

AGA KHAN AWARD FOR ARCHITECTURE
NOMINATIONS - 2025 CYCLE
FAQs

Below are questions received in the past by the Award secretariat:

1. GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATIONS AND PROJECT TYPOLOGIES

Q. Can nominators nominate any building or project inside and outside of their national boundary? For example, if I am from Singapore, am I allowed to nominate a building located in China so long as it fulfils the criteria set by the Award and that the country has a sizable Muslim community?

A. *Nominators can nominate any project anywhere in the world that fulfils the eligibility criteria and timeline. The size of the Muslim community in the country in which the project is located is not a condition of eligibility, but the Award requires that the architecture or infrastructure demonstrate service to Muslims. For projects located in countries where Muslims are a minority, nominators can indicate on their statement the reason they consider the project eligible. In any doubt, nominators can highlight the issue and the Award office will consult experts in the field before including the project in the nominated project list.*

Q. I have been a nominator in the past, but there has been little of interest in my country in the past decade in terms of new buildings to nominate. Do you have any suggestions?

A. *Many nominators are rather selective in suggesting project nominations, often looking for large public buildings; therefore, some types of buildings are under-represented such as factories, modest public spaces including small parks and urban landscaping, and medium-size housing schemes which form the majority of the cities' building stock etc. As a nominator, we value your deep understanding of the cities and landscapes of your country of expertise or residence. We suggest you look at some recent architectural work that has had a positive impact on the environment and improved the life of citizens.*

Q. The Award is an architectural award, but in the past, we have seen premiated projects that might not be classified as architecture but can be considered as belonging to the fields of urbanism or landscape design. Should we include landscape and urban projects in the nominations? If so, what are the limits of scale that we should apply when considering projects for nomination?

A. *The Award considers architecture as a wide field and as a holistic discipline that embraces all types of projects that affect today's built environments, ranging from modest small-scale interventions to major complexes, urban or regional design, and which may include initiatives for housing, community and neighbourhood projects, as well as those that focus on urban areas and issues. Projects may also address infrastructure, transportation, and industry.*

Q. Some of the more interesting public spaces today have a unique multi-dimensional nature and are a combination of both digital and physical spaces. These can be educational, recreational, business and networking spaces and are generally small to medium public gathering spaces within buildings with a digital display and network infrastructure that projects contemporary art and culture. My question is: does this type of space seem appropriate and eligible for this Award cycle?

A. *Any spaces, especially public spaces, that enhance the quality of urban life are relevant. It is very important that these contemporary spaces - urban or public/semi-private - which play an important role in keeping a society vibrant are brought to the attention of the Master Jury.*

2. TIMELINE FOR ELIGIBILITY

Q. I am thinking of nominating a new building that opened in September 2018, and I would like to know whether it is eligible for the current 2025 cycle.

A. *The project is indeed eligible as all projects completed between 1st January 2018 and 31st December 2023 can be considered for the 2025 Award cycle.*

Q. I would like to nominate a project that is still under design, with the design and engineering package completed at 90% and construction expected to begin in 2025. However, it appears that it is not ready for a nomination until the next Award cycle as it does not fit the criteria of being in operation for at least a year. Could you please confirm that it is necessary to wait for the project to be built before nominating it?

A. *This project is **not** eligible. Only projects completed and in use before 31st December 2023 are eligible for the 2025 Award cycle. This deadline allows us to conduct an on-site review and to evaluate the functionality and performance of the project before it is submitted to the Master Jury and assures us that the building will have been in operation for at least one year before the beginning of the selection procedures at the start of 2025.*

Q. I submitted a project for the 2019 Award cycle. Does this mean that the project automatically re-enters the coming cycle 2025?

A. ***No**, the project does **not** automatically re-enter the next cycle. If you wish the project to be considered for this cycle, you should simply inform us, but you do not need to submit any further documents.*

Q. I would like to nominate a project for the Aga Khan Award for Architecture and need to know the deadline for submitting the project?

A. *The deadline for the submission of projects is **30th October 2024**.*

Q. I would like to enquire about the deadline for submitting all the documents for a project nomination (i.e. drawings, research papers, models, images, etc)

A. *As a nominator, you need only to provide us with the name of the project, its location, its author and a contact email, as well as a brief paragraph explaining why **you** think the project is important. The Award office will then contact the author/architect of the project for visual documentation. Therefore, it is not necessary for the nominator to send any documents that will be requested from the architect. However, if you have any extra visual documents or texts that you think will help to communicate the importance of the project, please send them to us before **30th November 2024**, which is the final deadline for the documentation phase. (Please note: this is not the same deadline as for the nomination phase).*

Q. Is it a requirement that nominated projects have to be built and constructed, or are conceptual projects that have completed the research and design phase acceptable?

A. *Projects that can be considered for nomination must have been constructed and already be in use. Therefore, conceptual projects or projects in the process of construction are **not** eligible.*

Q. I want to nominate a large-scale housing project but to date only one building has been completed and the rest of the project is being built very slowly. Can I nominate it?

A. *Large and/or long-term projects that are not yet fully completed – such as urban design area conservation, and community upgrading schemes, among others – are also eligible so long as a tangible portion has been completed and demonstrate the potential success of the long-term project.*

Q. How many projects do I need to nominate?

A. *There is no minimum or maximum number of projects. You are free to nominate as many as you wish as long as you consider them of significance and quality for the Master Jury to review.*

3. NOMINATOR STATUS – CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Q. Before I accept the responsibility to be a nominator I would like to know if it will exclude my own work being selected for the Award and if I can nominate my own projects?

A. *Nominators can nominate their own projects and as the identity of the nominator is not revealed to the Jury it will **not** have any impact on them **nor** will it break the Award regulations.*

Q. Can the authors (architects) submit their own projects or do the projects have to be nominated by a third party?

A. *Architects, project authors, and clients can submit their own projects.*

Q. An architecture and art magazine recently published information on the Aga Khan Award for Architecture, stating that this time around architects (or anyone) could send nominations directly to the Award's office. Two architects whose projects I was sending say that they can now send their projects to you directly. If this is the case, what is the role of the nominator?

A. *"Nomination" is a process conducted by the Award office that draws on the suggestions provided by a network of dedicated contacts called "nominators", who include architects, professionals, scholars, and others, all of whom familiar with current architectural developments in Muslim societies. **Only** the projects received from a **nominator** are presented to the Master Jury; other submissions are **not**.*

*In parallel, the Award encourages and accepts recommendations for projects to be considered from all possible sources through a programme called "Identification". All interested persons can submit projects to the Award office by completing a simple Identification Form which is available on the website or by contacting the office directly (akaa@akdn.org). Projects received through the identification programme are systematically sent to the Award nominators for their approval. Only projects **endorsed** by nominators will be included in the nomination list.*

4. GENERAL QUESTIONS ABOUT THE PROCEDURE

Q. When is an architect or author informed whether his/her project has been selected or not?

A. *Once a nominator has submitted a nomination, the author or architect is contacted for the project documentation to be submitted to the Master Jury.*

Q. In the process of nominating a building or space for an Award, can I inform the architect/designer that his/her building is being considered for nomination for the Aga Khan Award for Architecture? Or is the architect/designer told only after the building has been successfully nominated for consideration by the Master Jury?

A. *A nominator can certainly inform the architect that his/her project is being nominated, however, we request that the architects and the nominators do **not** make a public announcement of it.*

- Q. Are nominators paid an honorarium for their services?
- A. *Nominators work on a voluntarily basis and are **not** remunerated.*
- Q. In nominating the building, is it compulsory for the nominator to have visited the building physically?
- A. *Visiting a nominated project is **not** compulsory and nominators can submit projects that they have not physically experienced. The important issue is that the nominator sees merit in the project he or she nominates.*
- Q. I wish to nominate a project and have already contacted the architects for further information. Please advise on how I should go about doing this. Will I send the Nomination with the project's identification to you, and will the architects then send you the project documents directly?
- A. *You must simply send us the nomination by email within the deadline of 30th October 2024 providing the architect's contact details. The Award office will then contact the architect of the nominated project. The architect will receive an Award documentation package that describes the standardized presentation requirements. In addition to submitting photographs, slides and architectural drawings, architects are asked to complete a detailed questionnaire pertaining to use, cost, environmental and climatic factors, construction materials, building schedule, structural integrity, ongoing maintenance, and, more importantly, the design concepts as well as the project's significance within its context.*
- Q. How many members are there in the Master Jury?
- A. *There are **nine** members of the Master Jury who are selected by the Steering Committee.*
- Q. When does the Master Jury meet?
- A. *The first meeting of the Master Jury is in early January 2025 to select the shortlist of projects. In June 2025 they will confer again to select the winners.*
- Q. How many projects are presented to the Master Jury for consideration?
- A. *In the past cycles, approximately 350 to 400 projects have been presented to the Master Jury, who then compose a shortlist of projects (some 20 projects) which are submitted for on-site review for the final selection.*

Q. Is there a defined number of winning projects or does the number vary?

A. *The jury decides on the number of winning projects; usually five or six. In the early cycles when shortlisted projects were not made public, it ranged from seven to 15 projects.*

Q. How is the triennial prize fund divided up between the winning projects?

A. *The total sum is divided equally between the winning projects. The Master Jury then decides how the prize is divided amongst the different partners of each project, which can include the architects, engineers, project managers, NGOs etc.*

Q. Can the author of an Award-winning project of a previous cycle submit a project for the current cycle?

A. Yes. *Winning an Award does not exclude an author from re-submitting further projects.*