

arcVision Prize

Women and Architecture

by Italcementi Group

THE PROJECT

The arcVision Prize is an annual award for a female architect whose research and design work reflects excellence and special attention to the key issues in building construction—quality, technology, innovation—and provides a distinctive and powerful expression of the values of social, environmental and economic sustainability.

The Prize nominations will favor female architects working under particularly challenging conditions, in terms of both project type and scope and the context in which they live and work.

Candidates must submit at least one project designed for the community, either built or in the planning stage.

The nominees are selected from a group of professional designers indicated by a pool of Advisors. The Advisors' recommendations are assessed by an internal technical-cultural Commission, who draw up a shortlist of nominations to be submitted to an international Jury, which will meet in Bergamo from March 5 – 7, 2014.

The Prize winner will be officially announced by the Jury during a press conference on March 7 at i.lab, the Italcementi Group research & innovation center in Bergamo, to celebrate International Women's Day.

PROFILE OF THE WOMEN DESIGNERS

Designers recommended for the Award must:

- have designed at least one building (either built or in the final planning stage) presenting essentially innovative functional and technological solutions and values, with particular attention to sustainability issues;
- ideally, have conducted research—in the field or in a teaching/academic sphere—on the development of innovative building system solutions;
- have designed alone or jointly with other architects the projects presented. In this sense, the purpose of the arcVision Prize is to highlight all the women architects active in the profession today, irrespective of whether they work in a firm of architects, independently, alone or with other partners, provided that their contribution to the project and, more generally, to the work of the practice, can be clearly identified;
- not have been a candidate for last year's award.

CRITERIA FOR THE SELECTION OF NOMINEES AND PROJECTS

In line with Italcementi business strategies, the arcVision Prize places particular emphasis on the innovation and sustainability content of the projects and buildings presented, with reference to the standards described briefly below.

Innovation and technological progress

New design concepts, different approaches to construction techniques and processes, attention to the future life of the building, ability to accommodate future technological upgrades.

Development of a design model that can be replicated in other projects.

Use of technologies to optimize the building's performance with regard to functional requirements, and to optimize financial outlay.

Environmental quality, economic use of resources

The projects should aim not only to improve living conditions for their users, but also to safeguard the existing natural and/or manmade environment.

Optimal use and conservation of local energy resources is essential, as a benchmark for future projects.

Social responsibility, professional ethics, promotion of community values

Maximum attention to ethical values in project development, contractual procedures, use of manpower. In general, respect for the social, individual and cultural values of the local community, throughout the construction process.

Engagement (where possible) of the local community in the project planning process: transparency, correctness and consensual decision-making.

Emphasis on teamwork, both during the design process and in the creation of user/designer work groups.

Formal research, material aesthetics, innovative language

Preference will be given to the work of female architects committed to creating new aesthetic codes as distinguishing elements of the project, compatibly with the existing environment and culture.

A point of particular interest will be the re-definition of new or existing materials, as elements for technological and also expressive advancement: in the belief that the progressive value of architecture embraces all aspects of design innovation.

PRIZE

- A two-week research project and workshop (during Milan Design Week, April 2014) at i.lab, the Italcementi Group research & innovation center in Bergamo, designed by Richard Meier, which acts as a center to promote innovative technologies and practices.
- A monetary award of € 50,000, part of which the winner may decide to donate to social architecture programs of her choice.

SCIENTIFIC DIRECTOR

Stefano Casciani. Born in Rome in 1955, he began working as a writer and designer in 1979 in Milan, where he moved on completing his studies in literature and architecture at La Sapienza University. At 24, he became a staff editor for the *Domus* review, at 25, art director for Zanotta: in 1984 he published his first book on Italian design, *Mobili come architetture*. Since then, through exhibitions, publications and lectures on art, design and architecture, Casciani has gradually established a reputation as one of the finest experts and communicators on international artistic culture, winning prestigious awards (the Gold Compass award for the RAI *Lezioni di Design* broadcast, 2000: the Lighting of Tomorrow award for the Aliante lighting system, USA 2009). For many years (2000-2011) he was Deputy Editor of *Domus*, in 2012 he founded the print magazine *Disegno. La nuova cultura industriale*. He is scientific director of the **arcVision Prize – Women and Architecture**, instituted by the Italcementi Group, and the author of **MILLENNIUM MEETINGS WITH ARCHITECTURE** published by the *arcVision* publishing house.