

gia[®] global
innovation
awards

home + housewares
student design excellence

The International Housewares Association presents

2027 STUDENT DESIGN COMPETITION

**Recognizing Young Industrial Design
Talent Since 1993**

Propel Your Design Career

- ▶ Meet industry executives looking for new product ideas

Win a Cash Prize

- ▶ \$12,000 in cash prizes, plus travel and lodging
- ▶ Winners' schools also receive cash grants

Once-in-a-Lifetime Experience

- ▶ Your design displayed at
The Inspired Home Show 2027

ENTRY DEADLINE:
DECEMBER 15, 2026
11:59 PM CST

Enter now at:

TheInspiredHomeShow.com/SDC

**THE
INSPIRED
HOME
SHOW**[®] | IHA's GLOBAL HOME +
HOUSEWARES MARKET

March 9-11, 2027 | Chicago, USA
TUESDAY - WEDNESDAY - THURSDAY





The Global Innovation Award (gia) Student Design Competition, sponsored by the International Housewares Association (IHA), began in 1993. It is recognized by design practitioners and professors as a valuable contribution to industrial design education. This rigorous competition is judged by design professionals and managers at housewares companies. Each entry receives two written evaluations. Top winners come to Chicago to exhibit their product concepts at The Inspired Home Show, IHA's Global Home + Housewares Market.

The Housewares Industry

Learn about products and companies in this dynamic global industry and The Inspired Home Show at

TheInspiredHomeShow.com

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RULES

WHAT IS A HOUSEWARES PRODUCT?

Housewares products are consumer goods purchased by or for the user that are portable. Permanent installations such as lighting systems, sinks/bathtubs or major appliances (washing machines, full size refrigerators) are not considered housewares.

Your project should meet a current consumer need or be a concept for a future product. Packaging and point-of-sale presentation may be included.

Contact **Jessie DesRochers** at jdesrochers@housewares.org if you are unsure that your product concept fits any of these housewares categories:

- **SMALL ELECTRIC APPLIANCES**
Food preparation, cleaning, home environment and personal care.
- **PERSONAL CARE + HOME HEALTHCARE PRODUCTS**
Self-care items for grooming, hygiene and products for general health care and maintenance of minor medical needs. Assistive devices are acceptable, but equipment for long-term care or products meant to be used by medical professionals are not eligible.
- **TABLEWARE, SERVING PRODUCTS + ACCESSORIES**
Cutlery, dinnerware, beverage ware, flatware and containers for eating "on the go."
- **COOK + BAKEWARE**
Stovetop and oven-proof ware. Cookware for travel and camping are acceptable.
- **KITCHENWARE**
Hand tools, storage containers.
- **CLEANING PRODUCTS**
Brooms, mops, brushes, sponges.
- **OUTDOOR PRODUCTS + HOME MAINTENANCE**
Barbecue grills, food and beverage coolers, picnic, patio and garden accessories, Do-It-Yourself (DIY) tools for minor home repairs and decor. Sports equipment and power tools are not eligible.
- **ORGANIZATION + STORAGE**
Shelving, racks, garment care, home office accessories.
- **FURNITURE**
Indoor, outdoor and ready-to-assemble ("RTA") tables, chairs, bookcases and home space systems.
- **DECORATIVE ACCESSORIES**
Vases, mirrors, lamps, picture frames, clocks.
- **JUVENILE + PET PRODUCTS**
- **CONNECTED HOME PRODUCTS**
Physical products with "internet of things" connectivity and user interaction.

WHO CAN ENTER?

Undergraduate and graduate industrial design students enrolled in a degree-granting program at any university in North America or other countries may enter. Spring 2026 graduates are eligible if the project was completed before graduation. A student may enter more than one project. Team projects are allowed. If a team project is selected as a winner, IHA pays for travel for one student and the team splits the cash award.

The student submitting the application represents and affirms that the entrant named is the owner and originator of the application and all source materials submitted to IHA's judges for this competition.

WHAT ARE THE PRIZES?

- Judges allocate \$12,000 in cash prizes. An additional \$3,000 is donated to the winners' schools.
- Winning projects are displayed at The Inspired Home Show, March 9-11, 2027, McCormick Place, Chicago.
- Winners receive travel, per diems and lodging for five nights (Sunday, March 7 - Thursday, March 12). IHA will cover the cost for economy-class flights up to \$1,000 round trip to and from Chicago. Winners must be available for the exhibit and media.
- **Winners will be notified by email by January 29, 2027.**
- Honorable Mentions receive a small cash award. They are not required to attend the Show. Honorable Mentions are included in media information.



HOW TO ENTER

1

VISIT WEBSITE

TheInspiredHomeShow.com/SDC

2

CREATE AN ACCOUNT

Using your account profile and password, you can create and access/edit your project until the competition deadline.

3

CREATE AN ENTRY

Answer a few questions about your product to get started. If you've created an animation or product demonstration, you can also include a link to the video.

4

UPLOAD PRODUCT JPEG

This image will identify your project for the judges.

5

UPLOAD PROCESS BOOK

(PDF size limit is 25MB)

Your name and school name **SHOULD NOT APPEAR** anywhere in the entry. This assures all entries are anonymous for the judges.

6

CONFIRMATION EMAIL

You will receive a confirmation email with your entry number in the subject line.

REQUIREMENTS

WHAT DO THE JUDGES LOOK FOR?

- Is this product innovative, necessary and valuable?
- How does this product meet competitive products on features and price?
- Did the student conduct user research to identify needs and validate the product concept through user testing?
- Does the student tell a compelling story?

Consider the Scientific Method as a guide for inquiry, research, hypothesis testing and conclusions.

WHAT DO I INCLUDE IN THE PROCESS BOOK?

The book should tell the story of your process and include:

- View of final concept.
- Sketches showing the development. Show ideas that were discarded and why you chose your solution.
- User observations and human factors evaluations.
- Market positioning/opportunity space: compare available products and explain your product's unique features.
- Mechanical or technical layout.
- Exploded views with individual parts listed.
- An image of a 3D model or prototype that shows the product in physical form and in the context of the user environment. This model should validate your concept.

HOW ARE THE ENTRIES EVALUATED?

Judges rank the product according to:

- **Design**—concept innovation, development process, aesthetic appearance, appropriate materials and production.
- **Research**—user observation, market positioning, product feasibility, concept testing.
- **Technical skills, presentation organization**—clear written and visual communication, sketches, computer renderings, compelling storytelling.

HOW DOES THE JUDGING WORK?

The jury is composed of professional designers, product development executives at IHA companies and design educators. Judges who are educators do NOT review entries from their own schools. The judges are matched into pairs and each pair evaluates a fraction of the total. The judging is blind—judges do not know the identities of the students or schools and they discuss projects by entry number. **Judging is a two-part review process.**

PART 1: Each pair reviews a batch of entries online over 4-5 weeks, writes evaluations and can revise them during the jury meeting.

PART 2: Judges discuss entries, each pair presents its top picks and the panel votes on six winners and honorable mentions. Winners' names and schools are then revealed.

After the winners have been notified, entrants will be able to view their evaluations, which will also be made available to their professors.

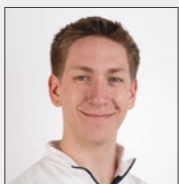
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2026 STUDENT DESIGN WINNERS



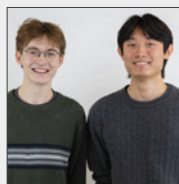
FIRST PLACE
ALEX
KADKHODAIAN
Arizona State
University



SECOND PLACE
BRANDON
ESCALONA
FH Joanneum
University of Applied
Sciences



THIRD PLACE
KYLE HAGERTY AND
KATHRYN HOANG
Georgia Institute of
Technology



THIRD PLACE
CHARLIE JOHNSON
AND MATTHEW LI
University of
Washington



THIRD PLACE
MIKE MINERVA
Rochester Institute of
Technology



THIRD PLACE
LOYAL PRACH
University of
Wisconsin-Stout

CHECKLIST

Your entry should include three items:

- ✓ The completed project questions
- ✓ One jpeg of finished product
- ✓ A PDF file of your process booklet

ANY QUESTIONS?

Contact **Jessie DesRochers** at
jdesrochers@housewares.org

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Rights of Ownership

Previous winners have been offered production agreements and have negotiated patents and intellectual property rights for their designs. A patent application may need to be filed before submitting and displaying your design to preserve your intellectual property rights in the design. IHA recommends that students seek advice from faculty, school legal counsel, the local bar (attorney) association or not-for-profit inventor groups to learn about intellectual property protection. IHA is not responsible for obtaining patent or other intellectual property protection for your designs and is not responsible for any loss of intellectual property rights that may result from the submission of your design.

After one year, entries of this competition will be archived at the Milwaukee Institute of Art & Design and will be available for on-site study by appointment.

Promotion

IHA reserves the right to publicize individual winners and their entries using the photographs submitted. IHA will request that winners provide portrait photographs, biographical information and additional images of the products.

Winning product information may be available at TheInspiredHomeShow.com/SDC.



6400 Shafer Court, Ste. 650
Rosesmont, IL 60018 USA
TEL: 847-292-4200 | FAX: 847-292-4211
Housewares.org
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