Design Effectiveness Awards

# Where you're judged against objectives

not pitched against your peers

For design work that works.

**Entry pack** 

+44 (0) 20 7251 9229 awards@dba.org.uk www.dba.org.uk

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# Introduction

Established in 1989, these are the longest running and most robust effectiveness awards for design out there.

> If you want to convincingly demonstrate and prove the effectiveness and impact of the design work you and your team produce, the unique accreditation of winning a DBA **Design Effectiveness Award** gives you the ability to do this.

Independently, expertly and robustly peer reviewed by a panel of judges who sit within a wide range of design commissioning organisations.

Our judges are design leaders working in the environments you work in and who understand the challenges associated with meeting and exceeding the brief to create meaningful change and growth.

These awards recognise your success, whatever the sector or discipline of design you work within.

Eligibility

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Entered jointly by the agency or in-house design team delivering the work, and the organisation commissioning it, these awards celebrate the partnerships that deliver value – be that commercial, societal or environmental.

Entries from across the globe are welcome.

Design work in any context is eligible.

The only requirement is that you have the measured proof that design made a clear and significant contribution to the results achieved by the work.

If you don't see the type of work you do represented in past winners, isn't it time you entered and proved that the type of work you do is undeniably effective too?

# Judging and confidentiality

# Entries are judged anonymously

Entries are judged anonymously – this isn't an award scheme weighted in favour of anything other than the evidence for effectiveness.

# Entries are judged by leading figures

Entries are judged by leading figures from design commissioning businesses – from global companies, through to start-up challenger brands, they understand how design can be used to create results.

# Entries are judged with respect

Entries are handled with respect and confidentiality is treated very seriously. Our systems, processes and methods of sharing information are set up to ensure data is protected, and NDAs and conflicts of interest checks are an important part of this. You also have the opportunity to redact confidential data at the point your winning entry is published.

# Entries are judged on their own merits

Entries are judged on their own merits rather than pitted against others. So you aren't competing against other entrants. And there are no categories. You enter your work, and it's judged on its own unique context, design solution, and results.

# Entries are judged through rigorous stages

Entries are assessed through a rigorous three-stage process. You can rest assured your entry is fully and properly considered before a judgement is made.

"Winning a DBA Design Effectiveness Award demonstrates the true value design can bring. It elevates design above simply the aesthetic or a cost and highlights the extensive value design can provide across any industry."

### Paul Edwards

Head of Advanced Design **Airbus** 

Bronze Silver Gold Grand Prix

Bronze awards go to entries that **conclusively prove** design's contribution to the commercial, societal or environmental success of the work and have **evidenced strong results**.

Silver awards are reserved for excellent examples of design effectiveness. Entries will have provided **impressive evidence** to prove the work exceeded expectations and led to **significant results**.

Gold awards go to outstanding projects that have provided **unquestionable and considerable evidence** of **exceptional results** that have created powerful business, societal or environmental impact.

The Grand Prix is chosen from amongst the Gold winners and rewards the entry that the judges feel demonstrates **the most significant and impressive evidence** of design effectiveness.

#### The effect of winning

A win provides independent, authoritative and unquestionable recognition of the <u>impact of your work in the real world</u>.

A win can help to make the case for design investment at board level, maintaining and growing budgets, and boost and motivate your team, helping to attract the brightest and best talent.

A win will powerfully demonstrate your ability to deliver competitive advantage through design, setting you apart from the masses and driving new business opportunities.

## **Dates**

<b>February – July</b> 2025	Call for entries
	Gather your data, speak to th (either with the thinking, planr and make your case.
<b>Monday 14 July</b> 2025	Deadline for entries, 5p
	Submit your entry at: <u>effective</u> The deadline is never extende
<b>October</b> 2025	Shortlist announced
	If you're in the shortlist, you a Bronze, Silver or Gold award.
<b>February</b> 2026	Winners announced
	We'll celebrate together at Th exploring and recognising the society and the world.

**Fees** 

## £0

one free entry for DBA members in 2025. If you would like to become a member of the DBA, email awards@dba.org.uk

# **£100** +VAT

early bird discount on entries paid for by 5pm BST on Monday 2 June 2025. You don't need to submit your entry by that date, just pay for it on the system.

## £595 +VAT

each additional entry from DBA members

**£1120** +VAT

ne DBA team if you would like help ning or pointers on the writing),

#### pm BST

<u>redesign.awardsplatform.com</u> led. Really, it's not.

are guaranteed to have won a l.

he Design Effect; a full day event e impact design has in business,

No refunds are given even if you don't submit a final entry, however you may defer your entry once to the following year. Free entries cannot be deferred.

The Design Business Association is a notfor-profit organisation, set up by the design industry for the design industry. Every penny that you invest in the Awards only covers the costs the DBA incurs against running them, and anything additional is invested in programmes, activities and campaigning that directly support our industry. 7

#### 8 How to enter

You can find the full rules for entry on page 16. You'll need to familiarise yourself with them before you get started - it's a 2-minute read and we promise it'll save you time in the long run.

- Entries should be up to 9 pages long, following the structure outlined below. Begin structuring and then writing your entry as early as possible to do justice to your work and make the process easier for yourself.
- Images are purely illustrative and never used as part of the judgement. Pick ones that support what you've written in your case. Only include 3-6.
- No design agency or in-house team names or margues are allowed. Client names can be included.
- All entries must be made online and submitted in the form of a PDF report, black font on white background, font size 10, portrait, written in English and A4 in size.
- We encourage you to include graphs that support the case. However don't spend studio time on extensive art working at this stage.
- To validate your results, reference your research, including audit or market data and appropriate sources.
- The project may have been launched at any time, however your entry must include some up-to-date evidence collated after 1 January 2023.
- Confidential data must be dealt with carefully - please refer to rule 5 on page 16.

#### Structuring your entry

Entries to the DBA Design Effectiveness Awards are written case studies.

#### Page 1 – Title page

Include:

- A simple and identifiable title for the work.
- Whether the version is 'Confidential not for publication' or 'For publication'.
- Client name.
- DBA Design Effectiveness Awards entry -July 2025.

#### Page 2 – Executive summary

Describe what you are submitting and summarise the achievements.

#### Page 3-5 – Context and overview

Please note: Below is an outline of the areas that should be considered in this section. Please use these areas to inform your narrative and ensure you have included information vital to making your case. The areas listed below can be explored in the order and way which makes sense to your own case and are not intended to indicate a required order.

#### Include:

#### **Description and key facts**

- The background to the project, a description of what was designed, and a description of the business / initiative / organisation the work was happening within.
- Whether this was a partnership between multiple design teams and / or business units. If so, outline the way in which partners worked together.
- Launch date. (Must be included.)
- Design fees, not including production costs. (Must be included.) If this was pro bono work, include the cost of studio hours not charged.

#### Market context and project brief

- Describe the business, societal or environmental challenge - what problem or opportunity was being addressed?
- What was the scope of the work at the outset? Did the brief evolve and was the strategy further defined as part of the design approach?
- The market context; ensure the judges understand the scale and landscape of the market or challenge, including any obstacles faced or opportunities presented, and the business, service or product's position and performance within that market.
- The internal context: provide information that helps judges to understand the environment within the commissioning business / initiative / organisation at the outset of the work and, as relevant, the previous performance of the business, service or product prior to the work.
- Clearly list the key business, societal or environmental objectives as bullet points, the more specific and measurable, the better.

#### **Design solution**

## Page 6-9 – Results and other influencing factors

Results:

# demonstrate:

- this will be.

#### **Evaluating other contributing factors**

- explain why.

# DBA Design Effectiven Entry pa

- The scope of the work that was finally delivered.

- An explanation of how the design solution addressed the business, societal or environmental challenge and led to the results claimed.

- Please note, rather than a description of aesthetic outputs in this section, it is very important you focus on: how the design solution addressed the objectives; how the creative and strategic decisions led to effective design work; and therefore how the results claimed in this case study were created by the design solution.

Please read the guidance on pages 10-15.

## In summary, your evidence must

- How the results performed against objectives and intended outcomes.

- The scale and breadth of the impact created - the more you have contextualised the internal and market context earlier in your case, the easier

- How the design solution links to the results achieved.

- Evaluate other factors, outside of the design work, that may have contributed to the results. Provide as much information to isolate the effect of these factors, so that you can clearly articulate and prove the impact of design.

Don't leave judges with doubts or unanswered questions in this section. If no other factors outside of the design work contributed to the results, clearly

#### 10 Making your entry the best it can be

Judges are looking at what is written in your case study and they cannot consider facts that aren't articulated within your case. It is your job to provide clear and comprehensive information.

#### The importance of the context and overview section

Judges understand that every design solution operates within its own unique market and business context. This is why entries to this Award are judged entirely on their own merit and not compared to other entries.

In order for judges to assess the significance and scale of impact of your work, your entry must explore and explain the business and market context within which your work exists and provide clarity around the original business, societal or environmental challenge, objectives and goals. The information you provide to them in this area is crucial for establishing the level of effectiveness and the link between your work and the results.

If your work is particularly complex, embedded in a larger-scale business environment and / or without a clearly defined start and finish point, think about how you can clearly articulate the original challenge design was tasked with, what you were aiming to achieve and how you can prove and demonstrate the impact your work has had.

Judges will be looking for clear proof of a cause and effect between the design solution and the results. It is important that you don't simply assume that design created the results - you must demonstrate proof.

When talking about the design work itself, judges are not looking for a description of the aesthetics of the design solution, but instead will want to clearly understand what was created and how the design decisions behind the solution impacted the results.

#### Writing about results

In order to assess effectiveness, judges will want to fully understand performance over time, as well as the scale of effect and breadth of impact of the solution.

#### You could consider:

- How your results stack up against the objectives? How challenging were the original objectives?
- If relevant, to what extent has the design work influenced business strategy, direction and / or decision making? In complex environments where other parts of the business drove overall change, how has your work made a meaningful and impressive contribution?
- How does performance compare to market norms or against competitive products or companies?
- Can you demonstrate an uplift over time? (We don't advise entering work with less than six months of post-launch data, unless its context means results limited to the time period immediately after launch are all that is needed to prove effectiveness.)
- If this is a re-design, how does it compare to the performance of the old design? Is there evidence that design has created a shift in performance or created meaningful change?
- Is there data collected after (and where possible, before) launch to establish a causal relationship between the design and its effectiveness?

Use of both quantitative and qualitative measures within your entry is encouraged qualitative results are often important in supporting the link between your work and the quantitative results claimed for your work.

The metrics, measurements and results you chose to use in your entry to demonstrate design effectiveness depend entirely upon what your objectives were.

Need some ideas for what metrics could be used? See page 12.

#### **Proof of effect and** other influencing factors

activity.

context.

If you think there were no other influencing factors, please state this and show the judges why other potential influencing factors did not impact the results.

Not sure what counts as an influencing factor? Check out page 14.

"Producing evidence of the impact of design builds confidence in its role and ensures a business knows where to prioritise investment."

#### **Jeremy Lindley**

**Global Design Director** Diageo

Design is rarely the only factor influencing a project's success and often design activity is intrinsically linked to other business

The aim of a DBA Design Effectiveness Awards entry is to prove beyond reasonable doubt a cause and effect between the design solution and the results. If other activity had an effect on the success of a project, you should explore, explain and evaluate the impact of that activity in order to help prove how your work created and / or contributed to the results claimed. In some cases, design will be just one part of the story, and you need to demonstrate to the judges the impact design had within that

You must tackle this area head on and ensure the judges aren't left with unanswered questions. Each entry has its own unique context and judges will need to be able to discern the extent to which your work impacted the results claimed. If you leave them with doubts, it will impact the success of your entry.

#### 12 **Suggested metrics**

The DBA has been collecting data for over 30 years on design effectiveness and we've seen that when it comes to evidencing design effectiveness, there is no hard and fast rule as to what must be covered in your entry.

Depending on the particulars of each case, results will vary to reflect the ways in which design has had an impact.

#### Some examples to start you off:

- Changes in stakeholder attitudes and behaviour.
- Improvements in **customer experience** (e.g. reduction in customer queries / complaints, increased interaction, increased customer satisfaction levels as determined by surveys / questionnaires / positive feedback / market reaction etc).
- Sustainability improvements; reductions in carbon footprint; elimination of waste; impact on transportation; impact on energy consumption; impact on viability of circular business models; improvements in welfare of suppliers; etc.
- Efficiency / cost benefits: simplification of manufacturing processes; reductions in labour time; reductions in materials and production costs (by percentage but preferably with amounts); increases in productivity / throughput; reduction of assembly / installation times; improvements in processes / systems; streamlined supply chain management; payback period.
- Improved footfall / attendance; increased capture rates / dwell times / spend. improved visitor attention / retention / return; uplift in occupancy rates.
- Rollout of design solution; uptake of model by other organisations or departments; innovative use of new technologies.
- Increased engagement of external stakeholders; tracking studies demonstrating shifts in attitude; peer approval, adopted as best practice; increased usage or response rates.
- Social impact: increased education and awareness leading to positive behavioural change.

- dba 100
- Increased engagement with internal audience, reflected in changes to frontline attitudes and behaviour (e.g. improved customer service, increased productivity, reduction in customer complaints, reductions in staff absenteeism / sickness), tracking studies demonstrating shifts in attitude: peer approval, adopted as best practice; increased usage or response rates. Specific changes to working practices or company attitude / strategy.
- New revenue streams created; new product development or extension into new categories, driven by success of design solution; payback period.
- Increased awareness / profile, positive shift in **perception** (uplift in favourability ratings / customer feedback), attraction of higher value customers / partnerships / sponsorships.
- Media impact / reach: press and social media coverage driven by design. measured by impressions, media stories, value of organic coverage equivalent to advertising value.

- share price.
- partnerships.

For further reading and information on what could be measured and how, we recommend referencing Key Marketing Metrics: The 50+ metrics every manager needs to know, by Farris, Bendle, Pfeifer and Reibstein.



Digital growth / engagement: across social media (active engagement), mobile and online (uplift in traffic / sessions, conversion rates, open rates, sign ups, downloads, session times, bounce rate, online revenue etc) versus objectives / industry benchmarks; increased usage or response rates.

- Increase in **sales** (value / volume by percentage but preferably with amounts); market distribution; market share (against competitors' products / services, or penetration of key consumer groups or geographical areas); increased conversion rates; profitability.

- Increases in perceived value / higher price point achieved / increased

Funding / investment in a business / initiative or brand (against original target); sale of business (against expected value).

 Improved recruitment and retention of target audience / staff / sponsors / partners; higher calibre of recruits /

- Job creation / retention; expansion of business or premises as a result of increased demand.

#### 14 **Influencing factors**

We've provided some suggestions of other influencing factors you could consider when compiling your entry. This list is not exhaustive, and every care should be taken to think through the unique circumstances that apply to your entry.

#### Two common influencing factors:

#### - Marcomms activity

Such as advertising / PR / direct marketing; channels used and estimated reach. Often marcomms activity is present, however explaining what level and type of activity was present and when will help the judges to understand where its impact started and ended. If there was marcomms activity on a similar scale post-launch as prior to launch, then that could be used to compare relative impact.

- Impact of collaborators and / or impact of activity across other business units Design is often a very collaborative process and can work closely alongside other business units, such as engineering, marketing or other functions in the creation of value. It is important then to articulate where the influence and impact of the design solution starts and stops and how design enabled and catalysed the overall business success. For example:
- 01. Think about where the design has led to a collaborator looking at a problem / solution in a new way.
- 02. Consider whether your design has utilised an existing technology in a revolutionary way to generate impact.
- 03. How have other business units or collaborators contributed to the success of the project?

#### Examples of other factors that, where present, you should explain and evaluate:

- Sales promotion, special offers / promotions

For instance: were prices reduced or discount offers made? Did in-store promotion drive footfall? Or did gifts with a purchase incentivise customers? Was the successful roll out of a new product down to the impact of new business and sales teams?

#### Competitor activity, market / consumer changes and trends

For instance: is the success of your work down to a general boom in the industry / market your work sits within, or because of a general shift in popularity amongst consumers? For example, an increase in ice cream sales throughout a hot summer. If using comparative data from year to year, are you comparing the same time period? Has a competitor led the way for a shift in category behaviour that has positively impacted your results?

- External association or endorsement For instance: has the credibility of a fundraising campaign been influenced by association with a reputable 3rd party? Has a brand collaboration or sponsor partnership impacted customer acquisition or perceptions?
- Product or service changes / improvements, product line changes / improvements

For instance: was a website re-design accompanied by increased product range or improved services? Was a new improved formula or flavour introduced at the same time as a redesign?

- Product / service novelty For instance: has a new app sustained its popularity beyond the natural consumer interest after launch?
- Price changes For instance: does a competitor price increase account for higher volume sales, or has the reduction in the price of a museum entry seen a spike in visitors?
- Location factors For instance: is the footfall in a new store the result of its prime location; is your data from one location or country comparable with data from another? Can the success of a service in one country be compared to its success in another, even with the natural cultural and political differences? Are efficiencies
- in manufacturing due to relocation rather than by design? Is the success of an online marketplace app due to the range and quality of the outlets on offer, rather than due to the app functionality and design?

- the results?

- facilities?

- **Major events** de France?
- COVID-19 in question?

#### Merchandise changes

For instance: did an increase in the number of Stock Keeping Units (SKUs) result in new popular items bolstering the figures? Or did the number of SKUs reduce, therefore reducing consumer choice and increasing sales elsewhere?

#### **Distribution increases or** improved distribution

For instance: did improvements or changes in the supply chain impact

Improved pay and / or conditions, employee incentives, staff training For instance: did a new staff incentive programme result in the improvements to employee engagement and productivity?

#### Other activities such as hospitality / entertainment

For instance: was high exhibition attendance due to the presence of free food or drink? Was increased web traffic down to the business being featured in an international exhibition?

#### **Programming or facility changes**

For instance: was a theatre re-design accompanied by significant line-up changes? Or a higher rate of student enrolment accompanied by improved

#### **Ownership / management changes,** strategic changes

For instance: has the purchase of a new business increased international reach and opened up new channels to the customer? Did significant staff changes, such as a new CEO / senior management team / better sales teams influence results?

#### Legislation or regulation changes

For instance: has legislation required the client company to work in a different way, influenced consumer behaviour, or even forced a competitor out of your market?

For instance: did a spike in a lager brand's sales correlate with the World Cup? Was the increase in traffic to a bicycle retailer's website down to the proximity to the Tour

For instance: did the COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent international lockdowns positively impact sales, behaviour or attitudes to the product or service

#### 16 **Rules of entering**

- 01. Entries must be submitted online by 5pm BST, 14 July 2025. After the deadline no further changes will be accepted. Late entries will not be accepted. There will be no deadline extension.
- 02. The project may have been launched at any time, however, your entry must include some up-to-date evidence, collated after 1 January 2023.
- 03. Entries must be submitted anonymously and must not identify the name of the design agency or in-house teams responsible for the design work. Throughout the entry, please refer to the design team who is making the entry as "we". Any additional parties, such as other business units or design agencies, refer to as "they" or "Business 2", "Business 3", etc. respectively. Client names can be included. If your entry is shortlisted for an award, you will be able to add identifying names and art-work before your case study is published.
- 04. All entries must be made online and submitted in the form of a PDF report, black font on white background, font size 10, portrait, written in English and A4 in size. There should be no agency identifying margues. We encourage graphs and pictures which support the case to be included. However it is not required to spend studio time on extensive art working at this stage. A maximum of 6 images can be included in your entry. Entries must adhere to the specified page limits (9 pages in total). If the entry exceeds the page limits, the additional pages will not be circulated to the judges.
- 05. If you have any confidential data in your case study, you must submit a 'Confidential – not for publication' and 'For publication' version of the entry. This wording must be included on the cover of your entry to indicate which version it is. If entries are not clearly marked the DBA is not liable if the entry is published. If only one entry version is provided, then it will be assumed that this is available for publication however it is marked. If submitting a second confidential version, the publication version must state 'REDACTED CONFIDENTIAL DATA' within the entry in place of every instance of removed information throughout the version. Alternatively, indices or percentages could be used to replace exact figures in publication versions. It is the responsibility of the entrant to ensure that no confidential data is included in your 'For publication' version and the DBA will not be held responsible for any errors. We advise keeping as much data publicly available as possible to help the clarity of your case when it is read post-publication.
- 06. If your entry is shortlisted for an award, at that point you will be asked to reformat the 'For publication' version of your PDF ready for publication on the DBA website (February 2026), and studio time can be invested in artworking at that point (October 2025). The investment of extensive studio art-working time is of course not a requirement, however at this point the page limit will increase to 12 A4 sides, image use will be unrestricted, and you will be asked to re-introduce company names / logos. These are the only changes permitted at this stage. The 'For publication' version submitted at entry must be identical to the 'Confidential - not for publication' version apart from the redacted information. No changes to copy or content will be permitted, apart from art working.

- 07. Separate to the entry PDF, entrants must supply logos for both client and agency in addition to a minimum of three and a maximum of six images of the project. These should be supplied as 72dpi.jpgs online. Once you have submitted your entry online, please supply the same images via WeTransfer to awards@dba.org.uk. These files should be high-resolution, CMYK 300 dpi, TIFF, or jpg file formats. If you include any images which feature someone else's work, you must have permission to use these images and they must be labelled accordingly. All images must be sent to awards@dba.org.uk by Friday 18 July 2025.
- 08. Each entry must be finally approved, before submission, by the entrant's principal / managing director or equivalent, and by an appropriate senior executive of the other party. The names of these individuals should be entered into the online form and included on the sign off sheet which can be found at the end of this pack. Once these names have been entered and the form has been signed, they have confirmed they have complied with these rules. DBA may ensure all these individuals have the necessary authority.
- 09. Entries submitted into the Awards should be honest and truthful and comply to the rules. Any entry that is found, subsequent to judging and / or the Awards announcement, to have included false or misleading information may be disqualified and / or have its Award withdrawn. By entering the Awards, entrants are confirming that the works they submit contain no personal data which would be governed 14. The organisers reserve the right by the Data Protection Act 2018. No works submitted should contain any libellous or obscene material, nor anything which infringes the intellectual property rights of others. All entry content is respected as the intellectual property of the entrants.

10. The decisions of the judging panels are final. Once the shortlist of winners has been announced in October 2025, unsuccessful entrants can apply for feedback. After the shortlisted entries are awarded Bronze, Silver or Gold at The Design Effect where the DBA **Design Effectiveness Award winners** are announced in February 2026, winners can then also apply for feedback. Feedback is free for DBA members and will be charged at £125+vat for non-members.

11. You will be notified in October 2025 if your entry has been successful or not. The level of award you have won will be announced at The Design Effect where the DBA Design Effectiveness Award winners are announced. There is absolutely no prior disclosure of this information.

12. The judges reserve the right not to accept an entry if the rules have not been strictly complied with.

13. Subject to Rule 5, by submitting written or artistic work each entrant guarantees that approval of their client has been obtained and entrants (on behalf of themselves and their clients) give the organisers (and any other third parties approved by the organiser as part of the DBA Design Effectiveness Awards scheme or PR / reporting covering them) the right to reproduce all or part of the publication version entry and supplied images at any time in the future. If for any reason they are unable to grant this right, each entrant indemnifies the organisers and the judges against all costs, claims and liabilities.

to give permission to third parties to publish the whole or any part of the publication versions only of submitted material as part of the Awards or reporting thereafter.

15. Works submitted as part of an entry will not be returned. Unsuccessful entries will be deleted from our systems after 12 months from the entry deadline. Winning entries are kept indefinitely.

16. If entries submitted for the Awards are subsequently published, the authors must acknowledge the DBA Design Effectiveness Awards.

## **Contact us**

Email awards@dba.org.uk

Phone +44 (0)20 7251 9229

Visit www.dba.org.uk

Visit effectivedesign.org.uk

"Evidencing the value of design is a critical part of our craft. We have to be comfortable finding ways to measure, monitor, assess and evaluate the impact our work is having on the world. We also need to make sure we're measuring the right things, at the right time."

**Andy Young** Former Group Director of Experience Design Lloyds Banking Group

dba Design Effectiveness Awards

# **Sign off sheet**

#### **Client details**

Full name	Address
Job Title	
Company	Postcode
Email	Telephone
	Signature*
Agency details	
Full name	Address
Job Title	
Company	Postcode
Email	Telephone
	Signature*

Job Title	
Company	Postcode
Email	Telephone
	Signature*
Agency details	
Full name	Address
Job Title	
Company	Postcode
Sompany	
Email	Telephone
	Signature*
	Signature*

\*By signing, I confirm I have read, understood and agree to abide by the rules of the DBA Design Effectiveness Awards.(Please provide contact details of additional companies and signatures on separate sheet)

You will find this form as a separate PDF on the entry website effectivedesign.awardsplatform.com Please go there to download this form, complete it and then add it to your entry by the deadline.

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