

2025 ULI AMERICAS AWARDS FOR EXCELLENCE

SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

Americas website: www.uli.org/aae

Contents

Introduction.....	3
Benefits and Recognition	4
Schedule.....	4
Submission Fees.....	5
Fee Payment.....	5
Credit Card.....	5
Check	6
Bank Transfer	6
Categories and Eligibility.....	7
Categories	7
Sub-Categories.....	7
Eligibility – All submissions	7
Eligibility – Urban Open Spaces	8
Product Type.....	8
Criteria	9
Market Acceptance and Financials	9
Confidentiality	10
Category-Specific Criteria.....	10
Equitable Development Criteria.....	10
Low-Carbon Development Criteria.....	10
Resilient Development Criteria.....	10
Small-Scale Development.....	10

Urban Open Space Criteria	10
Images	10
Authorization.....	11
Submission Process.....	12
The Jury Process	12
First Round – Finalist Selection	12
Jury Site Visits with Finalists	12
Second Round – Winner Selection	13

Introduction

ULI began the Awards for Excellence program in 1979 to recognize truly superior development efforts in the private, public, and nonprofit sectors. Winning projects represent the highest standards of achievement in the development industry—standards that ULI members deem worthy of attainment in their professional endeavors. Today the real estate and land use industry widely recognizes the [ULI Awards for Excellence](#) as one of its most prestigious awards programs.

The Awards for Excellence recognize the full development process of a project, not just its architecture or design—although these elements play an important role.

The Awards recognize both development projects and programs. Among projects, the Awards recognize a wide variety of product types, including office, residential, retail, industrial, hotel, mixed-use, planned community, open space, and more. Programs are initiatives, processes, or policies that guide or enhance development.

A jury of ULI members chooses finalists and winners. Members of the jury are leaders who represent a broad geographic diversity and many areas of real estate and land use expertise, including finance, planning, development, public affairs, design, and professional services, among others.

Benefits and Recognition

Americas

- **Certificate.** All finalists and winners will receive digital certificates.
- **Press.** ULI will recognize each winning project:
 - in the print edition of *Urban Land* magazine
 - on [Urban Land online](#)
 - in press releases for finalists and winners
 - on ULI websites
 - on ULI social media channels:
 - Facebook: [@ULIGlobal](#)
 - Twitter: [@UrbanLandInst](#)
 - LinkedIn: [@Urban Land Institute](#)
 - Instagram: [@urbanlandinstitute](#)
- **Meetings.** After selection of the finalists and winners, ULI will be able to determine whether to have representatives of finalist and/or winning teams present at either:
 - [ULI Spring Meeting](#), either virtually or in person in Denver, CO, May 12–14, 2025;
OR
 - [ULI Fall Meeting](#), either virtually or in person in San Francisco, CA, October 13–16, 2025.

Schedule

Americas

Submissions open	Monday, September 30, 2024
Early bird deadline	Sunday, January 26, 2025
Final deadline	Sunday, February 23, 2025
Late deadline	Sunday, March 9, 2025
Finalists Announced	Late April 2025
Jury Finalist Interviews and Site Visits	Late April/early May 2025
Winners Announced	July 2025

Submission Fees

The ULI Americas Awards for Excellence have limited philanthropic sponsorship and submission fees help ULI cover the cost of delivering the awards, including creation of case studies and content for ULI members that is based on the award-winning submissions. If you are interested in sponsorship of the awards or related events in 2025 or beyond, please email awards@uli.org.

Submission fees for the 2025 ULI Americas Awards for Excellence are:

- **Early Bird Deadline – January 26, 2025 – 11:59 PM PT**
 - Public Sector/Non-Profit \$400 (\$100 discount)
 - Private Sector \$700 (\$200 discount)
- **Deadline – February 23, 2025 – 11:59 PM PT**
 - Public Sector/Non-Profit \$500
 - Private Sector \$900
- **Late Deadline – March 9, 2025 – 11:59 PM PT**
 - Public Sector/Non-Profit \$600 (\$100 fee)
 - Private Sector \$1,100 (\$300 fee)

NOTES:

1. The above fees apply to the type of company or organization submitting the application, not to the type of project.
2. We have a limited number of full or partial fee waivers for Public Sector/Non-Profit organizations, where the fee is a barrier to entry. Please contact awards@uli.org to request a waiver and we will determine eligibility on a case-by-case basis. We are particularly interested in granting waivers to encourage submissions to the Equitable Development, Resilient Development, and Small-Scale Development sub-categories.
- 3.

Fee Payment

Credit Card

ULI prefers payment by credit card, and accepts Visa, MasterCard, Discover, and American Express. The online submission form will take you through a secure process where you can complete payment, submit the form, and receive an automatic receipt.

Check

Upon checkout, select Pay by Check or Bank Transfer. You will be able to complete your submission form and will receive an invoice with the following instructions upon checkout. **ULI must receive payment no later than March 9, 2025, or the jury will not review your submission.**

Remit Payment to: Urban Land Institute, 2001 L Street, NW, Suite 200, Washington, DC 20036

You MUST include the following information on the check to receive credit for payment:

- **Reference:** Other (AAE2025 – 127-370010)
- **Project Name:** [Name of project submitted (e.g., “Best Building”)]
- **Name:** [First and last name of person who submitted the award]
- **ULI contact :** Mei Li Liss awards@uli.org

Example: AAE2025 – 127-370010, Best Building, John Smith, Mei Li Liss awards@uli.org

Bank Transfer

Upon checkout, select Pay by Check or Bank Transfer. You will be able to complete your submission form and will receive an invoice with the following instructions upon checkout. **ULI must receive payment no later than March 9, 2025 or the jury will not review your submission.**

Bank Name:	Bank of America
Bank Address:	222 Broadway New York, NY 10038
Account Number:	193 304 9661
Routing Number for Wires:	026 009 593
Routing Number for ACH:	054 001 204
SWIFT:	BOFAUS6S
Credit:	Urban Land Institute

Details of payment (You MUST include the following details with your bank transfer to receive credit for payment):

- **Project Name:** [Name of project submitted (e.g., “Best Building”)]
- **Name:** [First and last name of person who submitted the award]
- **Reference:** Other (AAE2025 – 127-370010)
- **ULI contact:** Awards@uli.org – Mei Li Liss

Example: John Smith, Other (AAE2025 – 127-370010), Mei Li Liss awards@uli.org, Best Building

Categories and Eligibility

Categories

The Awards for Excellence have long recognized both development Projects and Programs. Examples of programs include – but are not limited to – growth management strategies, publicly guided development programs and policies, and other built environment initiatives.

Sub-Categories

In 2025, the awards will ask Project submitters to select one of the following six sub-categories:

1. Open – All Project Types
2. Equitable Development
3. Low-Carbon Development
4. Resilient Development
5. Small-Scale Development
6. Urban Open Space

The ULI Americas Awards for Excellence program currently is not accepting submissions for a Heritage Award.

If you are submitting a Program related to equity, resilience, or open space, please select the Program category.

Eligibility – All submissions

- You do not need to be a ULI member to submit.
- The Awards are open to projects and programs in the ULI Americas region (North, Central, and South America).
- **INELIGIBLE:** Any project or program that has previously won the ULI Global, Europe, or APAC Awards for Excellence or the ULI Urban Open Space Awards. Finalists that did not win these awards are eligible to submit.

Projects are eligible to apply if they:

- are financially viable; for public sector/nonprofit this means demonstrating a reasonable use of financial resources
- are substantially complete (however, they need not be newly constructed); and
- are in stabilized operation.

“Substantially complete” means a single-phase project must be finished, occupied, and in operation. Projects with multiple phases may submit complete phases of the project. For multiple-phase projects, at least the first phase must be finished, occupied, and in operation.

Small or less significant components of the project may be incomplete; we do not require a specific percentage, but we recommend that the project is 90% or more complete.

While you can submit projects as soon as they are complete, they are more likely to advance to the finals if they have been in operation at least a year or more. This is because more information is available to help the jury determine if the project has been successful.

Programs are eligible to apply if they:

- are financially viable, if applicable; and
- have been substantially implemented.

Eligibility – Urban Open Spaces

In addition, Urban Open Spaces must be:

1. predominantly outdoors; and
2. open and inviting to the public.

Product Type

Upon submission, submitters select whether their project qualifies as mixed-use. Mixed-use is defined as including at least three substantial uses. Submitters will then select the product type or types for their project. These types help the jury better understand the project. The jury does not compare each submission only to other submissions in the same product type. The jury does not pre-assign a number or portion of the finalists and winners to different product types.

Product Types:

- Civic/Public
- Education/University
- Healthcare/Research/Life Sciences
- Hotel/Hospitality
- Industrial/Office Park
- Leisure/Entertainment
- Office

- Open Space
- Planned Community
- Program
- Residential - Multifamily - Affordable
- Residential - Multifamily - Market Rate
- Residential - Single Family
- Retail/Restaurant
- Other

Submitters will also select whether their project includes any adaptive reuse and will be asked to indicate what percentage of the project constitutes adaptive reuse.

Criteria

The following criteria guide the jury in determining the winner(s) in all categories. All submissions should be able to respond positively to many, if not all, of the criteria. These criteria are not weighted and are not listed in any order of importance. Please include quantitative data whenever it is available. The jury will evaluate projects and programs on the extent to which they:

- achieve market acceptance/financial success;
- demonstrate leadership through a high standard of excellence in all areas—architecture, design, planning, construction, amenities, economics, and management, etc.;
- demonstrate relevance to the contemporary and future needs of the community in which they are located;
- demonstrate innovation, through techniques, processes, or partnerships;
- have a positive impact in their communities and/or immediate context (e.g., contributing to advancing equity and inclusion);
- exhibit environmental sustainability, stewardship, and resiliency; and
- provide models, lessons, strategies, or techniques that other communities can replicate or adapt.

Market Acceptance and Financials

The jury will evaluate entries on the extent to which they have achieved broad market acceptance and financial success. An understanding of the financing structure is key. Projects

and programs are likelier to advance to the finalist stage if the jury understands their financial success.

Public or nonprofit projects should demonstrate a reasonable use of financial resources and indicate how they have positively impacted the local economy.

Confidentiality

Only the jury and a limited number of ULI staff will access financial information on this form. **ULI will not publish this information unless we receive authorization in writing from relevant members of the project team.**

Category-Specific Criteria

Equitable Development Criteria

Please see the online form at www.uli.org/aae2025 or view the sample form [here](#).

Low-Carbon Development Criteria

Please see the online form at www.uli.org/aae2025 or view the sample form [here](#).

Resilient Development Criteria

Please see the online form at www.uli.org/aae2025 or view the sample form [here](#).

Small-Scale Development

Please see the online form at www.uli.org/aae2025 or view the sample form [here](#).

ULI seeks to recognize not only a large, “flagship” project that may represent significant regional or local investment, but also smaller, neighborhood-serving developments that add to local quality of life. The jury will consider any development project that is smaller than 100,000 square feet for recognition in this sub-category. You will not need to answer additional questions if you select this category.

Urban Open Space Criteria

Please see the online form at www.uli.org/aae2025 or view the sample form [here](#).

Images

Project submissions must include the following images:

- Locator map showing the project's location relative to its metropolitan area;
- Aerial photo showing the project in its immediate context;
- Measured site plan showing the landscaping and furniture elements of the space; and
- At least two images of the project.

These images must be uploaded individually with a photo caption and photographer credit as part of the submission form. Individual images, along with their captions and photographer credits, will be used for promotional purposes during the finalist and winner stages. We recommend including descriptive captions written in third person to minimize the need for further communication at the finalist or winner stage. Please see the sample form [here](#).

We strongly recommend compiling all images, captions, and credits into a contact sheet for ease of reference. Please see the example contact sheet from 2024 ULI Americas Awards for Excellence winner, Bottleworks District, [here](#).

Each submission must also include a PowerPoint of all the images included in the submission form. Please see the example PowerPoint from 2024 ULI Americas Awards for Excellence winner, Bottleworks District, [here](#) or download the template [here](#). PowerPoint presentations of the submitted images will be used during the judging process

Authorization

Each submission must include a digital authorization by a specific representative. The Authorization Contact is:

- a representative of the primary developer or owner (for a project)
- a representative of the primary program creator or implementer (for a program)
- NOT a representative of the design team

The Authorization Contact agrees to the terms below. By checking the boxes, the Submitter is acknowledging that the Authorization Contact has agreed to the terms below.

- ULI may use and reproduce the information on the application and any supporting materials provided (including images), unless noted otherwise. Please note that ULI considers any financial information not otherwise public to be proprietary to the applicant. Only the jury and a limited number of ULI staff will have access to this information.
- There are no pending or impending concerns with the program or project's financial condition, debt, equity, or public agency subsidy; or, if there are, they will be disclosed during a potential site visit.
- The Submitter has accurately described the role of all team members and has not omitted any important team members.
- The Authorization Contact has full power and authority to provide this information and to grant these rights and permissions.

Submission Process

- You may submit online at www.uli.org/aae2025.
- You can save the application at any time and return later to complete it. **ULI recommends you save the application often to avoid loss of data.**
- Once you have started an application, **you can find your submission number at:** My Applications > In progress. In the # column, your submission number takes the format 2025-###.
- After you select whether the submitting organization is Public/Nonprofit or Private, you will be able to select Add to Cart to complete payment.
- You will not be able to Add to Cart if you have not answered a required question. The form will take you back to the section(s) you need to complete.
- If you submit an error, please contact awards@uli.org; ULI may be able to reopen your submission.
- ULI will review all submissions and give you at least one opportunity to address any incomplete sections. The jury will not evaluate incomplete submissions.
- ULI will not process refunds except in cases of duplicate payment; please be sure you wish to submit before your complete payment.
- The same submitter can enter several submissions into the system.

The Jury Process

The jury consists of ULI members who represent various facets of real estate and land use expertise, including planning, development, finance, design, public affairs, and professional services. Jurors operate independently, applying the highest standards of evaluation and professional practice as outlined by ULI code of ethics.

First Round – Finalist Selection

After an extensive briefing on the criteria and requirements, each juror receives a specific number of submissions to review in advance of the first group meeting. At least two jurors will review each submission during this initial review. At the first group meeting, the full jury will review a shortlist of approximately half of the original number of submissions. During this meeting, each juror presents to the rest of the group his or her submissions for debate, evaluation, and qualification. The jury determines the finalists by the end of this first meeting, and ULI will notify finalists and non-finalists of their status shortly after this meeting.

Jury Site Visits with Finalists

In 2025, we anticipate jury members will conduct site visits of the finalist projects in person. ULI will ask finalists to make available key individuals who are responsible for the success of the

project. It is imperative that at least one person who attends this meeting is a representative of the developer or owner and can speak to the financial background of the project; a designer should not lead the meeting. The goal is to gather insight into the planning, design, development, construction, and operations of each project with a detailed understanding of financial performance, community and environmental impact, development history, design elements, and innovations. If in-person site visits are not possible, ULI will ask finalists to send additional video footage of the project to share with the jury and to present to the jury via videocall. For the video, ULI will ask finalists to provide a more thorough walk through of the site; the video does not need to be highly produced – a walkthrough using a camera phone would suffice. For the video call, ULI will ask finalists to make available the same individuals as would be present for an in-person visit. The video call will last approximately 1.5 to 2 hours.

Second Round – Winner Selection

The jury convenes in a second and final meeting where they review each finalist again and discuss what they learned during the interview process. The member of the jury who coordinated the jury interview starts the debate with a brief presentation to the rest of the group. After a long day of deliberations, the jury selects the winners of the ULI Americas Awards for Excellence, and ULI notifies winners and non-winners of their status shortly after this meeting.

Information: uli.org/aae

Submit: www.uli.org/aae2025.

Questions: Awards@uli.org