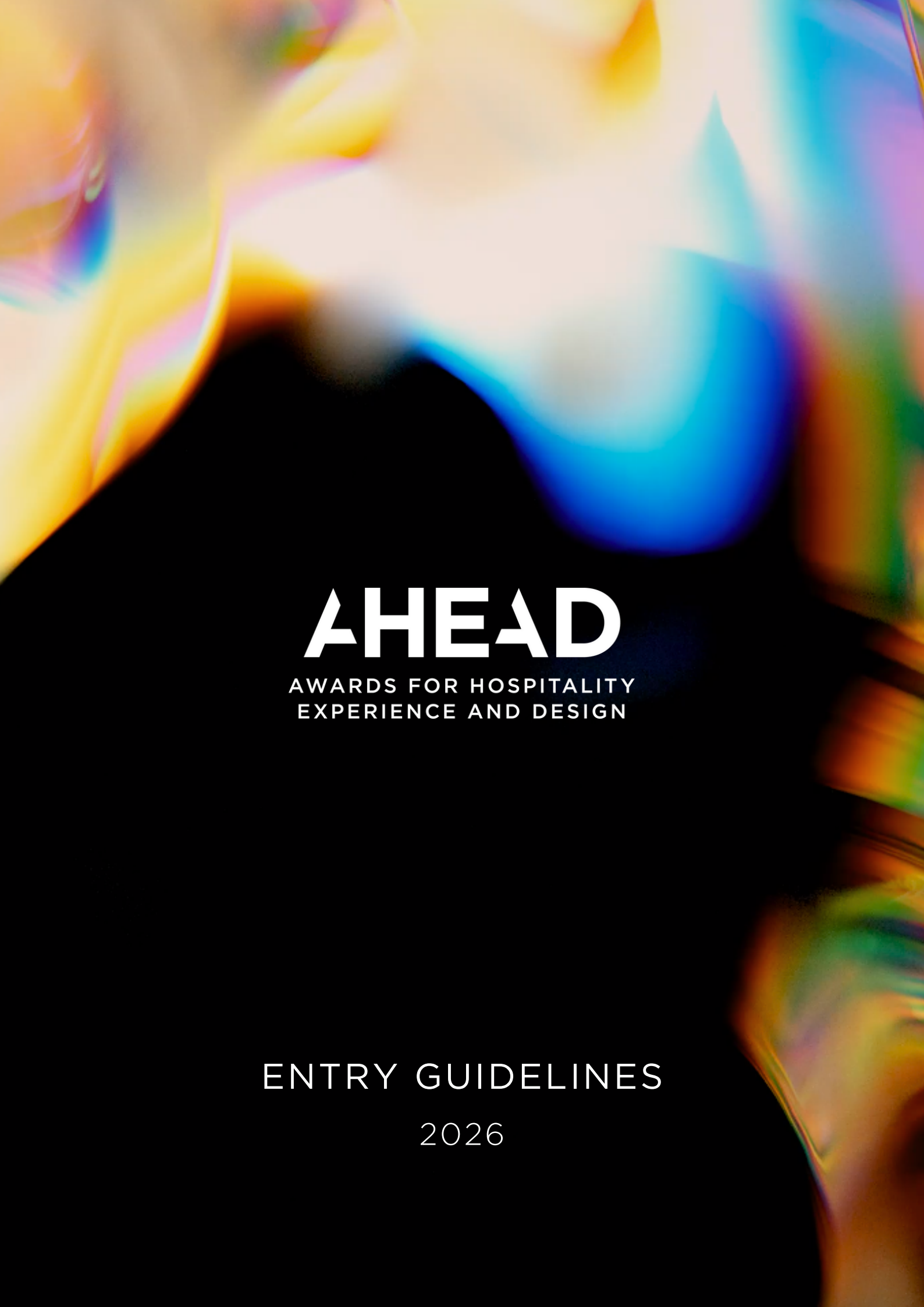




# AHEAD

AWARDS FOR HOSPITALITY  
EXPERIENCE AND DESIGN

ENTRY GUIDELINES

2026



# ABOUT

AHEAD is the only global awards programme for hospitality experience and design, hosting annual ceremonies in Singapore, New York, Dubai and London to celebrate the best new projects and the teams behind them.

Organised by industry-leading publication Sleeper and judged by 60+ leading figures from the hospitality design world, AHEAD is now in its eighth year and has become a touchstone of design excellence across the globe, with over 2,000 annual attendees.

# ENTRY FAQs

## How does AHEAD work?

The series is divided into four regions – [Asia](#), the [Americas](#), the Middle East & Africa ([MEA](#)), and [Europe](#) – with projects entered according to their location.

## What projects are eligible to enter?

Hotels and resorts can enter providing that they opened within the eligible dates (see page 3). Alternative accommodations such as lodges, cabins and tented camps are also welcome to enter, as are hotel sub-projects such as bars and restaurants.

## Who can enter?

We accept entries from a variety of companies, from architects and interior designers to PR representatives and hotel marketing managers. However, we encourage all entrants to work together across project teams to ensure accuracy and quality of submissions.

## How can I enter?

Entries open on **15 January**. To enter, [register for an account](#) on our online entry platform. You can then start your entry, save your progress and come back to submit (see page 5) before your regional deadline (see page 3).

## How much is the entry fee?

Entry fees apply per category and are tiered, so the sooner you enter, the cheaper:

- **Early fees** (£250) apply until Friday 27 February, offering a 20% saving.
- **Standard fees** (£300) then apply, with deadlines dependent on project region.
- **Late fees** (£375) come into force for two weeks following standard entry deadlines.

# KEY DATES

Entries for AHEAD's 2026 series open and tickets go on sale on **15 January**.

Entry deadlines vary by region and are as follows:

## ELIGIBILITY

## PROJECT REGION

## ENTRY DEADLINES

17:00 (UK TIME)

| Opening dates       |
|---------------------|
| Jan 2025 - May 2026 |



| Early      | Standard   | Late      |
|------------|------------|-----------|
| Fri 27 Feb | Fri 24 Apr | Fri 8 May |

| Opening dates       |
|---------------------|
| Jan 2025 - May 2026 |



| Early      | Standard   | Late      |
|------------|------------|-----------|
| Fri 27 Feb | Fri 24 Apr | Fri 8 May |

| Opening dates       |
|---------------------|
| Jan 2025 - Jun 2026 |



| Early      | Standard   | Late      |
|------------|------------|-----------|
| Fri 27 Feb | Fri 19 Jun | Fri 3 Jul |

| Opening dates       |
|---------------------|
| Jan 2025 - Aug 2026 |



| Early      | Standard    | Late       |
|------------|-------------|------------|
| Fri 27 Feb | Fri 31 July | Fri 14 Aug |

# CATEGORIES

## **BAR, CLUB OR LOUNGE**

A hotel bar, club or lounge.

## **HOTEL CONVERSION**

A conversion of an **existing non-hotel building** into a hotel.

## **HOTEL RENOVATION**

A restoration, extension, refurbishment or restructuring of an existing hotel.

## **LODGES, CABINS & TENTED CAMPS**

A single/collection of lodges, cabins or tented camps.

## **SUSTAINABILITY**

A hotel project that has demonstrably followed principles of sustainability throughout both its development and delivery.

## **EVENT SPACES**

A multi-purpose space or series of spaces in a hotel created for staging temporary events, including; ballrooms, conference areas and meeting rooms.

## **LANDSCAPING & OUTDOOR SPACES**

The landscape architecture and/or design of external areas of a hotel.

## **RESORT**

A self-contained resort hotel.

## **SPA & WELLNESS**

A spa and/or wellness facilities within or associated to a hotel.

## **GUESTROOMS**

Hotel bedrooms and en-suite bathrooms (not suites).

## **HOTEL NEWBUILD**

A complete new development of a hotel.

## **LOBBY**

A hotel lobby, reception, foyer and/or public areas (multi-functional areas with no specific purpose).

## **RESTAURANT**

A hotel restaurant.

## **SUITE**

A hotel suite comprising: a bedroom(s); living room area(s); and bathroom(s).

# SPECIAL AWARDS

## **NEW CONCEPT**

A new hospitality concept or brand that delivers both outstanding design and guest experience.

## **OUTSTANDING CONTRIBUTION**

Recognising the outstanding contribution of an individual or collective to the hospitality industry.

## **BRANDED RESIDENCES**

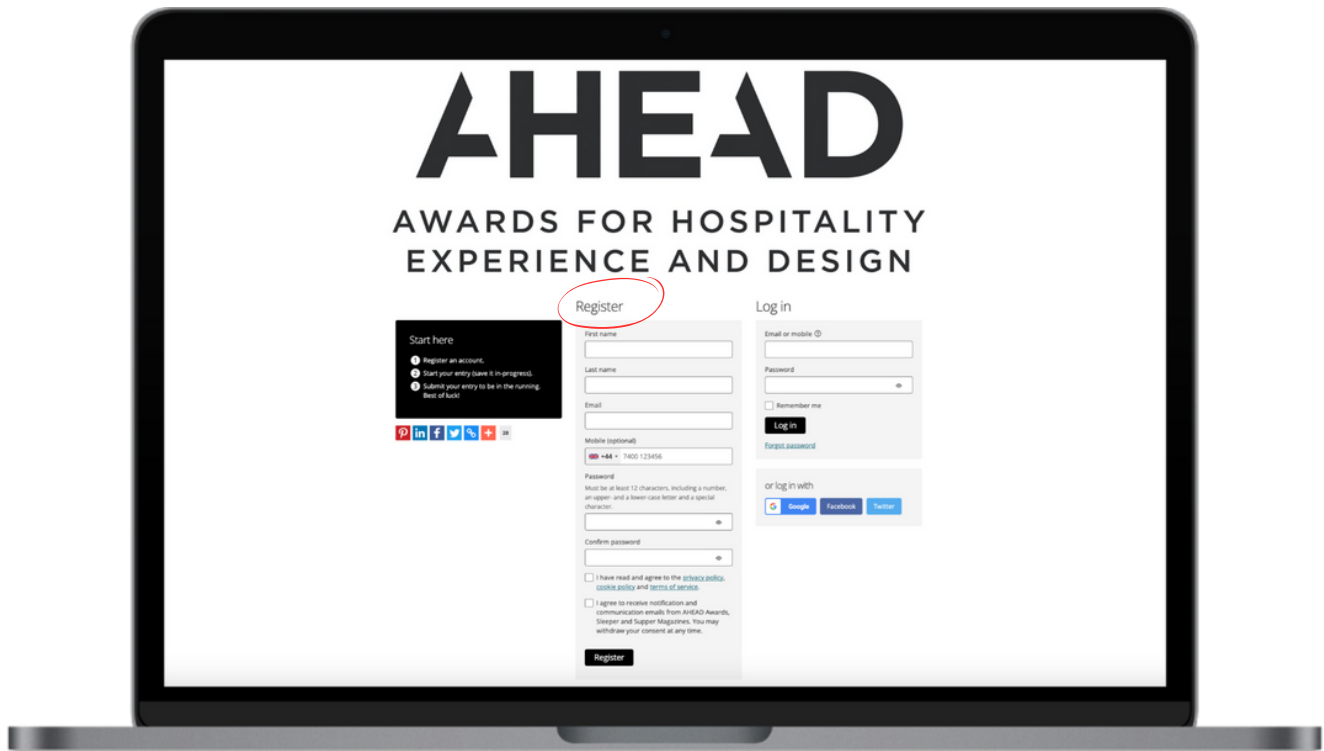
Residential accommodation developed in association with a hospitality brand, translating the hotel experience into a private living context.

## **HOTEL OF THE YEAR**

The entry that best combines architecture and design to deliver an outstanding guest experience.

# ENTRY INSTRUCTIONS

1) Visit [ahead.awardsplatform.com](http://ahead.awardsplatform.com) and login or register an account.



2) Click **Start Entry** to begin.

3) Fill in the Details page and click **Save + Next**. This will save your progress so you can come back and complete your entry at your convenience.

4) Each entry requires the following:

- Entrant details (name, company, email)
- Project details (location, opening date, developer/investor, operator, architect, interior designer)
- A 250-word project overview
- A 500-word category-specific summary
- 6 project images (high-resolution, landscape)
- A 60-90second video OR narrated slideshow of the project

5) Once you reach the Confirmation page, check you've provided the necessary information and read the [terms and conditions](#) before clicking **Submit Entry**. You will then be redirected to our secure payment portal. Please note, your entry will only be submitted once payment has processed.

# NEXT STEPS

## JUDGING & SHORTLISTING

Once entries close, each regional judging panel votes for its shortlist, consisting of four to five projects per category (excluding Special Awards). If your entry is shortlisted, you will be contacted. Each panel then convenes for a final judging session to whittle down a winner in each category and determine the Special Awards recipients.

## AWARDS CEREMONIES

The winners will be announced at regional awards ceremonies, for which each shortlisted project (not each entry) will be offered one complimentary ticket, with the option to purchase additional tickets.

**AHEAD ASIA 2026 | PAN PACIFIC ORCHARD, SINGAPORE | FRIDAY 11 SEPTEMBER**  
**AHEAD AMERICAS 2026 | GOTHAM HALL, NEW YORK | THURSDAY 15 OCTOBER**  
**AHEAD MEA 2026 | BLUEWATERS FORUM, DUBAI | MONDAY 2 NOVEMBER**  
**AHEAD EUROPE 2026 | MAGAZINE, LONDON | THURSDAY 26 NOVEMBER**

Tickets go on sale **15 January**.

## AHEAD GLOBAL

The series concludes with a Global finale to decide the best of the best – the AHEAD 100 list is unveiled, comprising the projects that received the most votes from the judges, before the Top 10 and the winner of the coveted Ultimate Accolade are announced, drawing the series to a close.

# CONTACT

## ENTRY ENQUIRIES

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## SOCIALS

