REQUIREMENTS**

**After the entry form is received (steps listed above) - an entry number, entry PowerPoint (PPT) template with submission guidelines and entry upload link will be sent to you to be used to upload submission.**

**Award submittals must include two to three documents:**

1. Required Entry Form with signatures and optional Client invitation information.
2. Documents
  - Each project entry must be uploaded and submitted as a separate entry package in the correct drop box category.
  - To ensure anonymity, do not identify by name/firm on any materials (including planning reports) except the payment confirmation and entry form. Failure to do so will result in disqualification.
3. Design award invitation list – (Optional)  
Please provide a list of project owners/clients/ agencies, title/role, address and email on entry form so that the Awards Committee can send them an invitation to the event.

**Entry Payment Questions?**

Call 619.733.6538 or email [ASLASD@asla-sandiego.org](mailto:ASLASD@asla-sandiego.org)

## **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION**

Kathryn Kanaan, Design Awards Committee Chair  
Ph 619.840.5174 [kathryn@kda-landscapearchitects.com](mailto:kathryn@kda-landscapearchitects.com)

**SDASLA 2026 EXCELLENCE IN DESIGN AWARDS  
CALL FOR ENTRIES**

**ENTRY FORM** – Provide all pertinent information along with a signed entry statement utilizing this entry form.  
**Entry category descriptions are outlined on the next 2 pages, FAQs on pages 6 and 7.**

Name of submitter:

ASLA Membership Number:

Call ASLA National office at 1-800-999-2752 for member number

Individual/Firm/Agency Name:

Postal Address:

Phone:

Email Address:

Project Award Contact:

Phone:

**INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT AND SIGNATURE AS BELOW:** I certify that as the entrant, I am a fellow, full member or associate member, in good standing with ASLA or otherwise meet the eligibility criteria as described on Page 1 of the Call for Entries and had primary involvement in the project entered. The submitted project was done in compliance with all licensure rules and regulations of the state in which it is located. I understand that all material submitted becomes the property of SDASLA and may be retained by SDASLA and used for the promotion of the profession.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Project Name:**

Project Location (if applicable):

Project Category (Commercial, Parks/Trails etc.):

Date of Project Completion:

Name of Project Landscape Architect and Firm:

**Client Invitation Information (optional)**

Owner/ Client Name:

Owner/Client Firm Name (if any):

Owner/Client Address (Street address, City, State, Zip):

Owner/Client Email:

**INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT AND HAVE THE OWNER/ CLIENT PROVIDE A SIGNATURE BELOW:** I have reviewed this entry and have no objection to the submission, judging or publication of this material.

Client Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## 2026 EXCELLENCE IN DESIGN AWARDS CATEGORY DESCRIPTIONS

### **Climate Champion Green Ribbon Award**

The Climate Champion Green Ribbon award will recognize projects that demonstrate exceptional efforts in climate mitigation, resilience, biodiversity, environmental stewardship, and commitment to draw down of carbon emissions. The jury will select one or more projects at its discretion. The Green Ribbon is awarded across all categories, and there is no separate application required.

To be considered, applicants must submit a climate action plan 750-word narrative describing how their project addresses the goals of ASLA's Climate Action Plan. Describe how the project positively impacts biodiversity and ecosystem services. Include construction material and plant selection criteria, implementation strategies and maintenance considerations.

For reference, the CAP can be viewed at the following link (<https://www.asla.org/climateactionplan.aspx>) and a CAP Cheat Sheet can be viewed at the following link (<https://wasla.memberclicks.net/assets/2023/WASLA%20CAP%20Cheat%20Sheet.pdf>).

### **Communications**

Entries in Communications recognize achievements in communicating landscape architecture information, technology, theory, or practice to those within or outside the profession. Typical entries may include published or written documents such as books, articles, videos, and audio recordings of presentations on landscape architecture history, art, or technology; educational material intended for the non-technical consumer; or material that increases awareness of landscape design, environmental, or conservation issues.

### **Commercial (Under 1 acre and Over 1 acre)**

Entries in the 2 categories recognize site specific works of landscape architectural design. Typical entries include landscape design and implementation of offices, commercial centers, medical centers, hotels, and resorts. Master planned multi-use developments are included in this category. For large incremental projects, at least the first stage must be completed to be eligible for an award.

### **Construction Detailing**

Entries in this category recognize excellence and originality in construction detailing. Entries should include construction documentation and photos of final installation. Judging criteria will include hardscape, planting or irrigation detailing.

### **Environmental**

Entries in Environmental, champion natural resource protection, conservation, restoration and/or reclamation. Typical entries in this category include brown field reclamation, native plant restoration, design for erosion control or fire management, watershed reclamation and drainage design, and solutions for sustainable landscapes.

### **Equity Award (NEW)**

The Equity Award will recognize projects that promote social and environmental justice and equity through inclusion, accessibility, community/public engagement, collaborative design. The jury will select one or more projects at its discretion. The Equity Award is selected from across all categories, and there is no separate application required.

### **Historic Restoration or San Diego Landmark**

Entries in Historic Restoration & San Diego Landmark recognize the importance of preserving historic landscapes and/or creating identity for the region as San Diego landmarks. Entries should demonstrate thorough research, adherence to period materials and construction methods, and preservation of historic elements. Entries can also be distinguished landscape architecture projects not less than 15 years that have retained their original design integrity. It recognizes the significant contribution landscape architecture makes to the public realm and calls attention to the element of time in landscape architecture. Projects should reflect appropriate regional design principles.

### **Institutional – (public or private)**

Entries in this category recognize site specific works of landscape architectural design. Typical entries include landscape design and implementation of hospitals, schools, campuses, medical centers, universities, and transportation facilities.

## **Landscape Art**

Art forms created with landscape elements, art in public places and projects in collaboration with artists.

## **Parks, Trails & Recreation**

Entries in Parks, Trails & Recreation recognize site-specific and/or regional works of landscape architectural design. Typical entries include projects designed to address park design, golf courses, greenways, public open space, and active recreational landscapes. For large incremental projects, at least the first stage must be completed to be eligible for an award. Design entries should exhibit a relationship to planning and a framework larger than the immediate site.

## **Planning & Analysis**

Entries in Planning and Analysis recognize the wide variety of professional activities that lead to, guide, or evaluate landscape architectural design. Typical entries include documents such as master plans, specific plans, development guidelines, environmental assessments, and feasibility plans. One hard copy of the plan document (in addition to the entry PPT template) is strongly encouraged and will be returned to the entrant.

## **Public International**

Like the *Public Municipal* category, entries in this category recognize site-specific and/or regional works of landscape architectural design that are publicly owned and/or maintained. The primary difference being that these project sites are located outside the United States, while the design team responsible must be based somewhere within San Diego County. Design entries should exhibit a relationship to planning and a framework larger than the immediate site and demonstrate direct social and economic benefit to the local community. For large incremental projects, at least the first stage must be completed to be eligible for an award.

## **Public Municipal**

Entries in Public Municipal recognize site-specific and/or regional works of landscape architectural design that are publicly owned and/or maintained. Typical entries include projects designed to address streetscapes, libraries, community centers, and federal, state and local facilities. For large incremental projects, at least the first stage must be completed to be eligible for an award. Design entries should exhibit a relationship to planning and a framework larger than the immediate site.

## **Pro-Bono**

Projects in this category recognize Pro-Bono work provided by landscape architects that may or may not be specifically related to landscape design. Typical entries might include landscape plans, design charrettes, project programming, community organization, project monumentation, etc. The key in this category is that the landscape architect must not have earned a profit for the project and should prove how the project benefits the end user and contribute to the significance of the profession. Design solutions should be appropriate to the surroundings, be considerate of long-term maintenance, meet budgetary constraints, and contribute to the significance of the profession.

## **Residential (Single-Family and Multi-Family)**

Entries in this category recognize achievements in single-family residential landscape design. Typical entries include projects that solve the client's project goals and objectives, exemplify quality design solutions, and utilize appropriate materials and construction techniques. Design solutions should be appropriate to the surroundings, be considerate of long-term maintenance, meet budgetary constraints, and contribute to the significance of the profession.

## **Un-Built Works**

Entries in the Un-Built Works category recognize excellence in design thinking and methodology for projects that have been designed but not constructed. This category includes entries of projects that may not be expected to be implemented. Judging criteria will include quality of design; functionality - design functions well and achieves the client's objectives; special or unique solutions to unusual problems; environmental responsibility; relevance to the profession, the public and the environment; presentation clearly communicates the written explanation of projects.

## 2026 Excellence in Design Awards Frequently Asked Questions

If you have additional questions that are unanswered in this FAQ, please contact us at [ASLASD@asla-sandiego.org](mailto:ASLASD@asla-sandiego.org) so our Chair can answer your additional questions.

### Re: Font Size and Color

- Q.** Can we prepare slides using the provided template with slight modification to color and text to help it read better? Or do you want all inserted text to be black and the same font and location as the template?
- A.** Please do not change colors of slides, fonts types or colors. Minimum 10 pt font to be used. The submissions will be judged on the quality of the written content and quality of images, not on fonts and layout.

### Re: 150 Word limit for Project Concept Statement (slide 2)

- Q.** I noticed that Slide 2 says that “each presentation shall contain a brief Project Concept statement about the project in less than 150 words”. Slide 2 has roughly 6 sections to answer, so is each section 150 words maximum?
- A.** No. Only the ‘Project Concept Statement’ is a maximum of 150 words. Slide #2 (the Project Data Sheet) may be longer than one slide. But other than that slide, all the other slides should remain one slide.

### RE: Project Slide Images

- Q.** Just to clarify a couple points on the submittal. Included in the instructions is a point that says, “no more than 1 image per slide”. As you probably know, at times we use collages in which we may have a graphic with several labeled support pictures, which are designed in Photoshop and are 1 single JPEG. Does this qualify as one image or does this instruction mean only one single photograph may be used.
- A.** If a collage can be uploaded to one slide as a single image, that would be acceptable.

### RE: Site Plan Labels Must Avoid Firm Identification

- Q.** I assume labels on the required site plan and any graphics we include are permitted, correct?
- A.** Labels and graphics that do not disclose your firm or other project-related firms are acceptable. ***Disclosure of firm will result in disqualification.***

### Re: Project Location Eligibility - Open for ASLA CA Members/San Diego Projects for All Others

- Q.** Does the project location have to be inside the “County of San Diego” to qualify for submission in the design awards?
- A.** The eligibility criteria reads: Entries will be accepted for projects from any individual, firm, non-profit organization, public agency, or academic institution as long as one of the project’s participants includes at least one of the following:
- ASLA CA Chapter Members and Licensed Landscape Architect in the State of California (**Projects at any location**)
  - ASLA Member and Licensed Landscape Architect in other states (**San Diego County projects only**)
  - Non-member Licensed Landscape Architect in the State of California (**San Diego County projects only**). Projects located anywhere are eligible, as long as they have been created by an ASLA CA Chapter Member who is also a licensed landscape architect in CA.

### Re: Use Project Name in PowerPoint

- Q.** Do we use the actual project name in the PowerPoint, or should we use the assigned category and number?
- A.** The answer is only use the name of the Project and not the entry category and number which are only used by the organizing committee to track and sort the entries by category.

### RE: Submittal Instructions to Identify Entry Category and Number

- Q.** The Submittal Instructions say to name the Power Point and PDF files with the Category and entry number.
- A.** Refer to the bottom of the submittal instruction, the third sentence from the bottom, says “Submit by uploading both the PowerPoint and the PDF files to the same link”. The Link will list the same category and entry number that was emailed to you for each entry so you can name your PDF and PPT by the assigned category and entry # before you upload them. Some entries have been uploaded to the wrong link so that’s our way to re-order them if they entrant is uploading more than one entry.

**Re: Entry Form is ALSO a Client Photo Release Form**

**Q.** Do I need a photo release form?

**A.** The client signature for release at the bottom of the Entry Form is all you need to provide. If you are using a photo off the internet then yes a release is needed.

**RE: Omit Firm Names from Entry Template and Site Maps**

**Q.** Are we not supposed to list our firm name (or any other firms we have collaborated with) on the PowerPoint presentation? On slide 3 'Project Data Sheet' where it asks for "Project Scope of Work"- we cannot say XYZ firm provided..." instead we should say "our firm provided..." Is this correct?

**A.** Don't list your firm name or any other firm who participated in the project. But yes, you can use phrases like "our firm provided". ***Listing your firm name will result in disqualification.***

**Re: Image Size**

**Q.** In the instruction material under the "Image Description Key" it states that..."drawings or photograph must be electronically scanned or produced at 150 dpi. We would assume that you would want "scanned or produced" images to be at a minimum of 150 dpi for better clarity. (a higher dpi for images/photography would typically be used if each submittal does not exceed 50 MB but images less than 150 dpi images are very poor and fuzzy.

**A.** Yes, images should be a minimum 150 DPI. If they get too big, it will slow down the ability to view each slide when the jury meets to review the entries.

**Re: AI produced images**

**Q.** Can AI produced images be used in our power point presentation?

**A.** Yes and No. AI images CAN BE used in depicting preliminary design slides and processes but NOT for final/ finished design work.

**Note:** Use JPEG images in your PowerPoint presentation slide. You don't need to submit JPEGs separately – just use them in your PowerPoint. The final PPT submittal should be submitted in both PPT and PDF formats.

**We hope this will help clarify any questions regarding the awards formatting and submittal process**