



PRESS RELEASE

**The Stage for Architectural Excellence, Business Impact, and Networking —  
ICONIC AWARDS 2026 Call for Entries**

Frankfurt am Main, February 18, 2026

The ICONIC AWARDS, a prestigious award by the German Design Council, today opens the call for entries for a new competition cycle honoring international projects in architecture, interior design, and product design. Leading up to the award ceremony in October 2026, a new series of international networking events will also begin, bringing together industry representatives, planners, architects, and project developers for interdisciplinary exchange. The platform's goal is to make innovative approaches and architectural excellence visible across borders and to foster impulses for concrete project collaborations. With up to 800 projects from more than 45 nations submitted annually in previous years, the ICONIC AWARDS continue to build on the successes of past editions.

**From Mixed-Use to Transformation – New Opportunities for All Stakeholders in the Construction Industry**

With five main categories and 50 subcategories, the ICONIC AWARDS 2026 offer a differentiated evaluation system for all stakeholders in the construction industry. Starting in 2026, these categories will be specifically expanded: In the main category ARCHITECTURE, "Mixed-Use Development", "Transformation", "Urban Regeneration and Development", "Industrial and Logistic Development", and "Facade and Surface" will complement the spectrum. In the main category CONCEPT, "Development Concept and Masterplanning" and "Transformation" will strengthen the strategic level of project development. This new focus will specifically address project developers, building groups, developers, as well as private and public clients, who play a key role as initiators and designers of construction and infrastructure projects. New categories like Healthcare, Circular Design, and Office and Workplace reflect current developments in the industry and honor solutions addressing contemporary issues. You can discover all categories [here](#).

**Networking Across the Entire Architecture Value Chain**

"The ICONIC AWARDS have created a platform that showcases the entire value chain of the industry," emphasizes Lutz Dietzold, Managing Director of the German Design Council. "The award brings together a wide variety of disciplines that contribute to architectural quality, from design concepts and planning

trades to products, materials, lighting, graphics, and branding." Thirty percent of participants are manufacturers from the construction and interior industries. They meet an innovation-driven group of architecture and interior design firms, which make up around 60% of the participants. The discourse focuses on the latest research findings, product innovations, and projects. The unique combination of expertise leads to lively discussion formats, drawing on diverse perspectives and driving business collaborations forward.

### **Year-Round Formats Instead of Single Events**

With a series of successful networking formats, the ICONIC AWARDS were present wherever the industry gathered in the past year. In addition to a Business Lunch during the 2025 Salone del Mobile in Milan, industry representatives and architects from various countries participated in a guided architecture tour and a subsequent networking evening with media partner DETAIL on the day before the 2025 award ceremony. The 2026 year kicks off with an expert meeting in March during the Light + Building fair in Frankfurt. A panel discussion with Kaldewei during the Milan Design Week in April 2026 will be the next highlight on the ICONIC AWARDS agenda, which each year features industry-specific highlights for fast-developing sectors. Participants in last year's program report that these networking events provide a low-threshold opportunity for concrete matchmaking.

### **Award Ceremony as a Meeting Point for the Industry**

The award ceremony in October in Munich, held in parallel with the Expo Real trade fair, brings together leading figures from architecture, industry, and real estate. In addition to the festive award show, expert dialogues, presentations, and curated networking opportunities provide greater visibility for participants. Formats like "Pitch & Pulse," a brief presentation format for innovative ideas and projects, allow participants to showcase their companies and innovations directly to a curated audience of professionals. Concrete feedback, questions, and follow-up discussions energize the exchange between industry partners and planners.

### **The Award for Global Reach and Networking in German Construction**

The demand for an integrated platform for architecture, interior design, and product solutions in the German-speaking market is evident from the large number of international participants and the high quality of entries from the DACH region. In particular, the increase in international submissions, which accounted for about 60% of all entries in 2025, demonstrates the importance of the award for international business. Numerous entries come from China, Japan, Italy, the United States, Korea, Portugal, Spain, and France.

### **Registration Dates at a Glance**

Start of submission: February 18, 2026

Early Bird Deadline: March 27, 2026

Registration Deadline: May 15, 2026

Further information on participation, categories, and the jury is available [online](#).

### **About the German Design Council**

The German Design Council is the authority on design in Germany. Since 1953, we have been unlocking the potential of design for a sustainable future. We bring together business and design to drive Circular Design, transformation, and economic success.

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