

NKBA | KBIS

Design & Industry Awards

2026 Design Competition Official Entry Packet

Category & Specialty Awards
Information, Judging Criteria,
Prizes, Competition Guidelines
& Entry Checklist

Call for Entries

Open to all industry professionals
designing kitchen and bath spaces

Deadline: August 17th, 2025

Member Pricing

Entry fees based on
member/non-member status as
well as number of projects entered

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ENTRY DEADLINE: AUGUST 17



Award Categories

Please choose the appropriate category from the selections below for your entry.

► Kitchen

- **Small** (Under 300-square-feet)
- **Large** (300-square-feet and over)
- **Specialty Kitchen** (dirty kitchen, outdoor kitchen, Kosher kitchen, guest house kitchen)

Only residential kitchens are permitted in the small and large kitchen categories. Specialty kitchens can be caterer's or scullery kitchens, Kosher kitchens, guest house, or outdoor kitchens. Any style is acceptable (traditional, contemporary, luxury, etc.).

► Bathroom

- **Powder Room**
- **Secondary Bath**
- **Primary Bath**

Only residential bathrooms are permitted. Powder rooms do not contain a shower or tub. Primary bathrooms must be **directly connected** to and entered through the primary bedroom.

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Design: Bethany Reilly | Photo: Sumaira Amber



Prizes

▶ Grand Prize Awards

- Best Overall Kitchen **\$25,000**
- Best Overall Bath **\$25,000**

**An additional \$25,000 will be awarded to each Best Overall winner who is an NKBA Certified Designer at the time of entry submission, for a potential total prize of \$50,000.*

▶ Category Awards

- First Place **\$5,000**
- Second Place **\$3,000**
- Third Place **\$2,000**

▶ Competition Prizes

In addition to cash prizes, category, grand prize and honorary awards winners will receive:

- One (1) personalized award
- Two (2) tickets to awards ceremony held during KBIS 2026
- Two (2) tickets to The Bash at KBIS 2026
- One (1) KBIS 2026 show floor pass with entry to Voices From the Industry Conference
- One (1) KBIS 2026 show floor guest pass
- One (1) round-trip airfare to KBIS 2026
- One (1) three-night hotel accommodation at KBIS 2026

▶ Sponsored Specialty Awards

These honors will be selected from among the winning projects in the competition:

- Best Use of Smart Home Technology
Sponsored and judged by CEDIA –
awarded to the best technology integrator

Winner Recognition

- Winners announced at the 2026 Kitchen & Bath Design & Industry Awards Event in Orlando
- Winning projects featured in at least one national consumer magazine
- Winning projects featured on NKBA.org, in the NKBA newsletter and across social media
- Winning projects featured in KBB magazine
- Winners included in national press release

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Judging

The competition entries will be scored based on the following core areas:

- Creativity; presentation; design planning; elements and principles of design; safety and ergonomics; and NKBA Planning Guidelines
- Round 1 — Media
- Round 2 — NKBA Certified designers, Media & Industry Professionals

Competition Guidelines

- Entries with entry fee must be received by August 17, 2025, at 11:59 pm ET.
- The individual entrant must be the Designer of Record on each project. There is a maximum of two co-designers for each project.
- If the entrant is not the owner of the business that billed the project, owner approval is required for eligibility.
- The project(s) submitted must have been installed between January 1, 2024 and August 17, 2025.
- Enter the project into the one category for which it is best suited. You may enter as many projects as you would like that fit into the six (6) different categories.
- A new entry form is required for each project submitted and is to be completed in full. Each entry requires a separate fee.
- All identifying design and firm information must be omitted, removed, or blacked out from photographs, floor plans, elevations, and design statements. (Note: Judges will make decisions on the projects without knowing who designed them).
- All required materials must be received digitally and labeled according to NKBA directions.

Entry Fee

MEMBER PRICING

Member 1st project	\$175
Member 2nd project	\$150
Any additional entry over 2	\$100

NON-MEMBER PRICING*

Non-member 1st project	\$225
Non-member 2nd project	\$200
Any additional entry over 2	\$175

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Design: Gina Bauerle | Photo: Eric Lucero

Round 1 & Round 2 Requirements

▶ Round 1 Requirements

1. Register for an account on the awards platform

2. Complete Online Entry Form

- Select “Start entry” at the bottom of the page
- Create a Project ID, including the category-specific abbreviation (e.g. An entry in the Specialty Kitchens category would be SPK – Name of Entry)
- Enter all required information, clicking “Save & Next” as you complete each tab
- Include any co-designers if applicable

3. Upload 2 “Wow Factor” Photos

- Submit two (2) high-resolution (300 dpi) color photos, approximately 8”x10”
- Professional photography is highly recommended
- Do not include images that identify the project location or individuals (e.g., clients, children, site workers)

4. Photography Release Form

5. Design Description

- Submit a two-sentence design description

6. Submit Entry

- Click “Submit Entry” to proceed to payment

▶ Round 2 Requirements

(For Those Who Progress)

1. Upload Additional Photos

- Submit up to eight (8) more high-resolution (300 dpi) color photos (for a total of 10)

2. Full Design Statement

- A 200-400 word narrative detailing the project
- Include a bulleted list of key features and highlights
- Do not include identifying designer or firm information

3. Drawings (Construction, Floorplans, Elevations)

- Scale MUST be ¼”, ½” or 1:20 metric scale
- Drawings must be cleanly labeled with dimensions
- Identifying designer and firm information must be removed

4. Client Property Release Form

5. Business Owner Form

6. Headshot & Bio

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Design Statement Requirements

Please use this as a guide when preparing your design statement. All design statements must be typed.

Do not include: Any identifying member information, such as:

- Client name
- Client address
- Business name
- Business address

200-to-400 word statement that outlines client needs, objectives, design philosophy, challenges, solution and special features (think of the design statement as you would pitch to a magazine)

Objectives: Outlines criteria to be met by your design solution, for example:

- Create casual dining for large family
- Update to contemporary tastes of clients
- Provide healing options for a sick family
- Create multigenerational kitchen

Design Challenges: Describe fixed elements or special circumstances, for example:

- Design space around support posts, air ducts, plumbing, etc.
- Include client's sports souvenirs collection

Design Solutions: Describe how you creatively solved the challenges, for example:

- Used negative space between air ducts and created storage space

Special Features: Highlight design elements that are unique or notable, for example:

- Technology and voice activation
- Repurposed wood from the dance studio where client danced as a child

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Reasons for Entry Disqualification

- If any materials are omitted or if required criteria is not met
- The NKBA reserves the right to disqualify a project before, during or after the contest judging, without any notification
- Your NKBA membership will be verified and false information will lead to disqualification (entry fees will not be refunded)
- Your submission must be received by **11:59 PM ET on August 17, 2025**. Incomplete entries will be disqualified
- To avoid disqualification, please adhere to all competition guidelines and deadlines; submit all documents and materials in one digital submission