

best practice paper:

**regulations and
best practices
for serving as
a juror of a
design award
competition**

ico-D. Leading creatively.

ico-D is the world body for professional design. It is a non-profit, non-partisan, member-based network of independent organisations and stakeholders working within the multidisciplinary scope of design and expanded media. Founded in 1963, ico-D actively promotes the value of design practice, thinking, education, research and policy, representing more than 140 organisations in 67 countries and regions globally.

ico-D's members believe in interdisciplinary collaboration and the effectiveness of a collective voice to represent the design industry.

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Introduction

The quality of the jury may have significant impact on the quantity and quality of submissions received for an award competition. These guidelines are intended to assist individuals invited to serve as members of a jury, as well as award competition organisers. They have been developed to promote consistent high standards, encourage broad representation and common application of practical considerations.

This document is intended to serve as a companion to existing ico-D best practice documents. For detailed information, please consult **Regulations and best practices for organising design award competitions**, **Regulations and best practices for organising design exhibitions**, **Regulations and best practices for organising design conferences** and **Soliciting work from professional designers** as applicable.

Regulations are conditions required to meet ico-D endorsement standards. Best practices are non-binding advice that should be applied where possible.

ico-D recommends that Members not act as a jury member for, take part in or promote design award competitions that do not comply with these best practices.

About award competitions and design exhibitions

Award competitions are aimed at evaluating and recognising existing work through assignment of awards and prizes. Award competitions do not require participants to produce original work, unless a competition has a specific theme.

Award competitions are distinct from a competitive process to solicit and contract work from professional designers, which is described in ico-D's best practice document **Soliciting work from professional designers**.

Award competitions or design exhibitions that include an award scheme offer awards in the form of medals, trophies, certificates, and/or cash prizes.

Award competition cash prizes, if offered, may be of lesser value than those specified in the competitive process in **Soliciting work from professional designers** as award competitions recognise existing work.

Design exhibitions may or may not include award schemes. A design exhibition that does not include an award scheme does not require a jury to be assembled.

1. Guidelines

Receiving an invitation to judge a design award competition is an honour and a responsibility. Your work as a member of the jury, and the decisions that you make in the process, will have impact for the event Organiser, the individuals whose work you evaluate, and your colleagues who join you as jury members. Invitations should be considered with care.

1.1 Accepting an invitation

Before accepting an invitation to serve as a juror, familiarise yourself with the competition rules established by the Organiser.

ico-D's **Regulations and best practices for organising design award competitions** are a reference to establish whether a competition meets international best practices supported by ico-D's membership in 67 countries and regions around the globe.

ico-D recommends that Members not act as a jury member for, take part in or promote design award competitions that do not comply with these best practices.

Design is a diverse sector of professional practice and there are a number of approaches to structuring a jury. Assess whether you feel your professional experience is an appropriate match to the competition topic or theme.

This document outlines how accepting a role on a jury limits how your family members and current colleagues may participate in the competition.

Your agreement to serve as a jury member establishes a bond of trust between you and the Organiser, with consequences outlined in this document should that trust be broken.

1.2 Judging process

Whether you are an experienced juror or accepting your first invitation, the judging process for the competition should be clearly understood and carefully observed.

This document outlines regulations and best practices for establishing judging criteria, determining the Chair of the jury, responsibilities of individual jury members and reporting on the results of the jury's work.

Chairing a jury is usually determined by seniority or expertise or stature and may be established by the Organiser or the jury members. It is a position of honour but carries with it responsibilities, so should only be accepted if you are prepared to fulfill these additional responsibilities.

A simple and transparent judging system is recommended. Where there is a large number of submissions it may take multiple rounds of voting to establish the final winners. In these cases, it is practical to establish short list of finalists and then agree on the winners of the prizes.

As part of the jury's work, it is normal for there to be discussion and debate on the merits of the submissions. The Chair of the jury should ensure that neither the Organiser nor any outside individual exerts influence on the jury in their work.

Individual jurors should respect the opinions of their colleagues on the jury and not pressure another jury member to change their vote.

The jury Chairperson will write a report of the jury's work for the Organiser. All jury members have the right to contribute observations to the report. Where jury members have dissenting opinions about the results of the judging process, they may ask for this opinion to be recorded in the report.

2. Regulations

2.1 Regulations for jurors

Each juror will attend all official meetings of the panel, which may be face-to-face, via telecommunication or in an online environment.

If the Organiser has not nominated a Chairperson, the jury will elect a Chairperson from amongst themselves.

If the Organiser has not stipulated a decision-making process, the jury will choose a process.

Unless a Pre-Selection Committee has established whether submissions meet the rules of the competition, the jury will examine all submissions, determine whether each meets the rules and will exclude work that does not meet the rules.

The jury Chairperson will prepare a written report of the voting results.

2.2 Jury composition

The jury must include at least five people.

The majority of the jurors must be professional designers. Jurors who are not practising designers must have expertise relevant to the competition.

For an award competition to be called “international”, the jury must include members from at least two of these seven regions of the world (North America, Latin America, Europe, Africa, Western Asia, Asia, Oceania).

For an award competition to be called “regional”, the jury must include members from at least three countries of that region.

Where a competition is an annual event, no more than 45% of the jurors can serve on consecutive juries.

2.3 Conflict of interest

The name, address and firm of the designer (or design team) and the client for whom the work was created must be declared on all submissions.

No juror, nor any member of their immediate family, current design firm, or current design teams may compete in the competition.

Where a juror has a current relationship to a submission (as a member of the design firm, design team or as client commissioning the work in the preceding 12 months), they must declare this relationship and not judge the work submitted.

Failure to conform to this regulation is grounds for disqualification from a jury panel and forfeiture of any benefits extended by the Organiser.

Failure to conform to this regulation is grounds for disqualification of an entry and, if applicable, forfeiture of prize.

2.4 Time line

The names of jurors must be published in the Call for Submissions.

Jurors must be invited to participate no less than two months in advance of finalising the Call for Submissions in order to allow sufficient time for invited jurors to respond.

2.5 Changes

Where a juror is replaced after the names of the jury have been published, notice should be announced on the award competition web site and recorded in the report of the jury at the end of the event.

2.6 Independent moderator

An independent moderator (“Moderator”) must be appointed by the Organiser to act amongst the Organiser, the jury and the entrants.

The name of the Moderator must be announced at the same time as the announcement of the competition.

The Moderator is responsible for:

- receiving all submissions;
- receiving written questions within the time limit stated in the rules;
- passing the written questions received, without disclosing any names, to the jury or to a juror appointed by the jury chairperson for answering questions;
- sending all the questions and the jury’s corresponding answers to all entrants, by a date mentioned in the rules;
- opening the submissions after the deadline of the competition;
- keeping a register of all submissions;
- passing the submissions to the jury;
- ensuring all submissions are returned (unless other arrangements have been agreed upon).

The moderator may not act as a Secretary to the jury, nor take part in the jury’s work in any way.

2.7 Awards and prizes

The form and number of awards and prizes must be clearly defined in the Call for Submissions and the jury informed of all details prior to commencing their work.

2.8 Criteria for evaluating submissions

Where the Organiser has defined criteria for evaluating submissions, this must be published in the Call for Submissions and the jury informed of these details prior to commencing their work.

2.9 Establishing the Chairperson of the jury

Where the Organiser has extended an invitation to a specific individual to serve as the Chairperson of the jury, this must be clearly stated in the invitation to all jurors.

2.10 Results of the jury work

The Organiser accepts that the results of the jury are final.

2.11 Jury report

When a competition is endorsed by ico-D, the Organiser will provide a report to the Secretariat once the judging process has been completed, including the names of the jurors, the number of submissions, the names of the winners and comments by the jurors on the quality of the work submitted.

Where jury members have a dissenting opinion about the results of the judging process, they may ask for this opinion to be recorded in the report.

3. Best Practices

3.1 Jury composition

Gender balance should be a consideration when constructing juries.

3.2 Reimbursement of jurors

Where the Organiser requests the jury meet face-to-face or participate in the promotion of the event, the Organiser pay jurors' travel, provide accommodation, and cover meals and local transportation for each day the jury meets.

3.2.1 Honorarium

The Organiser may, at their discretion, offer each member of the jury an honorarium for their participation over and above reimbursement of travel and accommodation costs.

3.3 Language

Where the Organiser has invited a juror (or jurors) that are not familiar with the language of the jury's work, a translator should be provided so that each juror may participate equally.

3.4 Evaluation criteria

Where the Organiser has not defined criteria for evaluating submissions, the jury should establish and agree on these criteria prior to commencing their work.

3.5 Jury Chairperson

Where the Organiser has not specified a Chairperson of the jury, the jurors should appoint a Chair prior to beginning their work.

3.6 Changes to the form and number of prizes

3.6.1 Withholding awards

It is recommended that the jury be granted the discretion to withhold an award or prize where it is their opinion that the submissions do not meet the standard for recognition.

3.6.2 Dividing awards

It is recommended that the jury be granted the discretion to divide an award or prize (including the cash prize associated with the recognition) in the proportions that reflects the standard of work submitted.

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