



AWDA
AIAP Women in Design Award
Sixth International Edition 2026

Now in its sixth edition, AWDA is a biennial international award founded in Italy in 2012 and currently addressed to women visual communication designers worldwide. It aims to explore diverse languages, poetics, and approaches to design practice, as well as to map the working conditions of women designers.

The AWDA Award is open to all individuals who identify as women, regardless of sex assigned at birth, and any transition journeys.

Eligible projects include visual communication design works produced from 2023 to the present. Projects submitted within the terms specified in the call will be selected by an international jury composed of esteemed figures in the field of design.

Since 2019, AWDA has benefited from the Institutional Partnership of ICoD – International Council of Design, which supports and promotes the award internationally, recognising its significant social and ethical value.

Among the selected works deemed worthy of publication, the jury will award the AWDA 2026 Award to the winning woman graphic designer; three Honourable Mentions, one for each category; and any Special Mentions, where applicable.

In addition, since 2023, the special prize AWDA for RIGHTS! has been introduced. This award is granted to the project, among all those selected by the jury, that most effectively addresses social issues related to women's rights and labour, and more broadly, gender inequalities across all fields.

A Lifetime Achievement Award, which may also be awarded in memoriam, will be attributed by the Prize scientific committee to a national or international designer who has distinguished herself through her professional and research career and has made an authoritative contribution to the diffusion and growth of design culture within the field of visual communication design.

Summary of Awards and Mentions

- AWDA 2026 Award
- AWDA 2026 Lifetime Achievement Award (and/or Career Award for Historic Achievement)
- AWDA for RIGHTS! 2026 Award
- AWDA 2026 Honourable Mention – Professional Designers Category

- AWDA 2026 Honourable Mention – Students Category
- AWDA 2026 Honourable Mention – Researchers Category

The official award ceremony will take place in Italy in November 2026.

Award Categories

1. Professional Designers Category

Visual communication designers

Eligible participants include: studio owners, independent professionals, studio employees, freelancers, and female-led or predominantly female collectives.

For employees and freelancers, a release form, signed and stamped by the owning studio or agency, certifying intellectual property rights of the submitted project, must be attached.

2. Researchers Category

Scholars, researchers, lecturers, PhD candidates or PhD holders

Eligible participants include: scholars, researchers, university lecturers, lecturers from academies or secondary schools, public and/or private institutions, PhD holders, and scholars who have developed studies, research projects, publications (including self-published works), doctoral theses, or educational projects related to visual communication design.

3. Students Category

Students, graduating students, graduates

Eligible participants include: students enrolled in public and/or private universities or academies, specialist schools, whose academic curriculum includes visual communication design projects; graduating students or graduates (within the last four years) who have developed or are developing undergraduate or master's thesis projects in visual communication design.

How to Apply

To participate in the award, applicants must:

- register on the website www.aiap-awda.com
- pay the application fee corresponding to their category:

Professional Designers

€ 120

Researchers

€ 100

Students

€ 30

A maximum of three projects may be submitted in total, including across different categories.

Registration and payment are completed directly on the website in the dedicated section, by filling in all required fields and uploading the requested materials.

Discount codes are available for AIAP members and members of partner associations, as well as for participants submitting more than one project.

No additional fees will be required for projects that are selected or awarded.

Materials to Submit

Participation in the award requires uploading the projects after registration. Projects must be uploaded in the dedicated section of the AWDA website (www.aiap-awda.com), following all instructions provided and respecting the deadlines.

For each project, the category must be clearly specified, including in the file name format: (surname_name_professionals / surname_name_researchers / surname_name_students).

Uploaded materials may be updated or replaced in the relevant section of the AWDA website until the call closes.

For each submitted project, a PDF file in English, including texts and images, must be uploaded with the following specifications:

- A3 horizontal format
- Maximum 10 pages
- File size under 8 MB
- Images of the completed project
- A clear project description in English, structured as: Abstract (max. 500 characters) + Extended description (max. 1,500 characters)

On the final page, the following candidate information must be included:

name, surname, nationality, year and place of birth, biography in English (max. 1,000 characters), contact details (email, phone number, website, social media IDs). Any significant collaborations must be indicated in a concise colophon.

For employees or collaborators of studios and/or agencies, a signed and stamped release form certifying intellectual property rights must also be attached.

In addition to the images included in the PDF, 5 high-quality photographs must be sent separately by email to info@aiap-awda.com. Both horizontal and vertical images are required (JPG format, 300 dpi resolution, minimum size 30 cm on the long side).

Exclusion

A project will be excluded if:

- a) it is received after 24:00 CET on the deadline date;
- b) it does not comply with the competition rules.

Protection

AIAP is responsible for ensuring the security of all submitted projects and the confidentiality of the information provided, guaranteeing that the upload area is private and accessible only to jury members.

Jury

All applications and online presentations will be reviewed by the jury, which will select the projects and subsequently award: the AWDA 2026 Award, the AWDA for RIGHTS! Award, three Honourable Mentions, any Special Mentions, and the Lifetime Achievement Award (out of competition, awarded by a scientific committee to a distinguished figure).

The jury's decisions are final and not subject to appeal. Decisions will be taken by majority vote, and the jury will provide written justifications and draft an official report on the overall competition process, particularly outlining the reasons for awarding the prizes. A copy of the report will be deposited with the AIAP Secretariat and published on the official award website (www.aiap-awda.com).

Projects in the Researchers Category will be evaluated by a dedicated jury composed primarily of university professors and researchers.

The composition of both juries (the international jury and the research-category jury) will be announced by **May 2026**.

Use of Submitted Materials

All submitted materials are intended for publication. AIAP reserves the right to use them, in whole or in part, for the selection process; to reproduce them in AIAP Edizioni publications and those of potential co-publishers; on AIAP websites and online platforms; and in media communications related to AWDA publications and any associated exhibitions, always crediting the project and designer, client, and year.

By submitting their applications, participants consent to the free adaptation of all materials (texts and images) according to the communication needs of the various media used, releasing AIAP from any liability for potential third-party rights violations.

Timeline

Call publication on the official website www.aiap-awda.com: **March, 31st 2026**

Registration and material upload: **March, 31st – June, 30th 2026**

Announcement of preselection results: **September, 15th 2026**

Submission by selected participants of original materials and files for exhibition and publication in the AWDA6 volume: **by October, 15th 2026**

Final jury meeting and award ceremony: **November, 18th – 20th 2026**

Secretariat

All information about AWDA is available at:

www.aiap-awda.com

For clarifications, further information about the award, or to report technical issues during registration and upload, please write to:

info@aiap-awda.com.

Additional FAQs may be published before the call closes.