

Henry van de Velde Awards

27

Regulations

The Henry van de Velde Awards are the most prestigious design prizes in Belgium. These prizes put Flemish designers and companies in the spotlight and generate press attention and great national — as well as international — interest. The prizes are not only an important recognition, but also represent a career boost for designers and companies that should not be underestimated.

1. Organisation

The Henry van de Velde Awards are organised by Flanders District of Creativity, a non-profit organisation.

2. Mission

The Henry van de Velde Awards honour Flemish products, services, research projects and systems that, through the smart deployment of design, have a positive impact on society, the environment and the Flemish economy. They demonstrate the impact of innovation through design in Flanders.

Through the website, the award ceremony, the publication, videos and talks, the Henry van de Velde Awards aim to be a platform for high-quality, inspiring and meaningful design from Flanders. In order to give the entire Flemish design sector the opportunity to enter and be considered for an award, participation is deliberately kept free of charge.

3. Different types of awards

The Henry van de Velde Awards consist of several types of awards:

- The Gold, Silver or Bronze awards within the Category Awards, for which a project can be submitted.
- The Public Award, which is presented from among all winning projects within the Category Awards.
- The Jury Awards, for which one cannot submit an entry but can only be considered through a nomination.

3.1. Category Awards

For the Category Awards listed below, one can apply by submitting a file — for a specific project. Which types of projects are eligible for which category is further explained in the category description. One project can be submitted in a maximum of 2 categories, but a project can only win one prize — with the exception of the Public Award by Nationale Loterij.

Per category, the jury designates a selection of three winners: one Gold, one Silver and one Bronze award. As an exception, the jury may, in one or more categories, also award an honourable mention in addition to the three winners.

These are the 9 categories:

Habitat

The prize for a product or object that contributes to pleasant living or comfortable (home) working and thereby contributes to personal well-being. These may include: furniture, lighting, textiles and objects for both indoor and outdoor use and for home, office or the project market; wall coverings, tableware and other accessories.

Consumer Innovation

The prize for (semi-)industrial end products, smart (digital) solutions and services that improve and facilitate the individual daily life of private individuals in the domain of food, well-being, leisure, mobility, media, lifestyle and recreation, etc.

Business Innovation

The prize for innovative solutions — business models, products, services or digital applications — in industry, the business world, healthcare or professional environments. The solutions should provide optimisation and efficiency of administrative, production, logistics or distribution processes; better working conditions; and/or a positive impact on the environment.

Spatial Design

The prize for designs and interventions that shape a private, public or professional environment — indoors or outdoors — and improve the experience, functionality and quality of use. This category honours projects that, through design, respond to how people experience or use spaces. The focus is on spatial experience, use logic, materiality and the relationship between people, objects and environment. These may include: (re)design of work and living environments, scenography, temporary or modular installations, retail and exhibition concepts, spatial interventions (indoors & outdoors), repurposing of existing spaces, etc.

Craft Driven Design by Bokrijk

The prize for products, objects or projects in which craftsmanship plays a central role and is deployed through 'design thinking' as a driver for innovation and renewal. This category honours creations in which artisanal knowledge and techniques are reinvented, combined or translated into contemporary applications and contexts. The focus is on materiality, the making process, experimentation, aesthetic quality and/or the integration of traditional (pre-industrial) and new techniques.

Projects submitted within the Crafts Driven Design category may be contacted by our partner Bokrijk to further review their file and/or to give it additional attention.

Graphic & Brand Design

The prize in which the graphic design, visual elaboration or illustrations of a product, digital application, campaign or system are boundary-pushing and distinctive, and ensure effective and compelling communication or identity. These may include: print or digital campaigns, typography, branding and identity, packaging, editorial design, motion design, signage and infographics.

Digital & Interactive Design

The prize for digital and interactive designs that improve user experiences, enable new forms of interaction and stimulate digital innovation. This category honours products, platforms, applications or systems in which design plays a central role in user-friendliness, engagement and the connection between people and technology. The focus is on intuitive interactions, digital experience, ease of use and the integration of technology to create meaningful and functional digital experiences. These may include: websites, apps, digital platforms, interactive installations, interface design, UX/UI projects, digital tools for work or leisure, and experimental or educational interactive applications.

Service Design

The prize for innovative services and user experiences that help organisations optimise processes and interactions for customers or citizens. These are solutions that respond to the real needs of users, customers and stakeholders, and that through design lead to greater ease of use, accessibility and impact. The focus is on customer-centricity, co-creation, innovative digital and physical touchpoints using design methodologies and new technology. This applies both in retail environments, public services, healthcare and well-being, mobility and transport, financial services, education, culture and leisure, work and office environments, digital platforms and ecosystems, as well as in industrial and B2B contexts.

Social & Systemic Design

The prize for designs, systems or projects that, through design, contribute to societal change, large or small. The focus is on solutions that address societal challenges (such as poverty, well-being, sustainability, polarisation, inclusion, safety, inequality, ageing, education, etc.) by intervening at the level of behaviours, policy and systems, regardless of scale. This through social innovation projects; participatory processes with citizens or communities, interventions in public space, behaviour-changing campaigns, policy design, etc.

3.2. Public Award by Nationale Loterij

The Public Award is an integral part of the category prizes. All winners from the 9 Category Awards are automatically eligible for the Public Award. The winner is determined through an online vote in which the public can cast a vote for all awarded products, services and (research) projects.

3.3. Jury Awards

The jury additionally presents specific prizes for: Lifetime Achievement, Young Talent, Company and Ecodesign by OVAM.

One cannot register for these awards oneself. The winners are designated by a professional jury, assisted by the Industry 200, 200 influential names from the design world who may each put forward a nominee for these four awards. From the compiled list, the professional jury determines the final winners. The winners are announced during the ceremony and remain under embargo until that time.

Lifetime Achievement

A design prize for a designer or design studio that has been active for at least 30 years and has had national impact on an economic, societal and/or cultural level through their design activities, and is an international player in the sector.

Young Talent

A design prize to stimulate a young talent or studio that has been active within the sector for a maximum of 10 years. The assessment focuses on the designer or studio and examines the societal relevance and quality of the entire portfolio. The laureate receives a cash prize of €10,000.

Company

A design prize for companies that strategically deploy designers, design methodologies and visual design for their company or institution. This rewards good clientship in relation to design. Important criteria are the degree of professionalism, strategy, sustainability and innovation.

Ecodesign by OVAM

A design prize for a company, organisation or designer that serves as a role model for other designers. This laureate convinces the jury through a well-considered choice for the principles of eco-design as a common thread throughout the entire company culture and strategy and/or throughout the designed products and services. Important criteria are the impact, potential growth, the vision and the continuity within the sustainability theme.

4. Everything you need to know about the Category Awards

4.1. Eligibility conditions

Registration is free and takes place online via the registration form on henryvandevelde.be, fully completed and within the deadline as stated on the website. Both the design studio and the commissioner or client can submit an entry. The competition is open to projects that register for the Category Awards and meet the rules described below:

- The entry has a clear Flemish connection. Either because the designer was born in Flanders, or through the commissioner, the design studio or the client.
- The project in its current form was launched on the market between 28 May 2025 and 24 May 2026. A prototype or a product offered via pre-order is not eligible.
- The submission file is complete. The submitter can return to their file at any time up to and including the submission deadline to complete it.

4.2. Jury members

The members of the jury are recognised authorities within the sector and professionally active, each with their own expertise. The jury is always composed of a diverse mix of designers, lecturers, curators, design critics, journalists, promoters, etc.

4.3. Jury criteria

The jury assesses each project according to the overarching Henry van de Velde Awards design principles:

- The entry is innovative, renewing, surprising.
- Design (methodology) has clearly played a role in the entry.
- The impact of the entry on the environment must be as low/as positive as possible.
- The entry possesses sufficient relevance. There is a demonstrable positive impact of the entry on the economic and/or societal objective.

In addition, each category has its own assessment criteria according to the following themes: user/person, design quality, innovation and impact. In your submission, try to address as many as possible of the different aspects that the jury will be looking at, as mentioned above.

The jury reserves the right to eliminate designs that show a clear resemblance to existing designs from the competition. Moving a project from one category to another can also be done by the jury. Finally, it is possible that no awards or fewer than three awards within a category will be presented, depending on the number of entries and their quality relative to the assessment criteria.

4.4. Participation procedure

First jury round

Participants will be informed of the jury's decision after a first selection round. The selected entries proceed to the second jury round.

Second jury round

During the second jury round, the projects are thoroughly examined and tested by the jury members during a physical expo. The submitter must make the product, project, object, etc. available for this expo.

- Physical expo submission

The submitter is themselves responsible for the transport and making available the entry to the designated location on the dates stated on the website. The submitter provides all requested information and is responsible for its accuracy. The organisation has no duty to investigate. By participating, the submitter automatically agrees to these conditions. If the entry does not meet these requirements, the organisation is entitled to exclude the entry from participation.

Products that, for example due to their exceptional size, cannot possibly be delivered for the second selection round, will be presented in another way. This also applies to intangible projects. Entries that are not delivered or are delivered too late, or for which nothing is arranged by the submitter at the location of the second selection round, cannot be assessed by the jury and will consequently be disqualified.

After the conclusion of the second selection round, the products must be collected again by the submitter on the indicated dates.

- Transport and expo insurance

Upon delivery to the location of the second selection round, the product is inspected by the organiser (possibly together with the designer or company). Any damage is recorded. The organisation is not liable for damage to the product arising from hidden defects and construction errors. The submitted design is insured by the organisation for the period between delivery and collection. When the participant has not collected the product by the final collection date, the right to subsequently claim damages against the insurance of the Henry van de Velde Awards lapses.

The winning entries are designated by a majority of votes. The organisation oversees an objective assessment procedure. The decisions of the jury are binding. No correspondence will be entered into regarding the results. No feedback can be given to entries that were not selected. The jury members commit to full discretion regarding the selection.

4.5. For the winners

Video

A video will also be made of each winning project. This video will be recorded in autumn 2026. The submitter chosen as winner consents to this and cooperates in the preparations for it.

Publication and communication

Once the entry has been chosen as a winner, the submitter agrees that the organisation may freely use the supplied visual material and the data about the project for publication and communication within the context of the Henry van de Velde Awards and Flanders District of Creativity. The submitter indemnifies the organisation against any claims by third parties regarding the publication of the submitted material.

Personal notification of win

The win is under embargo until the online announcement of the winners.

Public Award voting round

Once the winners have been announced online, the public voting round begins. The public can then vote for the Henry van de Velde Public Award by Nationale Loterij.

Award ceremony

All designers and commissioners of the nominated entries are invited to the festive award ceremony.

During the official ceremony, the Henry van de Velde Gold, Silver and Bronze Awards will be announced for the Category Awards. The Jury Awards and the Public Award will also be presented.

The Gold Award Winners receive the trophy and their certificate on the podium during the official ceremony. The Silver and Bronze Award winners receive their certificate after the conclusion of the ceremony at the award event.

Talks

Once the entry has been chosen as a winner, the submitter agrees that the organisation will organise a Talk at which the winner presents their project during a keynote. These talks will take place in spring 2027.

5. Communication campaign

After the conclusion of the ceremony, winners may use the Henry van de Velde 27 Award Winner logo in their communication about their entry. In addition, the winners will be mentioned in the communication campaign of the Henry van de Velde Awards 27 and Flanders District of Creativity, which includes the website, social media campaign, newsletters and a (inter)national PR campaign.

6. Liability

Participants in the Henry van de Velde Awards 27 declare that their participating project does not infringe upon any rights of third parties: copyright, design rights, trademark or model rights or other rights. The design complies, where applicable, with the statutory safety regulations. Neither Flanders District of Creativity nor the members of the jury accept any liability in this regard. The participant indemnifies the organisation and the jury against claims by third parties in this matter. The organisation reserves the right to exclude entries that do not fall within the conditions as set out in these regulations, both before, during and after the judging.

For more information, contact Flanders District of Creativity via info@henryvandevelde.be.