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AIAP WOMEN IN DESIGN 2026 AWARD

The Sixth edition of the AWDA Award will be held in Palermo from November 18 to 20 with events and activities open to the public throughout the city.

The sixth edition of the AWDA (Aiap Women in Design Award) – a biennial international prize for visual communication designers – will take place in Palermo from November 18 to 20, 2026. Established in 2012 under the auspices of AIAP, Italian Association for Visual Communication Design, which serves as the project leader, the award is supported by ICoD International Council of Design as an institutional partner. International collaborating partners for this edition include AIGA San Diego Tijuana, Grafia - Association of Visual Communication Designers in Finland, and the TDRI - Taiwan Design Research Institute. The University of Palermo is the local collaborating partner.

Since its inception, the award has aimed to highlight women in visual communication design – past, present, and future – who have often been overlooked by history, even in recent times. It seeks to give a voice to a profession that, while widespread, remains poorly or inadequately represented – particularly for women working in regions or sectors where the development of professional skills and the promotion of women's work are still far from achieving true equality.

Over the years, the AWDA, Aiap Women in Design Award has evolved into a platform for discussion and dialogue, with a strong focus on research into design and contemporary issues. Committed to struggle all forms of discrimination, it has become an observatory for the work of female designers globally, championing new production methods, innovative process management, fresh perspectives on content, and widespread practices of collaboration and sharing.

The Palermo edition centers on the importance of nurturing and disseminating ideas, promoting a culture of graphic design, and supporting the professional growth and protection of women designers. To this end, it offers a program of open, free-to-attend events that reflect the core values of the AWDA: fostering a network among designers, researchers, activists, and the general public, while consistently placing people at the heart of the processes of change.

A **Welcome Tour**, complimentary and offered in both Italian and English, will welcome guests and anyone else wishing to join on November 18th at 6:00 PM. Departing from Piazza Giuseppe Verdi, the tour will explore key landmarks in the center of Palermo, led by Francesca Trovato.

November 19th marks the beginning of the AWDA thematic event series, featuring two significant sessions: AWDA Community – an extensive journey through the visual narratives of graphic design

projects, presented by the designers themselves – and AWDA Miscela, an open dialogue centered on activism, design, and art.

AWDA Community will take place at the *Museo delle Città del Mondo* – FARM Cultural Park on November 19th, from 10:00 AM to 1:00 PM and from 2:00 PM to 6:00 PM. Over forty shortlisted designers from around the globe will present their finalist projects in an open forum, offering the public in Palermo an opportunity for the exchange of experiences, reflection, and innovation. AWDA Community is curated by Federica Lucido and Francesca Ciulla.

With **AWDA Miscela**, held on November 19th at 6:00 PM at the FARM Cultural Park, AWDA delves into the core themes central to the project. Miscela serves as an open space for dialogue, discussion, and community, where participants can engage with activists, experts, and artists on topics such as human rights, integration, labor, and design. The session will be moderated by journalist and communications expert Sara Muscogiuri, with contributions from:

- Florinda Saieva, Co-Founder of Farm Cultural Park – Institutional greetings
- Alessandra Sciurba, Coordinator of the Legal Clinic for Migrations and Rights and Associate Professor of Philosophy of Law at UNIPA
- Anne-Clemence De Grolée, artist and Arts and Languages teacher
- Beatrice Agnello, Editorial Director Mezzocielo
- Jamil El Sadi, journalist and Our Voice-APS Communication manager
- Valentina Greco, curator "Isola delle femmine".

On November 19, as the closing event for Miscela, there will be **Happy AWDA**, a social aperitivo and networking opportunity open to the public. Attendees will also have the chance to visit RADICI - Piccolo Museo della Natura.

The **AWDA opening press conference** will take place on November 20 at 11:00 AM at Palazzo Butera. It will be moderated by journalist Angelica D'Errico. Participants include:

- Massimo Midiri, Rector of the University of Palermo
- Beatrice Pasciuta, Vice-Rector for Inclusion, Equal Opportunities, Gender Policies, Livability, and Workplace Well-being
- Michelangelo Gruttadauria, President of the University Museum System
- Francesco Lo Piccolo, Director of the Department of Architecture
- Francesco E. Guida, President of AIAP, Italian Association for Visual Communication Design
- Cinzia Ferrara, AWDA curator
- Vincenzo Castellana, National Board Member of ADI, Association for Industrial Design
- Malte Martin, designer, visual artist, and member of AGI, Alliance Graphique Internationale
- Melike Taşcıoğlu Vaughan, Past president di ICoD International Council of Design

- Teal Triggs, historian and Professor of Graphic Design at the Royal College of Art, London.

The **AWDA award ceremony** will take place on the afternoon of Friday, November 20, from 5:00 PM to 8:00 PM, in the **Aula Magna of the Department of Architecture** at the University of Palermo. The ceremony will also be streamed online as part of the OFF program of the "**L'Eredità delle Donne" festival**.

From the 86 entries selected and deemed worthy of publication, the jury will announce the winner of the AWDA 2026 Prize and present three honorable mentions, one for each category: students, researchers, and professionals, along with any additional special mentions. Since 2023, a special award ***AWDA for RIGHTS!*** has also been included; it is granted to the project – chosen from among all those selected by the jury – that best addresses social issues related to women's rights and labor, as well as gender disparities across all fields.

Lifetime achievement and memorial awards will be presented to designers, both national and international figures, who have distinguished themselves through their professional and research careers, and who have made significant, authoritative contributions to the dissemination and advancement of design culture within the field of visual communication design.

THE PROGRAM

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 18

6:00 PM – 7:30 PM
AWDA WELCOME TOUR
Departure at 6:00 PM from Piazza Giuseppe Verdi

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 19

10:00 AM – 1:00 PM and 2:00 PM – 6:00 PM
AWDA COMMUNITY
Museum of Cities of the World (Museo delle Città del Mondo) -Farm Cultural Park
Via Maqueda, 206

6:00 PM – 8:00 PM
AWDA MISCELA
Museum of Cities of the World (Museo delle Città del Mondo) - Farm Cultural Park
Via Maqueda, 206

8:30 PM
HAPPY AWDA
Radici - Small Museum of Nature (Piccolo Museo della Natura)
Via Antonio Gagini, 23

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 20

AIAP WOMEN in DESIGN AWARD®

11:00 AM
AWDA OPENING PRESS CONFERENCE
Palazzo Butera
Via Butera, 8

5:00 PM – 8:00 PM
AWDA AWARD CEREMONY
Department of Architecture, Margherita De Simone Lecture Hall (Aula Magna Margherita De Simone)
Building 14, Viale delle Scienze

Attendance at the Awards Ceremony is free and open to all, subject to registration here via Eventbrite.

The event will also be available to watch via live stream *on this page, as part of the "OFF" program of the L'Eredità delle Donne*/Women's Legacy festival.

CURATORS

AWDA curators are Cinzia Ferrara, Laura Moretti and Carla Palladino.

THE JURY

AWDA International Jury

Laura E. Araujo Moreno, President & CEO, AIGA San Diego Tijuana Chapter – Mexico
Nina Ay, Vice President, Taiwan Design Research Institute – Taiwan
Federica Fragapane, Information designer - Italy
Malte Martin, Designer and visual artist / AGI Alliance Graphique Internationale – France
Katja Merisalo, AD & Graphic designer / Grafia - Association of Visual Communication Designers in Finland – Finland
Bianca Sangalli Moretti, Illustrator, art director / AWDA Aiap Women in Design Award team – Italy
Simonetta Scala, Graphic designer / AIAP Italian Association of Visual Communication Design – Italy
Melike Taşcıoğlu Vaughan, Professor, Past President of International Council of Design (ICoD) – Turkey
Teal Triggs, Professor of Graphic Design - Great Britain

AWDA Jury of Research

Sara Fortunati, Director of the Circolo del Design in Torino, Head of Communication School at IED in Milan - Italy
Laura Moretti, AWDA Curator - Italy
Valeria Piras, Technologist and research fellow - Italy
Vera Sacchetti, Design critic, curator - Portugal
Carlo Vinti, Design historian - Italy

AIAP WOMEN in DESIGN AWARD®

AWDA Scientific Committee

Cinzia Ferrara, AWDA Curator - Italy
Francesco E. Guida, President of AIAP Italian Association of visual communication design - Italy
Enrico Morteo, Design critic and historian – Italy
Elizabeth Resnick, Professor Emerita, Massachusetts College of Art & Design - United States

Please find below the link to the press kit. We remain at your disposal should you require any further information >
https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/11Dbs7huOqnnNlYFyIphG25rLMT8z8qGa?usp=sharing

Interviews and contacts

For inquiries regarding interviews with the curators, the jury, or the winners during the AWDA awards in Palermo, please contact Sara Muscogiuri at +39 349 6351774.

For any clarifications or further information, please write to: info@aiap-awda.com

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