

NOT A HOTEL DESIGN COMPETITION 2026 Competition Rules



1. Purpose

- The NOT A HOTEL DESIGN COMPETITION 2026 is a design competition for architects and creators under the age of 40 (U-40).
- The Grand Prize winner will receive a cash prize of JPY 10,000,000, and the winning design will be realized and sold as the next NOT A HOTEL.
- Through this competition, we aim not only to highlight the creativity of young architects and creators, but also to deliver real value by bringing their ideas into reality.

2. Treatment of these Rules

- The procedures for determining the award winners shall be conducted in accordance with these rules.

3. Overview of Competition Process

- Screening Method
 - The competition will consist of two rounds. In the First Screening (document review), 10 finalists will be selected.
 - In the Final Screening, applicants themselves will give public presentations followed by Q&A. The proposals will be evaluated for both content and feasibility, and the Grand Prize and other awards (a total of 10 works) will be determined.
 - The Student Prize (1 work) will be determined only through the First Screening and will be announced in mid-February 2026.
- Judges
 - Bjarke Ingels (Founder & Creative Director, Bjarke Ingels Group)
 - Sou Fujimoto (Founder, Sou Fujimoto Architects)
 - Masamichi Katayama (Founder, Wonderwall / Professor, Musashino Art University)
 - Shinji Hamazu (Director and CEO of NOT A HOTEL Inc.)

4. Schedule (Japan Standard Time)

- **September 22, 2025 (Mon):** Entry and submission open
- **January 11, 2026 (Sun), until 23:59 JST:** Entry and submission deadline
- **Late January 2026:** First Screening
- **Mid-February 2026:** Announcement of finalists and the Student Prize (on the website)
- **March 28, 2026 (Sat):** Final Screening (Public Jury Session) and Award Ceremony (Tokyo)

5. Design Services Agreement

- The Grand Prize winner will be required to enter into a “**Design Services Agreement for the New Construction of the NOT A HOTEL Yakushima Project.**”

6. Design Conditions

- Target Building
 - A building that can be used as a NOT A HOTEL (residence/villa and hotel).
- Site Overview
 - Location
 - A site in Yakushima (on-site visits are prohibited).
 - If another site more suitable for the Grand Prize work is identified, the site may be changed.
 - Other
 - All existing buildings and exterior structures on the site, such as artificial ponds, are scheduled to be demolished and removed.
- Restrictions
 - Setback
 - None.
 - Height Limit
 - 13m or lower.
 - Roof Shape
 - None.
 - Colors
 - Base colors should be those of natural materials.
 - As far as possible, avoid primary colors and use subdued, low-saturation tones.
 - Materials
 - Efforts should be made to use natural materials for exterior finishes.
- Plan Overview
 - Structure
 - Free.
 - Number of Floors
 - Free (subject to the height restriction).
 - Total Floor Area
 - Less than 300 m².
 - Construction Floor Area (including outdoor spaces such as terraces)
 - Less than 700 m².
 - Composition

- The building must include the following rooms and functions required for NOT A HOTEL:
 - Living-dining room
 - Kitchen
 - 3 bedrooms
 - Each room must have two semi-double beds (120 cm wide × 195 cm long).
 - Each room must have its own washroom, including:
 - Toilet
 - Shower
 - Bathroom
 - Changing room
 - Sauna
 - Cold plunge (or Plunge pool)
 - Bath
 - Shower
 - Outdoor terrace for cooling down (adjacent to the sauna and cold bath)
 - Pool (water depth: 1,200 mm)
 - Toilets (the number of toilet rooms should be appropriately determined according to the scale)
 - Parking (with roof), at least 2 spaces
 - Outdoor equipment storage area, approx. 70–100 m²
- Proposals for additional rooms not listed in these requirements may also be submitted, in line with the design concept.
- Other
 - The current site survey drawings and site photographs are available on the dedicated website.

7. Evaluation Criteria

- Harmony with the surrounding environment
 - The design should be well-integrated with the rich natural environment of Yakushima, an island known for its untouched landscapes.
- Desirability as a private residence or villa
 - The space should be highly unique and well-designed, making it a place that owners would want to purchase.
- Convenience and comfort for users
 - The design should go beyond refined aesthetics to provide spaces that genuinely contribute to user comfort.
- Consideration for facility management, including cleaning, inspection, and maintenance
 - The building should be easy to maintain and manage, ensuring that users can enjoy a comfortable and pleasant experience.
- Lifecycle cost
 - The design should aim to achieve long-term durability and longevity.
- Feasibility

- As the Grand Prize-winning design will be realized and developed as an actual project, proposals must demonstrate feasibility, particularly with regard to cost, structure, and constructability.

8. Eligibility

- Eligibility for Applicants
 - Applicants must meet all of the following requirements:
 - **Be under 40 years of age as of April 1, 2025.**
 - Not be a relative within the third degree of kinship to any of the judges.
- Eligibility for Design Offices
 - The design office to which the applicant (or representative in the case of a joint application) belongs, or the design office that constitutes part of a joint entity, must meet all of the following requirements:
 - Must not be subject to suspension of banking transactions.
 - Must not have filed a petition for commencement of rehabilitation proceedings under the Corporate Reorganization Act (Act No. 172 of 1952) or the Civil Rehabilitation Act (Act No. 225 of 1999).
- Other Conditions
 - Joint applications are permitted, provided that all members meet the eligibility requirements for applicants.
 - Each applicant (including joint applicants) may submit multiple proposals.

9. Procedures for Submission of Works

- **Entry Period**
 - September 22, 2025 (Mon) – January 11, 2026 (Sun), 23:59 (JST)
- **Registration Method**
 - Registration must be completed via the [\[Entry Form\]](#). Once the required information is entered, a registration number will be issued. This number is required for submission, so please retain it.
 - If any changes occur after a registration number has been issued, please re-register.
 - If submitting multiple works, register separately for each.
- **Submission of Design Proposal**
 - **Design Proposal**
 - **Requirements**
 - Format: A2 size (420mm × 594mm, landscape orientation) × 3 sheets
 - File format: PDF data (within 100MB)
 - **Contents**
 - Design concept statement, site plan (may be combined with floor plan), floor plan(s), elevation(s), section(s), tables (gross floor area, building area, number of stories, height), photorealistic CG perspectives (both exterior and interior), and any other drawings necessary to convey the design (scale optional).
 - Drawings must include scale bars and dimensions.

- Floor plans must show all levels. Number of elevations and sections is at the applicant's discretion.
- Floor plans must indicate the area of each floor.

■ **Notes**

- The PDF file must be named “**Registration Number.pdf.**”
 - Text should be at least **10pt** in size and clearly legible. Illegible text may not be considered for evaluation.
 - The registration number must also be indicated in the lower right corner of each sheet (within an area of 5cm × 5cm) and must match the number shown in the applicant qualification confirmation notice.
 - Do not include information that could identify the applicant or their design office/university. If such information is included, the relevant section will be blacked out by the Secretariat before judging.
- **Submission Period**
 - September 22, 2025 (Mon) – January 11, 2026 (Sun), 23:59 (JST)
 - **Submission Method**
 - **Submit via the [\[Submission Form\]](#)**

10. Secretariat

- Secretariat of NOT A HOTEL DESIGN COMPETITION 2026
 - Contacts: Saimaru, Matsui

11. First Screening

- Method
 - Ten entries will be selected through a document screening to advance to the second screening.
- Announcement of Results
 - The results of the first screening will be announced on the official competition website in late January 2026. Finalists who pass the first screening will also be notified directly. Please note that no inquiries or objections regarding the results will be accepted.
 - The Student Award (1 entry) will be determined based only on the first screening and announced in mid-February 2026 on the official competition website together with the list of finalists.

12. Second Screening

- Method
 - The second screening will consist of a public presentation by the applicants themselves, followed by a Q&A session with the judges.
- Date and Venue
 - Date: Saturday, March 28, 2026
 - Venue: The National Art Center, Tokyo
- Overview of the Hearing
 - The hearing will be conducted through a presentation by the applicants themselves, followed by a Q&A session with the judges.

- Presentations may be made by **up to two members** from each team and must be completed within 10 minutes, explaining the contents of the design proposal. Presentations may also include explanations using a PC (such as PowerPoint) and projector. **Any presentation exceeding 10 minutes will be disqualified.**
- Models may not be brought into the venue.
- If a finalist fails to attend, they will be deemed to have forfeited, and their proposal will be excluded from the screening.

- For applicants residing overseas, participation via online (remote) presentation will be permitted.
- The order of hearings will be determined at random by the Competition Office.
- Prior to the second screening, age verification (via ID check) of the finalists will be conducted. Details will be provided directly to the finalists.
- The final results will be announced on the day of the second screening. The review process and jury comments from the second screening will be published later on the official competition website.

13. Site Briefing

- No site briefing will be held at the proposed construction site.

14. Invalid Design Proposals

- Proposals that do not comply with the submission deadline, submission site, or submission method
- Proposals that do not contain all the required items specified
- Proposals that include content other than the required items
- Proposals containing false information
- Proposals submitted by applicants who do not meet the eligibility requirements
- Proposals prepared or specified through contact with the judges during preparation, judging, or selection
- Proposals from applicants who did not participate in the secondary screening

15. Other Notes

- Submitted works must be original, unpublished designs created solely for this competition. (Submissions that have been entered in other design competitions will be disqualified.)
- Travel expenses for finalists will be fully covered by NOT A HOTEL. However, coverage is limited to one representative per group.
- The languages used for procedures are Japanese and English. Currency will be Japanese yen.
- Revisions or resubmissions of design proposals after the submission deadline will not be accepted.
- Personal information such as name, address, and affiliation provided at the time of entry will only be used for the purpose of administering this competition and will not be disclosed or provided to third parties other than those involved in the competition.
- Submitted works, including design proposals, names, and affiliations, may be published on the official website, social media, or other media as part of the selection process.

- Submitted works will not be returned. Digital data will be destroyed or deleted and will not be used for any other purpose. The organizer assumes no responsibility for loss or damage due to natural disasters or other unforeseen circumstances.
- Copyright of submitted design proposals, excluding winning works, remains with the applicants. Copyright of winning works will belong to the organizer, based on a separate design agreement to be signed. However, the rights of adaptation and translation stipulated in Articles 27 and 28 of the Copyright Act will be excluded.
- Except for payments based on the award and the design agreement, no royalties or other payments will be made to the applicants in relation to the sale of the winning works by the organizer.
- The organizer reserves the right to make necessary modifications to the adopted works in accordance with the nature of the copyright and the purpose of use.
- If a winning work is found to infringe upon the copyright of another party, or if a serious violation of these competition rules is identified, the award may be revoked even after the announcement.
- Due to changes in social conditions, financial circumstances, or other unavoidable reasons, the competition plan may be modified or canceled. In such cases, NOT A HOTEL shall bear no responsibility toward the applicants.
- A separate contract will be concluded for the design services outsourcing agreement scheduled to be executed following this competition.
- In actual construction, the proposal may be partially modified for reasons related to functionality, maintenance, compliance with regulations, or budget considerations, upon discussion.
- In addition to the matters specified in these rules, if additional requirements arise in order to carry out this competition, NOT A HOTEL, in consultation with the Judging Committee, will establish and notify such requirements to the applicants.
- By completing entry registration, applicants agree that the operation of this competition shall be governed by the laws of Japan. Furthermore, applicants consent that any disputes arising in connection with this competition shall be subject to the exclusive jurisdiction of the Tokyo District Court as the court of first instance.