

Top tips for your entry boards

1. Designing entry boards, like designing buildings, can be done well or not so well - it shouldn't be done in a hurry!
2. Don't think you have to fill the entire board - empty space can bring focus to the design.
3. Think about the key attributes of what has been designed and make sure they are clearly conveyed in the layout.
4. Don't make all the images the same size or geometry: a compelling single image or two, then a series of smaller images tend to work better.
5. A sequence of same-scale images showing how the building has been constructed or the way the design evolved can also be effective.
6. Ask yourself what the judges need to know and ensure it is provided, for example a site plan, a ground-floor plan or if appropriate an exploded axonometric.
7. In complex designs, a section may be the best way of conveying the design approach/ response.
8. The layout should speak for itself so that the text provides useful additional information.
9. Text and any captions should appear at a readable size.
10. It should be obvious how the two boards work together, either because they are numbered, or have images (or sequences) running across.
11. You need to ensure that the two boards tell the whole story - don't use two from a set of three which really need to be seen together to make sense.
12. The boards should be in the same, i.e. both portrait or both landscape.

Presentation advice to entrants

What follows is a simple guide to the judging process for WAF and INSIDE intended to help entrants understand how it works. We also provide some simple guidance on presenting your entry in the way most likely to attract the judges.

Category judging at the Festival

- All shortlisted architects have to present their designs in ten-minute slots at the Festival, followed by questions and answers.
- Three-person judging panels decide the category winners, and may also make high commendations if they choose – where it has been really tough to make a final decision.
- We try to ensure that panels have appropriate experience to judge their category; for example we use category winners from the previous year, magazine editors with extensive experience, and high-quality designers capable of responding to excellent design well presented.
- Judges are obliged to pick a winner in each category.
- Judges are not entitled to question eligibility or category choice, and must refer to the organizers in the event of any query.
- Each panel has a chair, who is responsible for completing a form in respect of the winner and any highly commended entry. This states briefly what the judges particularly admired in respect of their choice, and provides the comments that are used on the WAF/INSIDE website, and in press releases.
- Judges do not 'score' presentations and are not asked to provide formal feedback in respect of individual presentations, not least because they may have viewed up to 16 presentations and are required to make reasonably prompt decisions on what they liked best and why

Presentation tips

- Ensure you have rehearsed your presentation in advance.
- Don't spend too much time setting the scene – make sure you allow sufficient time to present what it is you have designed.
- Stick to time – judges are under instruction to be very strict and are likely to cut you off after ten minutes. This is to ensure fairness to all entrants, not because they are being difficult.
- Don't assume that if you did not win the judges did not like what you designed – they almost certainly simply found more to admire in another entry.
- Try to answer questions succinctly – the more questions you answer during your session the better it is likely to be.

Super-jury presentations

- Super-juries are generally bigger than category juries, comprising four or five jurors, including a chair.
- By definition there will not be specialists covering the range of specialist buildings that have reached the 'finals'.
- However, for this judging stage the requirement is not simply to be a good example of a building that functions well, but outstanding in one or more respects.
- Overall award winners should be examples of architecture that is not simply good of its type, but is good by any standard. At its best, it could be architecture that either makes you think differently about a building type, or that makes you think differently about architecture as a whole, or is simply a superb example of a particular building type in its context.
- Super-juries are particularly interested in why design decisions have been made, since they can assume a level of quality in respect of detail and delivery. In a sense it is the quality of architectural thought that is being assessed.
- Again there is no 'tick-box' marking; the judges make their own notes and confer. The chair reports the positive factors in the winning design that made it successful, and these comments are used in media publicity for the award.

Advice on super-jury presentations

- You have already won your category so don't be too nervous!
- Focus on the architectural intention and thinking behind your project, not just how you met functional requirements.
- You might cite architectural precedents.
- Don't forget to mention any particular challenges you may have overcome in the achievement of your design.
- The input of other designers or the client is worth mentioning where relevant (i.e. successful collaboration).
- Any information about outcomes is useful (obviously unlikely to be relevant to future projects).
- How the project fits into its context, and how it addresses environmental and energy issues are well worth mentioning.