

DESERET SCHOOL OF DESIGN

2026 ALUMNI DESIGN COMPETITION

Official Competition Brief & Guidelines

1. INTRODUCTION

Deseret School of Design (DSD) is proud to announce the 2026 Alumni Design Competition, created to celebrate excellence, creativity, and professional growth among our graduates.

This competition is designed to:

- Showcase alumni talent
- Promote design excellence
- Encourage innovation and originality
- Strengthen the DSD professional network
- Recognize outstanding work in Architecture and Interior Design

This initiative aims to position DSD alumni as industry-ready professionals capable of delivering world-class solutions.

2. COMPETITION THEME

Theme: “Future Urban Living – Ghana 2030”

Participants are required to design innovative, functional, and forward-thinking spaces that respond to the future needs of urban living in Ghana.

Designs should reflect:

- Sustainability
- Practicality
- Climate responsiveness
- Cultural relevance
- Modern aesthetics

3. COMPETITION CATEGORIES

To ensure fairness and proper evaluation, the competition will run in two separate categories:

- Category A: Architectural Design
- Category B: Interior Design

Participants may compete in only one category.

4. PROJECT BRIEFS

CATEGORY A: ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN

Project Type:

Residential Development

Client Preamble

You have been commissioned by a private real estate investor who is developing a modern residential property aimed at the growing urban housing market in Ghana. The client's goal is to create a high-quality yet practical residential development that balances aesthetics, functionality, and long-term investment value.

The client intends to build **three (3) units of the same 3-bedroom residential apartments** on a single parcel of land measuring **0.21 acres**. The project must appeal to young professionals and small families seeking comfortable, modern living within an urban environment.

All relevant documents can be accessed here

Site Information:

- Land Size: **0.21 Acres**
- Site Plan: To be provided by DSD
- Zoning Context: Urban Residential
- Parking: Must be accommodated within site
- Access: Each unit should have its own access

Participants must:

- Maximize site efficiency
- Ensure adequate circulation
- Provide proper parking
- Consider ventilation and daylight
- Incorporate sustainability principles
- Demonstrate realistic buildability

Deliverables:

1. Site Development Plan
2. Floor Plans
3. Elevations
4. Two Sections
5. 3D Exterior Views (Minimum 4)
6. Sustainability Strategy
7. 400-word Concept Statement

SOFTWARE REQUIREMENT

1. Autodesk Revit (Compulsory)

- All architectural modeling and documentation must be produced using **Autodesk Revit**.
- Floor plans, elevations, sections, and 3D views must originate from the Revit model.
- Participants will be asked to submit working files for verification.

2. Canva (Compulsory for Presentation)

- Final presentation boards must be prepared using **Canva**.
- Participants are expected to present their work in a clean, professional, and visually clear layout.
- Presentation quality forms part of the judging criteria.

CATEGORY B: INTERIOR DESIGN

Client Preamble

You have been hired by a real estate investor to design the interior spaces of a residential apartment. The goal is to create an interior environment that enhances the lifestyle of future residents while increasing the property's attractiveness and rental value.

Participants will be provided with the **architectural floor plan**, which serves as the fixed layout for the project. Your role is to transform the space through interior design — focusing on functionality, comfort, material selection, and overall user experience.

The client envisions interiors that:

- Appeal to modern urban professionals and young families
- Feel warm, functional, and contemporary
- Use space efficiently without clutter
- Demonstrate good furniture planning and circulation
- Incorporate suitable materials and finishes for durability
- Balance aesthetics with practicality and budget awareness

The design should communicate a clear lifestyle concept, showing how interior design can elevate everyday living while supporting the commercial goals of the development.

All relevant documents can be accessed here

Deliverables:

Space planning layout

Mood board

Material board

3D Renderings (minimum 4 perspective views for each space)

A 720 virtual tour

300-word concept statement

SOFTWARE REQUIREMENT

1. Coohom (Compulsory for Renderings)

- All interior visualizations and renderings must be produced using **Coohom**.
- The provided floor plan must be interpreted and developed within Coohom.
- Renderings should clearly communicate material choices, furniture layout, lighting, and design concept.

2. Canva (Compulsory for Presentation)

- Final presentation boards must be prepared using **Canva**.
- Participants should organize mood boards, renderings, material boards, and design explanations in a clear presentation format.

5. ELIGIBILITY

Open strictly to Deseret School of Design alumni.

Participants must have successfully completed:

Architectural Design with Revit

OR

Interior Design Program

Proof of completion will be required.

6. COMPETITION TIMELINE

Phase Duration

| | |
|---------------------|---|
| Announcement | 2 nd March 2026 |
| Registration Period | 2 nd – 9 th March 2026 |
| Design Development | 9 th – 6 th April 2026 |
| Submission Deadline | 6 th of April 2026 |
| Judging Period | 7 th - 14 th April 2026 |
| Award Ceremony | 18 th April 2026 |

Late submissions will not be accepted.

7. SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

All entries must be submitted digitally in the following format:

One compiled PDF presentation board (A1 or A2 format)

All drawings properly labeled

High-quality renderings

Concept statement included

Working file (Revit, SketchUp, etc.) may be requested for verification

File naming format:

FullName_Category_2026DSDCompetition.pdf

8. AI POLICY

The competition recognizes that AI tools are part of modern design workflows. However, integrity and professional competence remain essential.

Permitted Use:

AI for inspiration

AI for mood board references

AI for idea development support

Not Permitted:

Fully AI-generated designs

AI-generated floor plans submitted as original work

AI-only renderings without actual modeling

Participants must:

Produce original modeling work

Be able to demonstrate authorship

Submit working files if requested

Violation will result in disqualification.

9. JUDGING PANEL

Entries will be evaluated by a panel consisting of:

External Licensed Architect

External Professional Interior Designer

DSD Senior Instructor

Industry Professional

Judges' decisions are final.

10. JUDGING CRITERIA

Each entry will be evaluated using the following weighted criteria:

| Criteria | Weight |
|--------------------------|---------------|
| Creativity & Innovation | 20% |
| Technical Accuracy | 20% |
| Functionality | 20% |
| Presentation Quality | 20% |
| Concept & Sustainability | 20% |

Total: 100%

11. AWARDS & RECOGNITION

Winners will receive:

FIRST PLACE (EACH CATEGORY)

Cash Prize 2000
20% Discount on any DSD course of their choice
Official Award Certificate
Featured Spotlight on DSD Website & Social Media
Professional LinkedIn Recognition

SECOND PLACE

Cash Prize 1000
20% Discount on any DSD course of their choice
Official Award Certificate
Featured Spotlight on DSD Website & Social Media

Professional LinkedIn Recognition

🏆 THIRD PLACE

20% Discount on any DSD course of their choice
Official Award Certificate
Featured Spotlight on DSD Website & Social Media
Professional LinkedIn Recognition

🏆 PEOPLE'S CHOICE AWARD (OPTIONAL)

Determined through public voting
Online Feature Recognition

12. INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

All designs remain the intellectual property of participants.

DSD reserves the right to publish submitted work for promotional purposes with full credit given to the designer.

13. CODE OF CONDUCT

Participants must:

Submit original work
Avoid plagiarism
Maintain professional presentation standards
Respect deadlines
Any misconduct will lead to immediate disqualification.

14. AWARD CEREMONY

The award ceremony will be held:
Physically at DSD campus OR

Virtually via livestream

This event will include:

Presentation of shortlisted works


Winner announcements

Alumni networking session

Media coverage

15. STRATEGIC VISION

The DSD Alumni Design Competition is intended to become an annual tradition, evolving into:

 The DSD Annual Design Awards

This initiative will:

Elevate alumni reputation

Increase industry visibility

Strengthen professional networks

Reinforce DSD's commitment to excellence

16. REGISTRATION PROCESS

Participants must complete the official registration form during the registration window.

Registration link will be provided at launch.

17. CONTACT

For inquiries, participants may contact:

Deseret School of Design

Email: admin@dsd.edu.gh

Phone: 055 666 2426