

IL PROGETTO NECESSARIO

Agorà Design Festival

2-5.10.2025 Martano LE

OPEN CALL!

Call Agorà Design 2025

AGORÀ LIVING

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by Sprech

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Interior Design Section Regulation

ART.1

Goals and Purposes

The implementation of research and development is indispensable for companies operating in the field of design and architecture, in order to compete on an equal footing with competitors in their target market.

Assessing unique projects, developing innovative products and acquiring a skilled workforce takes time and dedication on the part of companies.

Agorà Design is the epitome of this ongoing need for research.

The aim of the event is, in fact, to trigger the production cycle in the field of architecture and design that starts with an idea and materialises in the marketing of the product.

Agorà Design promotes dialogue and encounters between different generations and cultures. It achieves this through a contest dedicated to designers, architects, students and professionals, and a festival where the public, industry insiders, companies and big names in architecture meet to share ideas and future actions.

ART.2

Subject of the competition

Participants are called upon to submit innovative and unique projects, featuring design functionality and environmental sustainability, describing unique uses and innovative applications of materials. For the Living section, the participants must create a prototype – on their own or in partnership with a sector-based company – that respects the shapes and dimensions of the project in the contest.

The open call dedicated to Living embraces all the productive and creative possibilities that revolve around the world of interior design (from furniture to its accessories, such as fabrics, coatings, floors, etc.) with the aim of stimulating practical innovation.

At each edition, Sprech reserves the right to identify a main theme that the designers are called upon to address.

Il Progetto Necessario (*The Necessary Project*) is the theme established for 2025

The word “necessity” derives from the Latin word *necessitas*, which in turn is a derivative of *necesse*, which indicates what is inevitable, obligatory and indispensable. Over time, the meaning has expanded, including concepts of need, urgency, and lack of something essential.

Architecture and design have developed throughout history as direct responses to human needs, continuously adapting to available resources, emerging technologies and cultural changes. If architecture originated from rudimentary materials and techniques, evolving to reflect the values and lifestyles of society, design began as a functional and aesthetic improvement of everyday objects, and then transformed into an industrial discipline capable of combining craftsmanship and mass production.

Both share a common goal: to meet practical, social and cultural needs, evolving together with Humanity itself. This makes it crucial to reflect on the cyclical and relative nature of the concept of “necessary”, which varies according to the context in which architecture and design are inserted.

What are the needs of our time?

Today, the concept of “necessity” is intertwined with contemporary challenges and values, which can be broken down into four broad areas:

- Environmental sustainability and circularity – a responsible approach to the planet’s resources.
- Adaptability and multifunctionality – spaces and objects capable of transforming and meeting multiple needs.
- Inclusivity – designing for a heterogeneous community.
- Technological innovation – solutions that use of the most advanced technologies to improve daily life.

Less, but better

Necessity is not synonymous with excess. Dieter Rams’ “Less, but better” philosophy, formulated in the 1970s, continues to inspire designers around the world, calling upon them to create simple, yet profoundly effective projects. Rams developed a decalogue for “good design”, still today a reference point for conscious design:

1. Good design is innovative
2. Good design makes a product useful
3. Good design is aesthetic
4. Good design makes a product understandable
5. Good design is unobtrusive
6. Good design is honest
7. Good design is long-lasting
8. Good design is thorough down to the last detail

9. Good design is environmentally friendly
10. Good design is as little design as possible

The Contest: Designing the Necessary

In the 2025 edition, Agorà Design calls upon designers and architects to address the theme of “The Necessary Project”, exploring the delicate balance between contemporary needs and good design. Participants will have to propose unique solutions, which rise up to the functional, social, environmental and humanitarian challenges of our time, demonstrating that a project is “necessary” when it meets both the needs of the present and the timeless principles of a good project.

Through interior design proposals or outdoor solutions, the goal is to interpret the concept of necessity as a creative engine, asking how the project can improve the quality of life, respect the environment and dialogue with a constantly evolving society.

ART. 3

Participation requirements

Participation is open and free.

The contest is aimed at students and professionals as indicated below:

- **Professionals Category** – at the date of registration for the competition, the Professionals category shall include anyone not enrolled in training schools, institutes or academies, and who are instead already employed, in particular in the field of design, interior design, industrial design, etc. A specific academic certificate is not mandatory for this category.
- **Student Category** – aimed at all Italian and foreign students of Architecture and Engineering Universities, Design Schools and Institutes, Fine Arts Academies and secondary, technical and artistic higher education institutions.

For both categories, participation can be individual or collective.

If participating as a group, it will be necessary to appoint a group leader, who will be in charge and the sole contact person for the project.

If a group is made up of students and professionals, the group will fall under the Professional Category.

Each participant will be able to submit a single and unique project for the Agora Living section.

The submitted works and projects must be unique and must not have been published, disseminated or made accessible through media, social media or other communication platforms.

Articulation of the competition

The contest is organised into the following stages:

- Communication of the panel of judges: **June 2025**
- Expiry of the open call: **7 July 2025 at 22:00 hrs**
- Communication of shortlisted projects: **31 July 2025**
- Evaluation of the panel of judges: **August 2025**
- Notification of the winners: **by September 2025**
- Exhibition of prototypes: **from 2 to 5 October 2025** – Martano (Lecce) at Palazzo Baronale

It is not necessary to have already produced the prototype at the time of registration. Relevant information on sending the prototypes to the exhibition venue will be made known once the selection has been made.

How to participate

For the Agorà Living section, participation applications shall be filled out on the website www.agoradesign.it **by 22:00 hrs on 7 July 2025**.

First vetting of the projects: committee and assessment criteria

In the initial stage, the assessment committee will select the projects deemed to be the most innovative and consistent with the theme based on the criteria listed below.

The assessment committee will reach a decision at their sole discretion. The criteria taken into consideration will be:

- Consistency with the design theme in points 1 and 2 of this call
- Design quality
- Innovation and uniqueness
- Reproducibility and engineering

A score from 1 to 10 will be given for each element.

After this stage, the organisation will hand over the projects to an expert panel of judges which will be called upon to decide the winner, along with the second and third places. The expert panel of judges will reach its decision using the same criteria as in the pre-selection stage. The panel of judges will be made up of professionals and associations in the industry.

The decision of the expert panel of judges is final, conclusive and unchallengeable.

The selection of the panel of judges will be completed no later than August 2025.

ART.7

Presentation of project drawings

For the purposes of participation, it is mandatory to use the online registration form available on the website www.agoradesign.it.

The participation application, to be **filled out exclusively online**, includes the personal data sheet, in which the participant must indicate the following data: date of birth, tax code, residence/domicile, personal contact details (telephone/email); for students, it will be required to specify the location of the University, faculty and year of attendance; a short biographical presentation written in the third person.

In addition, a short text-only descriptive report will be required, describing the reasons, the general concept, the characteristics of the project and the materials provided.

The project drawings must be uploaded directly to the online platform, by the deadline of the competition, set for **Monday, July 7, 2025**.

Specifications for loading the drawings:

Drawing 1 – renamed with personal code_1 – Overview, general concept, short description, rendering, reference scenarios.

Drawing 2 – renamed with personal code_2 – Technical drawings: plans, perspective drawings, sections, axonometric views, exploded views, construction drawings listed on the appropriate scales and details of the choices of materials.

The drawings, in vertical A3 format, shall be submitted as .pdf files (maximum file size 4 MB). The code, with respect to the drawing, must be indicated as follows: code at the top left of the drawing, font: Arial pt.14 centred, font colour and box colour: black. Customisations are not allowed.

The creation of the prototype is a prerequisite for participation in the festival. The selected participants in the LIVING category are committed to creating a 1:1 scale prototype, which will be exhibited at Palazzo Baronale in Martano during the festival, from 2 to 5 October 2025.

Applications that do not comply with points 1, 2 and 3 will not be considered (see art. 10).

Anonymity

The project drawings must not bear any identifying signs other than the ones indicated in order to guarantee anonymity. THEREFORE, THE PROJECT DRAWINGS SUBMITTED WILL BE WITHOUT SIGNATURE, NAME OF THE AUTHOR OR ELEMENTS THAT MAKE IT RECOGNISABLE. THEY WILL BE MARKED EXCLUSIVELY BY THE MOTTO OF THE PROJECT AND PERSONAL CODE IN THE COMBINATION CHOSEN BY THE AUTHORS AS SPECIFIED IN ARTICLE 7.

Awards and recognitions

A Judging Panel will be appointed to award the final prizes, which will take into account the criteria and aims of the contest. After examining the project drawings received, assessing their uniqueness, degree of innovation, feasibility, social, ecological, economic suitability, formal and functional aspects, and the suitability of the materials, it will award the following cash prizes at its sole discretion:

Professional Category

First prize	€ 2.000,00 (two thousand/00)
Second prize	€ 1.000,00 (one thousand/00)
Third prize	€ 500,00 (five hundred/00)

(gross of tax deductions ref Italian Pres. Decree No. 600/73 as amended by Italian L. No. 449/97)

Student Category

First prize	€ 1.000,00 (one thousand/00)
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(gross of tax deductions ref Italian Pres. Decree No. 600/73 as amended by Italian L. No. 449/97)

The winners will be informed directly by the secretary's office of the contest organisers.

The Judging Panel, at its sole discretion, may decide that no project adequately meets the requirements of this call for proposals and may, therefore, decide not to nominate a winning project.

The decision of the Judging Panel is final, conclusive and binding.

Judging Panel

The Panel, referred to in the previous point, will be made up of prominent figures from the fields of design, architecture, publishing, marketing and business enterprises. The official line-up will be announced at a later date.

Reasons for exclusion and incompatibility

The following will be excluded and not be permitted to participate in the contest:

- members of the panel, their relatives up to and including third degree of relationship, anyone who has participated in the organisation of the contest or in the drafting of the call for entries;
- applications and project drawings submitted after the deadline stipulated in the call for entries;
- projects that do not comply with the technical requirements and other provisions of this call;
- participating authors who publish the project or part of it before approval of the contest proceedings on any multimedia device or physical media.

The identification, even after the conclusion of the procedure, of grounds for ineligibility to take part in the contest and the failure to meet the requirements or other conditions for participation set out in this notice, shall result in exclusion from the contest, regardless of any other liability, including criminal liability, in the event of false or misleading declarations, or for other specific offences under the law.

Awards ceremony and exhibition of projects

The award ceremony and the exhibition venue of the competition will be held at the Palazzo Baronale in Martano from 2 to 5 October 2025.

Catalogue and promotion

In addition to visibility in the exhibition, the projects will be published in a catalogue which will be sent to major design agencies and editors of design magazines in Italy and Europe.

Agorà Design will subsequently take part in some of the most important sector-based trade fairs. A certificate of participation will be issued to students upon request.

Subsequent development of projects

Regardless of the prizes awarded by the Judging panel, at the end of the event Sprech will analyse the project drawings considered most interesting from a design and technical point of view in order to evaluate their productive and commercial potential. Projects that meet these requirements may be selected for subsequent display at events or trade fairs and potential marketing.

The chosen designs may undergo modifications of a technical-constructive nature in order to ensure that the prototype is optimised for technical reproduction. This stage must be overseen and assisted by the designer at the production company site.

Intellectual property rights and press releases

By simply submitting the project and documents required by the contest call for entries, the participant duly authorises the promoting organisation to publish and publicise their project in the manner and by the means deemed most appropriate, for as long as necessary for purposes of any kind related to promotion, communication and/or marketing.

All the participants declare that their design is unique, that they are the author of the design and that it does not infringe the rights of third parties. The organising body is, therefore, exonerated from any liability for any disputes that may arise regarding the uniqueness and authorship of the work or from any imitations or exploitation of the work by third parties.

All the participants agree to exempt the organisation from any liability in the event of any claims or obligations arising in connection with this initiative.

The economic exploitation rights arising from any industrialisation of the prototype will be agreed upon with the designer by signing an agreement if the industrialisation and commercialisation option, described in the following clause, is exercised.

The partner companies reserve the right to industrialisation and commercialisation upon agreement with the designer within the ensuing 12 (twelve) months after the end of the event. The designer will be free of all constraints after this period.

The prototype will remain the property of the designer and/or the company that produced it (as agreed upon between the designer and the production company).

The authors of the projects are not entitled to any compensation for the publication of their work.

Agorà Design is exempt from all liability for any theft, loss or damage to the entries. Participants have the right to protect their project idea in advance in accordance with current legislation on the protection of intellectual property.

If deemed appropriate, Agorà Design and its partner companies will duly publicise and promote the projects and images of the works featured in the event in their catalogues or other media, so that the latter is always visible in the world of design, production and marketing.

Participants in the competition retain ownership and the right to exploit the works. Agorà Design reserves the right to define with the authors of the awarded or reported projects a contract for the industrial exploitation of the projects.

Contest participants grant Sprech an option to use the awarded projects for one year from the date of the panel of judges report. Within this period, it will evaluate whether to start production and in this case the economic relationship with the designer will be governed by a specific contract.

Agorà Design undertakes not to modify in any way the works submitted without the consent of the designer. The company has the right to request a one-year option even on non-rewarded projects, upon payment of the fees to be agreed between the parties.

ART. 16

Participation conditions

Participation in the event implies full and unconditional acceptance of these rules and regulations and of the decisions of the selection committee and judging panel.

ART. 17

Information and contacts

Applicants, who would like to request information about the purposes and procedures regarding the contest, can contact the secretary's office of the organisation for the Agorà Design contest via the following contacts:

E-mail: info@agoradesign.it

Secretary's office: +39 342 5261338