

ADP Recommended Guidelines for Design Competitions

Introduction

The following guidelines provide a framework for setting up and running an open design competition.

Any design competition for professional designers should include the following elements:

- Theme
- Design Requirements and Technical Specification
- Terms and Conditions
- Judging Panel
- Independent Intermediary

1. Theme

The competition terms and conditions should clearly define and explain the subject and purpose of the competition.

2. Design Requirements and Technical Specification

The competition terms and conditions should state precisely what drawings and/or models and specifications are required. The competition brief shall be fully informative on all aspects of the competition.

3. Terms and Conditions

3.1 Eligibility

The organisers should make clear, when announcing the competition, who could enter the competition.

An open competition may be entered by any number of individual designers or design teams but may be restricted to particular categories of designers, e.g. students or designers under a specific age.

The organisers should also state that individuals directly or indirectly concerned with the competition and members or their families are excluded from competition.

3.2 Time

The organisers should give adequate time, in relation to the complexity of the subject of the competition, between publication of the terms and conditions and of the closing date of the competition. This period should normally be between three to six months.

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3.3 Anonymity

To ensure impartiality and that each design entry is judged on merit all competition entries must be submitted without any signature or distinguishable mark. The name and address of the entrants should be submitted separately in a sealed envelope which could only be opened and numbered by an independent intermediary.

Each entry should be accompanied (in a sealed envelope) by a declaration signed by the entrant or joint entrants confirming that the submitted design is the original piece of work by the entrant or joint entrants and no other person and it has not been copied from any other source or from another person's work.

The entrants must not disclose publicly that they are the authors of the designs submitted until the winning design has been announced.

3.4 Restrictions

A design should be excluded from the competition if it is received after the announced closing date or it does not respect the terms and conditions.

There are also other types of restrictions. For instance, design proposals may only be submitted in electronic format by uploading via designated website and design proposals submitted in any other way will not be accepted.

3.5 Awards and prizes

The organisers shall clearly define the number of awards and their monetary value and whether the judging panel, at its discretion, may withhold the total prize money or divide it in other proportions.

Awards should be presented and the prize money should normally be paid within two months after the announcement of the awards.

In countries where currency restrictions are enforced, it is the responsibility of the organisers to arrange for permission to remit the prize money to foreign participants.

The names of the prize-winners should be announced publicly within two months of the closing date of the competition.

The organisers should also inform all participants within two months of the closing date of the competition, whether or not they intend to arrange an exhibition or publicise designs submitted in any other way.

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3.6 Copyright and Patents

It is the responsibility of the entrant to protect his design by copyright or patent application if he should wish, before its submission to the organisers.

The payment of the prize money gives the organisers an option on the use of the image or model of the prize-winning designs for one year from the announcement of the awards. The reproduction rights are always subject to the payment of an appropriate fee or royalty to the copyright holder.

The organisers may not alter, or amend in any way, the work submitted without the written agreement of the originator. The copyright should remain the property of the originator.

One should be aware that some competitions stipulate in their terms and conditions that in the event of winning the competition, the winning designer will have to enter into an agreement with the organisers to irrevocably assign all rights in the winning design to them. This might include all types of use on any medium. If you do not agree with those terms and the fact that if you win the competition, you will no longer own the design or be able to control how it is used, then you should not enter the competition and should not submit your design.

3.7 Return and Protection

The organisers are responsible for the safety of all submissions received, and when appropriate, are advised to insure them against damage or loss in handling, until they have been returned to the entrants.

The organisers must include in their terms and conditions a statement regarding whether submissions will be returned, who pays for that and when it will happen.

3.8 Design Development

The organiser should state in the terms and conditions what is their intention regarding the development of the winning or other designs. In the case of further development, the responsible entrant shall be commissioned to develop the design to the required stage. If the organisers do not intend to develop or reproduce any of the of the winning designs, this should also be clearly stated in the terms and conditions of the competition.

If the winning designers do not have the necessary experience or facilities available for the successful design development, or are unable to undertake such work within a time required, then a consultant or design organisation may be recommended by the jury to collaborate with the winning entrant.

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4. Judging panel

The organisers should appoint a panel of five or more judges, whose names should appear in the terms and conditions of the competition. Should the names not be available at the time of announcing the competition, they should be publicised at a later date but prior to the closing date of the competition.

The majority of the members of the jury should be practicing designers selected by merit relevant to the subject of the competition.

The organisers should cover judges' travelling, accommodation and subsistence expenses.

The judges should attend all the jury meetings. They should also select a chairman among themselves and decide on their voting procedure.

The judges should examine all the design entries, determine whether they conform to the terms and conditions and exclude any which do not.

The judges should prepare a report stating their reasons for awarding the selected winners. No decision should be taken by the jury unless in full session.

4.1 Judging Criteria

The terms and conditions should clearly explain the process and criteria that will be used to select the winning designs.

5. Independent Intermediary

An independent body or a person should be appointed to act as an intermediary between the organisers, the judges and the participants. The name of the intermediary shall be announced at the same time as the announcement of the award scheme.

The intermediary should provide secretarial support to the competition and keep a register of material received, and hand over to the judges the register and material.

Open and Limited Competitions

Guidelines applicable to open competitions could equally apply to limited competitions, or competitions with invited participants, with the following additions:

- In a limited competition each participant should be paid an equal fee in accordance with the work involved.
- The names of all participating designers should be made known to all participants when they are invited to take part in a limited competition.

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BEDA recommended guidelines for design student competitions

A distinction must be made between competitions organised for professional designers and/or for design students and competitions open to pupils and students generally (e.g. children's art competitions).

The main objectives of student competitions should be educational and should add significantly to students' understanding and experience of design.

Any guidelines for student competitions should follow BEDA guidelines for professional design competitions. However, there are some points that organisers as well as students, schools or colleges should be clear about in any student competition:

- Student competitions should take into account school timetables, available facilities and student learning objectives.
- Competitions can be set up in that way so they fit in or are part of the school curriculum, though students should enter competitions entirely of their own free will.
- Student entrants will normally be expected to have obtained the prior agreement of their department to participate since the competition entry may be prepared in class as a school project. Entry forms should indicate this endorsement and supply the name of the supervising tutor.
- The extent to which members of the teaching staff may assist or participate in entries must be clearly stated in the competition terms and conditions. It must also be clearly stated if collaborative or group entries are allowed.
- The prizes for student competitions may vary according to the objectives/complexity of the competition and the status of the organiser.
- Any arrangements regarding a possible sharing of the award prize between the student and the school should be done in accordance with a prior agreement with the competition terms and conditions or understanding established between the student and the school.
- Any payment for commercial production or development of a competition entry should be comparable to a normal professional fee.

BEDA Recommended guidelines for design awards schemes

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In contrast to design competitions, design award schemes do not require the entrants to produce original designs.

The main objective of an award scheme is to recognise the merit of existing work, to raise standards of design and to promote the better and wider use of design.

Awards made through such schemes are seen as giving professional recognition and prestige and may take the form of medals, trophies, certificates and cash prizes.

Organisers should decide what form of award would best suit their scheme.

A design award scheme should follow the terms and conditions for any professional design competition with some minor though important modifications and additions.

- **Pre-selection committee**

If a design award scheme is expected to attract a large number of submissions, the organisers may set up a special pre-selection committee in addition to the judging panel. This should be applied in cases where it is deemed necessary to convene a jury meeting for more than two days.

The same rules for the appointment and conduct of the judging panel outlined in BEDA guidelines for professional competitions apply to the selection of the pre-select committee members in a design award scheme.

- **Identification of submissions**

Since existing designs may be known to the judges, the names and addresses of participants should be shown with all submissions.

- **Awards and prizes**

The organisers should clearly define the form and number of awards and prizes.

If cash prizes are included their value should be stated. It should also be stated whether the jury, at its discretion, may withhold the awards or prizes or divide the total prize money in other proportions.

- **Protection of submissions**

The organisers are responsible for the safety of all designs and other material submitted.

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- **Return of submissions**

All submissions not selected for awards or prizes should be returned, carriage paid by the organisers, to participants within two months of the closing date for submissions, or within twelve months if these are exhibited or otherwise publicised.

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