



AIA
New Hampshire



Hints for Success

AIA New Hampshire Design Awards Program

Below are some notes from a 2015 juror, Ian F. Taberner AIA, Director of Masters of Architecture Thesis, BAC, plus additional hints, which we think could be helpful in preparing your submissions.

From Ian Taberner:

As the jury reviewed the design submissions in the 2015 program, certain themes emerged from our discussions of the work, and in turn those deliberations evolved into a criteria by which the work was often considered. In summary the following three themes materialized from the work in whole. In an established order of importance they were:

1. What is the role of the architect – the presence of the architect in the work being considered.
2. How is the work situated in place – its dialogue with context, surrounding landscape, and New Hampshire weather.
 - How is the building in dialogue with site and landscape, how does the work meet the ground.
 - Craft and details and how the materials fit together – relationship to existing.
 - Scale and fit to context, existing building(s)
 - Sustainability
 - Understanding how the work relates to Critical Regionalism.
3. The making of unexpected social spaces – especially in the academic and institutional works. Understanding how a school works, the stairs as a social space / place, how a building can connect and bring people together.
4. Some suggestions for submissions presentations:
 - Jurors have a preliminary individual review of your pdf before the actual jury date, but remember that the work is reviewed and considered for recognition through computer projection on the day of the jury; often what looks better on a computer screen is not always better projected.
 - The sequence of your images is important to explain the work.
 - Include drawings / diagrams / exploded axonometric drawings to display what is old and new with renovation work and their difference.
5. If one writes about something important in the design statement – do not rely only on text – also show it in a drawing.

More hints for success from AIA New Hampshire:

1. Jurors desire to see project context – how it fits into the environment or surroundings. At least one photo should show the project's relationship to its surroundings.

2. Site plans, floor plans, elevations, and sections should be used when appropriate to help describe the project. Past juries have stated their preference for seeing the floor plan(s) and site plan(s) for the project up front, so they can have a point of reference for viewing the photographs and reading the description.
3. Quality of plans: if beautifully done jury is set up to like the project. If plans are of different style and/or not well executed it shows lack of care.
4. Think about plan orientation. Changing orientation (north/south) on different pages is disconcerting.
5. Photographs should be of good quality and communicate the project well. Professional photography is not required, but we cannot overemphasize the need for good photographs. Dark, fuzzy, unappealing images will hurt even the best project's chances of being noticed by the jury. If professional quality photographs are not available, be sure those you do submit are crisp and clear, and show all necessary aspects of the project.
6. Do your photos show something about the architecture or are they meant for a magazine spread? Award submissions are for jurors not the public.
7. Presentation is important. Organize your entry into a coherent presentation. Although compositions of drawings and images are permitted, simple layouts, and single images often prove most effective.
8. Written information should not be too small or unclear. Use direct, simple language for description. Avoid marketing language; your submission is being reviewed by peers, not your clients.
9. Note if you had to adhere to any design review board requirements.
10. Watch your grammar and proofread carefully for typos!
11. You do yourself no favors by "writing a book" about your project...the jurors should be able to understand the project in a few short sentences, which may be all the time you get with them if your project doesn't make it through the first round of evaluation. Consider expressing key points in bullet form that will quickly and clearly convey to the jury the project scope, objectives, challenges and solutions.
12. Read through all the materials provided BEFORE you get started. Use the Call for Entries as a Checklist to make sure you have included all requested information and documents.
13. Make sure your firm is not identified on any of the images or drawings.
14. Make sure that Item 1 in your supporting documents is complete and includes each item requested with the information requested. Projects without this information will be disqualified. It is not the responsibility of the AIANH office to obtain the required contact information for your contractors, subcontractors, suppliers, and consultants. We reemphasize that this information is required. Projects submitted by persons other than the Architect of Record for the project must have written approval from the Architect of Record included.