



2026 AIA CALIFORNIA AWARDS

Residential Design

DEADLINES

Early Bird Deadline: June 17, 2025 11:59PM PST*

Normal Registration Deadline: July 8, 2026 11:59PM PST

Submissions Deadline: July 22, 2026 11:59PM PST

Award recipients and non-recipients will be notified in September

- ✓ [Register](#)
- ✓ [Submit](#)
- ✓ [How to Submit Guide](#)

FEES

Early Bird Registration	Amount	Normal Registration	Amount
AIA Member Fee	\$275.00	AIA Member Fee	\$325.00
AIA Member Small Project Fee	\$175.00	AIA Member Small Project Fee	\$205.00
Non Member Fee	\$450.00	Non Member Fee	\$525.00
Non Member Small Project Fee	\$250.00	Non Member Small Project Fee	\$315.00

ELIGIBILITY

- ✓ Submit a residential **built** and **unbuilt** project
 - Built projects must have been completed on or after **January 1, 2019.**
 - The project cannot have received an ***AIA California 2025 Design Award*** or ***Urban Design Award*** for the same project
- ✓ AIA California members and California Architects may submit projects located anywhere in the world.
- ✓ AIA members and Architects located outside of California may only submit projects located in California.
- ✓ Submit Project Portfolio
- ✓ Submit Common Application

CATEGORIES*

- Single Family Residential
- Multi-Family Residential
- Accessory Dwelling Unit
- Affordable

**AIA does not award based on category, please choose the category that aligns closest with your project. Categories are used by the jury for review purposes.*



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PORTFOLIO GUIDELINES

Submitted in PDF format, 8.5x11 landscape orientation. No more than 8MB and 12 pages. No firm name.

- Page 1: Cover page with a photo, project name and location (Do NOT include firm name anywhere in PDF or common application)
- Page 2: Project Summary – Photos/images may be included
- Page 3: A readable site plan with North arrow indicated clearly
- Page 4: At least one floor plan, but no more than two
- Page 5: Project sections and/or elevations
- Page 6: Include at least one sustainable design and **resiliency*** diagram with a brief description of strategies used
- Pages 7 – 13: Project Photos (Renderings or drawings for unbuilt)
 - Must be clear and concise, with a high resolution
 - Limit of 4 photos per page
 - Include one picture of the project within the surrounding area for context

****NEW!*** An additional page may be used if needed to cover both sustainability and resiliency.

ADDITIONAL NOTES:

- Please include project name when naming files
- If you list the firm name in your submission package/Common App or do not meet all the requirements, your project will be disqualified
- Give yourself plenty of time to fill out the Common App
 - [Use the resources on the AIA CA Residential Design Awards webpage](#)
- **If your project is submitted for the 2025 Design Awards program, please wait to register until notified if the project was selected**
- For unbuilt projects, please project the common application data and estimate to the best of your ability
- Common Application - Fill the application out to the best of your ability, use the narratives to explain areas with missing or limited data. Blank measures and incorrect information will negatively affect a project more than simple answers and explanations.

COMMON APPLICATION

AIA California is aligned with AIA's [Framework for Design Excellence](#) with the integration of 10 key principles into the award program requirements. While California leads the nation with the implementation of zero carbon standards and codes, the Framework identifies specific metrics



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to evaluate buildings that illustrate progress toward a zero carbon, equitable, resilient, and healthy built environment.

AIA California's Design awards follows AIA's Design Excellence criteria using the Common App. Submittals are encouraged to highlight project performance through narratives and metrics in the Common App.

Prior to the Design Awards Jury, each project will be reviewed by a Common Application Review Panel; multiple panelists will review each project's success in achieving wholistic design across measure, including meeting sustainability and building decarbonization goals. The average score, along with Common Application review comments, will be forwarded to the Residential Design Awards Jury. *(Important note: providing incorrect information or failing to provide information will result in a lower Common Application review score; projects with low scores may not be awarded by the Residential Design Awards Jury).*

When completing the Common App, pay particular attention to Measure 6, Design for Energy and be sure to provide the correct EUI information. EUI information can be obtained from energy models or LEED (or similar) documentation. If T24 Compliance documentation was used, see the instructions and calculator for calculating site EUI from T 24 compliance documentation.

AWARDS

The Jury has the discretion to recognize all projects with any of the following awards **Honor, Merit and Citation**. Past recipients in this program may not apply again, regardless of award level. If the project was awarded in another award suite (Residential Design Awards or Urban Design Awards) in a previous year, it is eligible to be submitted.

Award recipients and non-recipients will be notified in September. An award celebration will be held towards the end of the calendar year.

AIACA AI DATA DECLARATION

AIA California recognizes that AI is a valuable and increasingly common tool, and that its use will continue to evolve within the profession. We support its responsible use, while emphasizing that AI should be applied thoughtfully, ethically, and with clear intent. For all submissions for recognition including awards, scholarships, articles, etc., participants are expected to ensure that all work reflects their own ideas, judgment, and professional integrity, with AI serving only as a supportive tool—not a substitute for original authorship.