



2025 Professional & Student Design Awards Submission Guidelines



The American Society of Landscape Architects Northern California Chapter (ASLA NCC) is excited to announce the 2025 Professional & Student Design Awards Call for Entries! This annual program honors excellence in landscape architecture, recognizing the innovative and impactful work of local landscape architects across a wide range of categories.

Why Submit

Submitting your project to the ASLA NCC Awards is a fantastic way to gain recognition while reflecting the chapter's priorities, including climate action, biodiversity, sustainability, equity, diversity, innovation, and the unique natural and cultural character of our region. Winning entries will be featured in ASLA NCC publications, on the chapter website, and across social media channels, offering visibility to the broader landscape architecture community. Award winners will also be honored at the Annual Meeting & Awards Presentation Ceremony on **April 24, 2025**, at Lake Chalet in Oakland.



La Fénix at 1950 – GLS Landscape | Architecture, Honor Award 2024, Community Impact Category

Award Categories

The ASLA-NCC Professional and Student Design Awards feature following categories:

- **General Design:** Recognizes outstanding, site-specific works of landscape architecture. Entries in this category must be completed and built. For large, incremental projects, at least the first phase must be completed.
- **Residential Design:** Recognizes exceptional landscape design for single-family and multi-family residential projects. Entries in this category must be completed and built.
- **Urban Design:** Recognize projects that activate and enhance urban environments by addressing social equity, economic viability, infrastructure, environmental stewardship, and placemaking.
- **Analysis and Planning:** Recognize recognizes projects stemming from comprehensive analysis or strategic planning that are built or unbuilt.
- **Research and Communication:** Recognizes work that advances landscape architecture through research that expands the knowledge base and advocates for the profession, or through the communication of landscape works, techniques, technologies, theory, and history.
- **International:** Recognize projects located outside the United States that contribute to landscape architecture in diverse global contexts.
- **Small Projects, Big Impact:** Recognizes excellence in projects that, despite size or budget constraints, achieve significant impact and effectiveness.
- **Community Impact Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (JEDI):** Recognize built or unbuilt projects or products that promote social and environmental justice, equity, diversity, inclusion, accessibility, community-based design, collaborative design, community stewardship, and public engagement—serving communities that often lack access.
- **Student Awards:** Recognize outstanding landscape architecture projects by students at the undergraduate or graduate level in any category.

The Professional and Design Awards Jury will review all eligible submissions and may select one **Award of Excellence** and any number of **Honor Awards** and **Merit Awards** in all categories.

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- Award of Excellence — Given to one truly exceptional project if Jury determines merited
 - Honor Award — Given to any number of superior projects
 - Merit Award — Given to any number of outstanding projects

This year, we are also introducing the **Biodiversity and Climate Action Award** to honor and recognize projects that demonstrate exceptional innovation and commitment to drawing down carbon emissions, restoring ecosystems and enhancing biodiversity, and reducing reliance on vehicles while ensuring equitable community access to these benefits. All entries are eligible for this award, and entrants do not need to win in another category to be considered. One winner will be selected by the awards jury in collaboration with the ASLA NCC Biodiversity and Climate Action Committee.

Eligibility

- **Professional Awards:** Landscape architecture professionals or firms located within the Northern California Chapter area, or projects based within the chapter's boundaries.
- **Student Awards:** ASLA Student, Student Affiliate members or emerging professionals who graduated in 2024 from schools within the Bay Area, using a student project.



San Francisco's Civic Center – CMG Landscape Architecture, Honor Award 2022, Analysis and Planning Category

Criteria

Primary criteria:

- **Quality of Design and Execution:** The project must demonstrate creativity, innovation, and technical excellence, showcasing the landscape architects' ability to create functional, aesthetically pleasing, and forward-thinking solutions.
- **Relationship to Context:** The project should reflect a deep understanding of and integration with its site's cultural, ecological, and physical context. This includes considering the local community, history, and natural environment.
- **Relevance and Impact:** The project must highlight its relevance and impact on the profession, the public, and/or the environment. It should show how it addresses contemporary issues and contributes to the field of landscape architecture.
- **Sustainability:** Highlight your project's exemplary and outstanding approach to sustainability, resilience and conservation. Focus on tangible measures and outcomes that exceed required codes and ordinances and exemplify environmental performance. Please refer to the **Statement of Sustainability Metrics** on Page 9 for further details.
- **Clear Communication of Intent and Project Outcomes:** The project should clearly communicate its concept, process, and outcomes through written and visual media.

General Design	Primary criteria
Residential Design	This category follows the same primary criteria, with particular attention paid to the challenges and opportunities specific to residential spaces.
Urban Design	The jury will consider primary criteria; urban design context; contribution of project to a broader urban landscape; and attention to social justice, equity, and inclusion.
Analysis and Planning	The jury will consider primary criteria; the quality of the analysis and planning effort; likelihood of successful implementation.

<p>Research and Communication</p>	<p>The jury will assess the research based on the clarity and significance of the research question, hypotheses, or objectives, ensuring that it addresses a relevant issue in landscape architecture. They will evaluate the use of historical data, its connection to current knowledge, and whether the research design and methods are rigorous and appropriate; Clear Communication of Intent and Project Outcomes.</p> <p>For communication, the jury will look for the effectiveness of the presentation in conveying key ideas, the innovation in its approach or delivery, the use of new tools or technologies, and how well the message resonates with its intended audience.</p>
<p>International</p>	<p>This category evaluates projects based on the primary criteria with a focus on their relevance and impact in an international context, outside of the United States.</p>
<p>Small Projects, Big Impact</p>	<p>Projects in this category, despite their smaller scale, should demonstrate significant impact in their community or context, showing how even limited interventions can create meaningful change.</p>
<p>Community Impact Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (JEDI)</p>	<p>The jury will consider projects that exemplify effective service to underrepresented communities and demonstrate the value of the project to both its community and its environment. Projects in this category should promote justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion through design by exhibiting innovative community engagement strategies and effective involvement of diverse populations.</p>
<p>Student Awards</p>	<p>Student projects must meet the primary criteria; exploration of new methods, tools, or technologies that advance the field of landscape architecture.</p>

Biodiversity and Climate Action Award	<p>The jury will consider the primary criteria and alignment with the Climate Action Plan, including</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Achieve zero embodied and operational emissions and increase carbon sequestration;● Provide significant economic benefits in the form of measurable ecosystem services, health co-benefits, sequestration, and green jobs;● Address climate injustices, empower communities, and increase equitable distribution of climate investments;● Restore ecosystems and increase and protect biodiversity.
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Typical Entries Include: public spaces, streets, transportation corridors and facilities, resorts, institutions; parks and recreational facilities; trails; open space; landscape reclamation; environmental restoration; conservation; landscape art; earth sculpture; single-family residences; multi-unit housing communities; historic preservation and restoration; cultural resource preservation and restoration etc.



Moss Rock – Ground Studio, Honor Award 2023, Residential Category

Meet the Jury

The prestige of the ASLA-NCC awards program is built on the expertise of our distinguished jurors. The 2025 jury includes:



David Fletcher – Fletcher
Studio



Patricia Algara – BASE
Landscape Architecture



Joni L. Janecki – Joni L.
Janecki & Associates
Landscape Architects



Caroline Souza – David Baker
Architects



Michael Dellis - PWP
Landscape Architecture



Monica Way - Studio-MLA

Submission Instructions

Failure to follow these instructions and rules for submission may result in the disqualification of your entry and the forfeiting of your entry fee. ASLA-NCC retains the right to disqualify any entry that does not meet the program requirements or that presents a conflict of interest. In such cases, refunds will not be issued.

1. Applicant office or project site location must be located within the boundaries of the Northern California Chapter area.
 2. The chapter will be using CadmiumCD to accept and review award submittals. Log In to the Abstract ScoreCard by selecting Join Now under New Users. Complete the Account Profile information and create your account. Please note you will receive an access key when you begin your submission(s). Access keys from previous years or other ASLA accounts will not be accepted.
 3. The jury process is “blind,” in other words, the identities of the entrant and creative team are not revealed to the jury. All the materials cannot have any indication of the identities of the landscape architect(s), other designers, their firms(s) or other firm(s) responsible for the project.
 4. Entrants are responsible for obtaining written client authorization allowing the entry to be submitted, judged, and published. Clients should be made aware that all submittal materials including photographs for entries become the property of ASLA-NCC. Do not include this authorization with your submittal; retain it for your records.
 5. Complete the **Project Title (Name)**, **Project Statement** and **Project Narrative**. Do not include any indication of the identities of the landscape architect(s), other designers, their firms(s) or other firm(s) responsible for the project.
 - Project Statement: In 150 words or less, describe the project and why it is award-worthy. This statement may be used in promotional materials if the project is selected for an award. NOTE: failure to submit this statement will lead to disqualification of entry.
 - Project Narrative: In 700 words or less, describe the project, addressing the criteria for the category selected.
 - Check the box to be considered for the **Biodiversity and Climate Action Award** and include these consideration into your **Project Narrative** explaining how this project aligns with and advances the initiatives outlined in [Climate Action Plan](#).
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- Achieve zero embodied and operational emissions and increase carbon sequestration;
 - Provide significant economic benefits in the form of measurable ecosystem services, health co-benefits, sequestration, and green jobs;
 - Address climate injustices, empower communities, and increase equitable distribution of climate investments;
 - Restore ecosystems and increase and protect biodiversity.
6. Complete the **Statement of Sustainability Metrics**. If sustainability does not apply to your project please indicate N/A.
- Briefly list all sustainability measurements, certifications, goals and rating systems achieved by this project. Examples include but are not limited to SITES, LEED, Cal Green, California Water Efficiency Ordinance, Bay Friendly Rated Landscape. Etc.
 - Briefly describe all sustainability measures related to project context, pre-design assessments, planning, and site design. Focus on measures that are exemplary or exceed required codes and ordinances.
 - Briefly describe all sustainability measures as related to water efficiency and management, soil management, vegetation preservation and design, energy conservation and material selection. Focus on measures that are exemplary or exceed required codes and ordinances.
 - Briefly describe all sustainability measures that could be considered innovative, inventive, and/or ground breaking. Additionally, describe any measures which exceed expectations and provide a model for future projects in sustainable Landscape Architecture.
7. Upload the Site Plan Drawings/Photographs. Images cannot have any indication of the identities of the landscape architect(s), other designers, their firms(s) or other firm(s) responsible for the project.
- At least (5) images but no more than (15) total images must be submitted in a single PDF file not to exceed 10MB. Must include (1) site plan, **Research and Communication** excluded.
 - Each image must be formatted as 8.5" x 11" and in landscape orientation.
 - Entrants are responsible for clearing photographs with photographers for publication and reproduction by ASLA- NCC. ASLA-NCC will provide proper photography and other project credits when using photos, but will not assume responsibility for any copyrights or photography fees. ASLA-NCC retains the right to publish photos submitted in winning entries on the ASLA-NCC website,
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in promoting the awards program, and in other products in conjunction with promoting landscape architecture.

8. Include brief captions of no more than 40 words for uploaded images in Site Plan Drawings / Photographs Captions.
9. Complete the Non-Disclosed Project Information & Non-Disclosed Photo Credits. This information, indicating the identities of the landscape architect(s), other designers, their firms(s) and other firm(s) responsible for the project is only listed on the Non-Disclosed Project Information. Such information is not allowed anywhere else in the submittal.
10. For **Research and Communication** and **Analysis and Planning** categories, original publications or project documents can be submitted electronically (with concealed identification) separate from entry material.

Entry Fees

Category	Fee
Professional Awards: Small Firm (<10 Employees)	\$150
Professional Awards: Large Firm (>10 Employees)	\$300
Professional Awards: Non-Member	\$400
Student Awards	\$30

* ASLA Student Membership is free!

Important Dates

- **February 1, 2025:** Submissions Open
 - **February 13, 2025:** Informational Workshop for Students and Recent Graduates
 - **February 28, 2025:** Submissions Close
 - **April 24, 2025:** Awards Ceremony at Lake Chalet, Oakland
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Contact Information

For questions, please contact:

Laura Leuer

Executive Director, ASLA NCC

Email: admin@asla-ncc.org
