PAVING THE WAY FOR THE DESIGN TALENTS OF TOMORROW

In the 12 years since we first inaugurated the Asia Young Designer Awards (AYDA), the changes we’ve seen have been immeasurable.

A simple goal of nurturing the next generation of design talents has grown to be an invaluable platform where aspiring designers and key industry leaders converge to transcend aesthetics into ideas that positively impact the communities, by putting the people at the heart of its creations.

Over the years, AYDA has grown and served as a platform to build pockets of close-knit communities amongst those in the design industry across 15 geographical locations in Asia, further paving the way for our AYDA alumni to establish their presence in the architecture and interior design spaces within and across borders. This AYDA experience translates to an enriching learning experience that truly goes beyond classroom teaching, setting a knowledge space where ideations and cultures unite. And with that, our vision of bringing colours and inspirations to everywhere around the world was realised.

In a world where demands are ever-evolving, the opportunities for young people to impact the future has never been greater. Today, more than 4.5 billion people live across Asia, and we continue to be one of the largest and quickest developing economies in the world. This warrants the need for sustainable designs that are created with the people in mind, for now and into the future. And this is why Nippon Paint is honoured to be the creator of this program and together with various partners and stakeholders, we remain committed to mentoring and empowering the region’s brightest creative minds.

And to truly understand these dynamics, AYDA has evolved and progressed beyond just a competition platform. A participant is taken through an enriching experience. In the competitive mode, they would be pitching their creations to a very critical panel. However, from past experience, we know that this critical panel of industry practitioners will also be going to great lengths to mentor, motivate and inspire.

Our theme this year is “Forward: Human-centred Design” - reflects the need for designers to provide practical and socially-conscious design solutions for a rapidly growing population in a globalised world. With the aim of expanding the imaginations of these young design talents, this year’s theme seeks to further empower them to consciously design with dwellers and sustainability in mind - not just from a commercial aspect, but also deep dive into understanding the multi-faceted social and emotional aspects.

Every year, we continue to be extremely excited for AYDA and this year is no different. We truly can’t wait to see how our participants will bring their ideas to life and in the process, propel the greatness of humanity forward!

May we all continue to strive towards excellence!

JON TAN
CEO (Decorative Paints)
NIPPON PAINT INDONESIA
FORWARD: HUMAN-CENTRED DESIGN

Time and again, extraordinary designers have continuously found innovative ways to merge the present with the future in ways that stand the test of time. The challenge for designers in today’s globalised society goes beyond creating spaces that meet the ever-evolving needs and demands of users – from an emotional, social and economic point of view – the spaces must also provide a sense of security and accessibility for the users.

As designers, you need to create spaces with the dwellers in mind. Your creations must be holistic in its approach to be able to provide them with a sense of security, accessibility and opportunity.

The selected theme for the year is “Human-centred Design”.

Human-centred design is about cultivating deep empathy with the people you’re designing for – generating ideas and sharing what you’ve made with the people you’re designing for and eventually, putting your innovative new solution out in the world.

The challenge here is to showcase a new approach towards innovation by incorporating the Design Thinking approach to your design, taking into consideration a human-centred approach and perspective when solving problems through design.

A human-centred design consists of three phases:

INSPIRATION

The inspiration phase is all about removing any preconceived notions you might have about your users, but learning about their needs through careful observation.

During this stage, you need to keep in mind that your design is never about the object. Instead, you need to keep an open mind and further understand the needs of users and how you can bring to them the best solution.

IDEATION

Your design should be one that begins with a critical thinking process that includes visualising, brainstorming, and discussing all the potential solutions for the problem through your design. During this stage, the documentation of all ideas is important to help you further tap into your creativity.

IMPLEMENTATION

Once you arrive at a concept that feels right, you will move to implementing your project into a physical prototype to allow users to experience the possibilities of your design solutions.

As designers, one should be aware of the design actions that affect the lives of the users. The challenges faced by designers today are in a whole new level and scale compared to a few decades ago. As the industry moves towards a human-centred approach, the main challenge lies in the supposed loss of autonomy of designers where designing a building is no longer to give shape to the designer’s vision. Instead, an effective design should be one that can positively impact the lives of its users – a by-product of two co-existing components that are “Artistic” and “Social”.

The development of practical instruments during any design process is a key element for an effective integration of user derived data in the final outcomes. By adopting a human-centred approach towards design, you will be able to further align your mind-set, skills and environment, and the result is something that is personalised to the needs of your users – a socially-conscious solution offered to help create a better world for all.
Over the years, AYDA has impacted thousands of young and talented student designers, presenting them with various opportunities to engage with renowned speakers and key figures in the design industry. The platform has not only enabled the participants to be exposed to first-hand industry knowledge, personalised coaching, mentoring and skills-building through various workshops by experienced lecturers and industry professionals, but it has also allowed them to learn from their fellow peers from within and across borders.

The Asia Young Designer Awards (AYDA) was first launched in 2008 as part of Nippon Paint’s vision to nurture the next generation of design talents. The award serves as a platform to inspire Architectural and Interior Design students to develop their skills through cross-learning opportunities and networking with key industry players as well as fellow Architectural and Interior Design peers in the region.

Since then, AYDA has grown in terms of reach and stature, and has now established itself as one of Asia’s premier design awards, having received more than 28,000 entries from over 900 tertiary education institutions to date, across 15 different geographical locations in Asia.

Every year, AYDA presents yet another opportunity for young design talents to further push their design boundaries beyond the norm. In an effort to continuously push the envelope, the Asia Young Designers of the Year stand a chance to embark on an opportunity of a lifetime with an all-expenses paid 8-week placement at Design Discovery Program at Harvard University’s Graduate School of Design (Harvard GSD) in the United States, where they will have the privilege to learn and experience intensive studio work, lectures, workshops and field trips.

Through the various experiential learnings and once-in-a-lifetime opportunities such as these, AYDA has established a close-knit design community comprising of professional architects, interior designers, industry associations, partners, design schools, alumni and design students.

To learn more about AYDA, visit the following links:
www.ayda-indonesia.com or www.linkedin.com/company/asia-young-designer-awards-ayda
THE COMPETITION BRIEF

Great designers have always found ingenious ways to resolve contradictions and conventions, merging the present with the future in ways that surprise, delight, and stand the test of time.

Today, the challenges facing designers go far beyond just delivering a space but a space which has the ability to serve the different facades and needs of the users emotionally, socially and economically.

We want you to take advantage of digital connectivity and technological advances like our predecessors have never seen before and transform a space which would help cultivate and meet the needs of people – especially for the booming population in Asia.

Your end-product need to be practical and socially-driven with a clear vision to deliver positive impact for the end-users you have in mind.

THE AYDA JOURNEY

1. SUBMISSION DEADLINE
   14 August 2020

2. PRELIMINARY JUDGING
   Top 5 finalists will progress to oral presentation stage.

3. ORAL PRESENTATION
   Top 5 finalists will present their designs to a panel of judges.

4. NATIONAL FINALS
   A national Gold winner will be selected from each country.

5. INTERNATIONAL FINALS
   The national Gold winners will compete in the international finals for the "Asia Young Designer of the Year" award.

NATIONAL AWARDS

2. SILVER AWARD
   Cash money Rp 15,000,000 + Internship opportunities

1. GOLD AWARD
   Cash money Rp 20,000,000 + Internship opportunities
   Asian Young Designer Summit 2021

3. BRONZE AWARD
   Cash money Rp 10,000,000 + Internship opportunities

INTERNATIONAL AWARDS

ALUMNI’S CHOICE AWARD
Cash money Rp 5,000,000

HONORARY MENTION
Cash money Rp 3,000,000

BEST LECTURER
Product Voucher Rp 5,000,000

UNIVERSITY WITH THE MOST ENTRIES
Product Voucher Rp 5,000,000

Disclaimer: Each of the awards below applies to both Architectural and Interior Design categories.

Main Award:
Asia Young Designer of the Year

The opportunity to attend a 6-week, all expenses paid Design Discovery Program at Harvard University’s Graduate School of Design, U.S.A. worth up to USD 10,000 in the program’s June 2022 cohort.

Sub-Awards:

NIPPON PAINT COLOUR AWARD
Cash prize of USD 1,000

BEST SUSTAINABLE DESIGN
Cash prize of USD 1,000

BEST DESIGN IMPACT
Cash prize of USD 1,000
PAST WINNER

AYDA 2019 NATIONAL ARCHITECTURAL WINNERS

1. Febri Aji Prasatya
   Universitas Pembangunan Nasional

2. Garda Ady Yasa
   Universitas Brawijaya

3. Ronaldi
   Universitas Katolik Parahyangan

HONORARY MENTION

Ari Pandi P.
Universitas Gadjah Mada

Jimmy C. Linaga
Universitas Kristen Duta Wacana

HONORARY MENTION

AYDA 2019 NATIONAL INTERIOR DESIGN WINNERS

1. Grota Elsa Nurjaya
   Universitas Padjadjaran

2. Candra Sitiawan S.
   Universitas Bina Nusantara

3. Muhammad A.
   Universitas Nekorn Bandung

HONORARY MENTION

Check out past winning projects at www.AYDA-Indonesia.com

Check out past winning projects at www.AYDA-Indonesia.com
How to write a relevant and powerful design concept statement

Your write-up will be the first component on the presentation board to be reviewed by our judges. It should not be more than 800 words. It should also provide the structure for your oral presentation if you are shortlisted to present your design concept to the judges. It should answer the following questions:

- How will your future-proof design concept solve and/or benefit the communities and societies around it?
- How do you envision the ecological, sociological, and technological aspects that may contribute to the well-being of humanity?
- What is your design's impact on the environment based on its concept, materials, maintenance, energy usage and water and waste management?
- In your opinion, what is the one key component that must exist in future-proof designs?

Your research process

- What was your research methodology?
- Who was your main source of information and/or inspiration during your research?
- What questions and scope of work did you consider during your research process?
- Was the research methodology effective?
- What did you learn from your research findings?

OTHER ASPECTS TO CONSIDER WHEN PREPARING THE DESIGN CONCEPT STATEMENT

01 CONCEPTUALISATION
Employing critical and mature solutions through effective design concepts and communications.

02 DESIGN INNOVATION
Thinking out-of-the-box to implement inventive and innovative interventions.

03 CRITICAL ANALYSIS
Finding strategic ways to resolve issues critically with traditions, culture and people in mind.

04 DESIGN SENSITIVITY
Designing with an empathetic mind-set through practical, functional and well-designed considerations.

05 SUSTAINABILITY
Adopting a sustainable and greener sensibility to allow design and architecture to coexist harmoniously with nature and its surroundings.

06 PLACE-MAKING
Understanding the importance of interactions between the people as well as significant cultural contexts.

07 FORWARD-THINKING
Challenging conventional pragmatisms to re-enact new fundamentals to spatial appreciation and visual impacts.
HOW TO DESIGN WITH IMPACT?

DESIGNING WITH PEOPLE IN MIND:

Concepts of Sustainability and Impact Delivery

For more information on the Sustainable Development Goals, visit

Traditionally, architects and interior designers primarily focused on designing with aesthetics and functional needs in mind. With the rise of global environmental issues and the increased awareness that comes with it, designers today need to expand their focus to also include environmental considerations and the wellbeing of the users. In fact, both architects and interior designers need to realize that they play a big role in identifying the environmental impacts of any building by

ensuring that it is built with material and products that are environmentally-friendly.

Formed with the intention to cultivate and groom young designers across Asia, the Asia Young Designer Awards encourages students to provide practical design solutions for the new world by taking into consideration aesthetic features, the design impact as well as elements of sustainability.

Many sustainable design practices today are aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), also known as the Global Goals, which have been adopted by all United Nations Member States in 2015 as a call-to-action to end poverty, protect the planet and ensure that everyone enjoys peace and prosperity by 2030.

Through AYDA, we aim to empower and educate students to take a holistic design approach when it comes to their projects, which are aligned to 4 of the 17 goals below listed in the SDGs:

1. Affordable and clean energy
2. Industry, innovation, and infrastructure
3. Sustainable cities and communities
4. Climate action

The built environment is a major source of energy consumption and a potentially crucial energy producer. Buildings must be designed to limit energy as well as to produce and recycle energy.

This means that there is a need for designers to design and construct buildings that utilise appropriate energy technology under the given geographical, climatic and cultural conditions. Examples include the use of daylight, natural ventilation or materials that support heating or cooling, such as the use of heavy exterior walls in a hot and dry climate.

Example: https://inhachetto.com/project/40-powerhouse-kjorbo

The construction industry produces a large amount of waste and consumes large amounts of natural resources and energy. Integrating sustainability in the built environment requires an eco-conscious approach to ensure a decrease in pollution and waste.

As such, the development of both physical and digital infrastructures is required to promote sustainable trade and coexistence, including focus on the industry’s use of local materials and resources. This requires training and the development of new competences at all levels in the building industry, as well as research and prototypes to test the potential of new tools, processes and solutions.

Example: https://smile-plastics.com/inspiration/

A built environment should be sustainable, where components of architecture, design and planning contribute in multiple ways to make cities inclusive, safe and robust.

Urban planning takes into consideration design and planning solutions that are sustainable, affordable and accessible by ensuring that its infrastructure helps to reduce pollution as well as enables walking, biking and commuting by public transport. Urban designs should also counter to the environmental impacts stemming from air and noise pollution. Examples include the integration of vegetation and greeneries.

Examples: https://www.archdaily.com/912227/nightingale-t-brother-architecture
https://www.lilac.coop/
ARCHITECTURAL CATEGORY

DESIGN CONCEPT 20%
- Identifies clear and impactful project concept and problem statement.
- Displays of effective and extensive research.
- Demonstrates the ability to propose relevant and effective solutions to the design challenges.
- Indicates critical thinking and problem-solving skills.
- Originality, relevance and impact on users.

PROMPTERS
- Does your design successfully fulfill an innate human need or solve a problem?
- Does your design facilitate better functionality and purpose for its inhabitants or visitors on a human scale?
- Is your design able to deliver and demonstrate commercial or social values?
- Does your design reflect ergonomic and environmental principles that sustain physical well-being?
- Does your design offer alternative perspectives and/or ways of solving problems.

SUSTAINABILITY & RELEVANCE 15%
- Demonstrates the capacity to support the needs of people and the environment in long-term and impactful approaches.
- (e.g., Demonstrates climate and energy responsiveness).
- Displays effective thought process and the use of renewable resources and life cycle throughout the development and maintenance of the design.
- Displays a long-lasting design and universality.

PROMPTERS
- Could your design be implemented using processes, materials and technologies available or in development today?
- Is your design a versatile one that supports people, activities and change?
- Does your design stand the test of time, from both an aesthetic and physical point of view?

DESIGN INNOVATION 15%
- Displays a high level of originality and creativity.
- Showcases the ability to deliver innovative and forward-driven interventions with the integration of technology.

PROMPTERS
- Does your design maximize or leverage tech-enabled connectivity and/or intelligence?
- Is your design original in its execution?

COLOUR USAGE 10%
- Showcases brilliant and creative use of colours.
- Showcases brilliant display of balance between colours, materials and design outputs.

PROMPTERS
- Does your design reflect ergonomic and environmental principles that sustain physical well-being?
- Does your design offer alternative perspectives and/or ways of solving problems?

FUNCTIONALITY 20%
- Site and Spatial Planning/Sensitivity: The ability to deliver a layout plan which is sensible to a specific context. The integration of appropriate design and planning of individual spaces need to be tailored to the needs of users, with an emphasis on anthropometric and ergonomic principles.
- Functionality: Design is appropriate for its intended use and will create a positive change for the community and users.

PROMPTERS
- Presentation showcases a high level of clarity, creativity and interactivity.
- Design is aesthetically pleasing and effectively integrates social and cultural aspects for the users.
- Presentation focuses on both your project deliverables and design philosophy, including the journey and concept.

INTERIOR DESIGN CATEGORY

DESIGN CONCEPT 25%
- Identifies clear and impactful project concept and problem statement.
- Displays effective and extensive research.
- Demonstrates the ability to propose relevant and effective solutions to the design challenges.
- Indicates critical thinking and problem-solving skills.
- Originality, relevance and impact on users.

PROMPTERS
- Could your design be implemented using processes, materials and technologies available or in development today?
- Is your design a versatile one that supports people, activities and change?
- Does your design stand the test of time, from both an aesthetic and physical point of view?

SUSTAINABILITY & RELEVANCE 15%
- Demonstrates the capacity to support the needs of people and the environment in long-term and impactful approaches.
- (e.g., Demonstrates climate and energy responsiveness).
- Displays effective thought process and the use of renewable resources and life cycle throughout the development and maintenance of the design.
- Displays a long-lasting design and universality.

PROMPTERS
- Does your design compromise of sustainable and eco-friendly elements which help preserve the natural environment?

DELIVERY & PRESENCE 10%
- Presentation showcases a high level of clarity, creativity and interactivity.
- Presentation is cohesive and demonstrates a high level of understanding of the design challenges and solutions given paired with appropriate visual aids, graphics and/or animations.
- Presentation focuses on both your project deliverables and design philosophy, including the journey and concept.

FUNCTIONALITY 15%
- Spatial planning: Appropriate design and planning of individual spaces as suited to the specific needs of the user with an emphasis on anthropometric and ergonomic principles.
- Functionality: Design is appropriate for its intended use and has a positive impact which benefits the community and users holistically.
- Displays a high level of the integration between aesthetic and practicality.

PROMPTERS
- Does your design maximize or leverage tech-enabled connectivity and/or intelligence?
- Is your design original in its execution?

COLOUR USAGE 15%
- Design is aesthetically pleasing and effectively integrates social and cultural aspects for the users.
- Place-making: Creates opportunities for users to interact through the use of the space.

PROMPTERS
- Displays a long-lasting design and universality.

SUSTAINABILITY & RELEVANCE 15%
- Demonstrates the long-term capacity to support the needs of people and the environment (e.g., Demonstrates climate and energy responsiveness). Displays effective thought process and use of renewable resources and life cycle throughout the development and maintenance of the design.

PROMPTERS
- Does your design compromise of sustainable and eco-friendly elements which help preserve the natural environment?
SUBMISSION

SUBMISSION CHECKLIST

1. NAME AND THEME CONCEPT
   All projects must start with the project title and theme/concept.

2. DESIGN CONCEPT STATEMENT
   The design statement should not be more than 800 words and submitted as a Microsoft Word file. It must also be included during submission via website www.ayda-indonesia.com

3. PRESENTATION BOARDS (A3 SIZE)
   - At least 3, but not more than 4, boards are to be submitted, based on the digital copy.
   - Board 1 must show existing site photos (if applicable), property/site developer (if applicable), floor plan, elevation, furniture layout plan and site analysis.
   - Boards 2, 3, and 4 must show 3D perspectives. Refer to the section ‘COLOURS’ for instructions on the use of colour.
   - Presentation boards must be designed in a portrait format and must be at least 300 dpi in JPEG format only.
   - The digital version of the A3 boards of the project must be saved in a folder named ‘Presentation Board’, and file name set as Board 1.

4. PHOTOGRAPHS
   - Upload a photo of yourself.
   - Individual perspectives must be at A4 size (minimum). These files must be saved in a folder titled “Perspectives”. The JPEG file should follow the naming convention based on “area”. For example: Living room/Lobby.
   - All image files must be at least 300 dpi in JPEG format only.

5. LABELLING THE PRESENTATION BOARDS
   - Label all areas on the floor plan.
   - Do not place your name or other identification details on your boards to ensure anonymity during the judging process.

6. COLOURS
   - All colours used in the project, if any, must come from Nippon Paint’s range of colours.

7. PROJECT LAYOUT SIZE
   - Minimum 5,000 m² for Architecture Category
   - Minimum 300 m² for Interior Design Category
   - Must be real site
   - Visit www.ayda-indonesia.com to download the colour chips.

SUBMISSION PROCESS

All completed entries must be submitted before

15 AUGUST 2020
SATURDAY

For enquiries please contact
ayda@nipponpaint-indonesia.com

Log on to
www.ayda-indonesia.com
for more information

ONLINE SUBMISSION

Complete the online entry form at www.ayda-indonesia.com

APPENDIX

RULES & REGULATIONS

1. Participants must be enrolled in an interior design, architectural and/or other relevant courses at an educational institution.
2. This award is open to all interior design students in their second year and above, as well as architectural students in their third year and above.
3. Only one entry is allowed per student.
4. Entries must strictly conform to the submission guidelines and must be online submitted at www.ayda-indonesia.com
5. Final date of entry is 14 August 2020.
6. All entries shall become the property of Nippon Paint Group of Companies.
7. The Judges’ decisions are final.
8. Shortlisted candidates will be notified to make an oral presentation as part of the final judging procurement.
9. Winners will be notified to attend a ceremony. Winning entries may be featured in marketing and promotional materials as deemed appropriate by the organizer and sponsor.
10. Prizes are non-transferable and non-exchangeable for cash or credit.
11. The organizer reserves the right to substitute prizes with another product of similar retail value without prior notice.
The Harvard Design Discovery Program is applicable to the awarded Asia Young Designer of the year only.

The Harvard Design Discovery Program is a 6-week summer program at Harvard University’s Graduate School of Design (Harvard GSD), which welcomes people – from recent high school and college graduates to seasoned professionals – to explore and experience pursuing a graduate-level studio-based education in architecture, landscape architecture, or urban planning and design. The program offers:

- A chance to learn first-hand what it's like to pursue an education or career in the architectural and interior design fields.
- An immersive culture that is challenging, rewarding and exhilarating.
- An opportunity to experience and gain an in-depth insight from leaders in the fields of design.
- A rigorous course of intensive studio work, lectures, workshops, critiques and field trips – sometimes social, and sometimes solitary.

Section L1) Disclaimer and remarks

1) The Asia Young Designer Awards, or AYDA, is an extension of NIPSEA Management Co. Pte Ltd’s (NIPSEA) inclusive business arm promoting its education initiatives. It is an award for architectural and interior design students in Asia.

2) The Design Discovery Program at Harvard University’s Graduate School of Design (Harvard GSD) is NOT a sponsor, contributor and/or a partner of AYDA or NIPSEA, its organisations and/or its associated affiliates.

3) Acceptance into the Harvard GSD is determined in entirety and solely by the Harvard GSD’s Admission Authorities and/or its faculties.

4) Any and/or all decisions on entry acceptance and/or non-acceptance to its programs decided by the Harvard GSD is final. Responses and/or reasons may or may not be offered at the sole discretion of the Harvard GSD.

Section L2) Cost, tuition, restrictions and conditions

1) Upon successful acceptance of your application by the Harvard GSD and Visa approval by the US Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and/or approvals required of you and any other Government or Institutional authorities; organisers of AYDA, NIPSEA Management Co. Pte Ltd (NIPSEA) and/or your local AYDA representatives will assist you with all other matters to prepare you for your program at Harvard GSD in the June 2022 cohort.

2) The tuition and accommodation fees during your Harvard Graduate GSD Design Discovery Program will be paid for by AYDA/NIPSEA. AYDA/NIPSEA will undertake the following cost:

- Per Diem will be provided at the discretion of AYDA/NIPSEA.
- Miscellaneous expenditure e.g. personal shopping, personal care products or expenses, entertainment, sightseeing, tours etc. are not included. Please prepare sufficient USD for your personal use.
- Family members and/or friends are not allowed to accompany you on this program, nor are they allowed to share the housing facility that is provided to you by AYDA/NIPSEA.

3) Exceptions and conditions: Should your application be rejected by Harvard GSD or you are denied/fail to obtain a US entry Visa, the compensation may be offered in lieu. The amount of the compensation will only be up to USD5,000.00 only, but will be at the sole discretion of the organisers of AYDA/NIPSEA.

5) The Asia Young Designer Awards and/or its associated organisations, partners, agencies, sponsors and/or its employees will not be held responsible for non-acceptance of the winner(s) of AYDA due to circumstances that are not within its control and/or scope of authorisation; for whatever reason, whatsoever.

6) The Asia Young Designer Awards, its associated organisations and/or its employees will endeavour to assist the winner(s) to submit and provide additional information within its scope to support their application towards the Design Discovery Program at Harvard GSD.
Section 1.3 FAQs and policies information for international students

International students
Participants of Design Discovery come from across the globe, with international participants making up 43% of the program's population. With such a culturally diverse student body, Design Discovery’s learning environment provides a unique perspective of the impact of design across nations.

International applicants are encouraged to apply early and to begin the I-20 application process by early March. Additional information regarding the I-20 process will be provided upon admission. A brief overview of visa requirements is outlined below.

Important Visa Information
Design Discovery is considered a full-time academic program. International participants entering the U.S. must enter on an F-1 student visa. Neither Electronic System for Travel Authorization (ESTA) nor the B-2 visa allows full-time study. ESTA and B-2 visas are only for international travellers whose main reason for visiting the United States is tourism. Do not attempt to enter the United States on either ESTA or the B-2 visa. Attempting to enter the United States on ESTA or the B-2 visa to attend a full-time non-degree program is a violation of the US visa policy and you risk being denied entry to the United States.

Canadian applicants
If you will be enrolled in courses as specified above, you are required to request an F-1 certificate. However, you do not need to obtain an F-1 visa stamp in your passport prior to traveling to the US. Instead, you will present your I-20 certificate at the port of entry.

International applicants currently studying in the United States
If you are currently studying in the U.S. and will not be graduating this spring, you do not need to apply for a new visa sponsored by Harvard; you may attend Design Discovery on your current F-1 visa. You must, however, ask your school’s international office for approval to attend our program. If you are studying in the U.S. and graduating this spring, you may want to consider transferring your F-1 visa to Harvard. You may download the transfer form at:
https://www.harvard.edu/transfer-form-students

English Proficiency Test
International applicants, except those from countries where English is the native language or who are currently enrolled in a university within the United States, must submit ONE of the following:

A valid score from the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) internet-based test
The minimum required TOEFL iBT total score is 92, with the following minimum section requirements: reading, 23; speaking, 23; listening, 22; writing, 23. Please have test results submitted to the Harvard University’s Graduate School of Design, institution code 3455. For further information about the TOEFL exam, please visit:
(“Please check with Harvard GSD on the latest minimum score requirement prior to application”)

Duolingo test
The minimum required score is 81.
(“Please check with Harvard GSD on the latest minimum score requirement prior to application”)

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

Q: I am an international student. Do I need to apply for a visa if I am currently attending a US college or university?
A: No. However, you must ask your school’s international office for approval to attend our program in lieu of applying for a new visa.

Q: For international students, is there a minimum TOEFL score that must be achieved?
A: Yes. The minimum required TOEFL iBT total score is 92, with the following minimum section requirements: reading, 23; speaking, 23; listening, 22; writing, 23. The preferred total TOEFL iBT score is 104 or above, with individual section scores of 26 or above.
(“Please check with Harvard GSD on the latest minimum score requirement prior to application”)

Q: Can other English proficiency tests be substituted to replace TOEFL?
A: Yes, applicants may take the Duolingo test in lieu of the TOEFL.

GENERAL FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS – DESIGN DISCOVERY

Q: How old do I have to be to apply to Design Discovery?
A: Applicants must be at least 18 years of age and must have a high school diploma or the equivalent. A high level of academic skill is necessary to take full advantage of our rigorous program.

Q: How do I submit my transcript(s)? Do I need to send an official copy with my application?
A: Transcripts should be submitted electronically through the online application. Applicants should scan a copy of their transcript(s) and upload these documents as part of the online application. During the application process, it is not necessary to send an official transcript.

Q: Does my transcript need to be official, or can I scan an unofficial version?
A: Scanned transcripts can be unofficial or official. If we need further information, we may ask for an official transcript to be sent to our office for review.

Q: I am having technical difficulties with the online application (such as uploading a transcript). What do I do?
A: You may contact the Design Discovery office at discovery@gsd.harvard.edu.

Q: I don’t have a background in design—can I apply?
A: Yes. Design Discovery is a program designed to introduce Architecture, Landscape Architecture, and Urban Planning & Design to those who have interest in the areas but have little to no experience within the disciplines.

Q: Can I apply for more than one concentration at the same time?
A: Participants of the program are exposed to all three concentrations through lectures, but your studio work will focus on only one chosen concentration. Participants have one week to switch concentrations once the program has begun.

Q: Does the program cover design thinking?
A: Yes, it does. The program is as much about the ‘mind-set’ as it is about the ‘toolset’ of designers. Many of our students have gone on to other disciplines, taking with them what is now called ‘design thinking’: the processes, mental habits, and methods of research and collaboration that are second nature to designers which can be beneficially applied to all fields and areas of study.

Q: Where do most students live? Are there dorms?
A: Most participants live on campus in dormitories provided by the Harvard Law School. Others may live within walking distance of the school.

Q: Can I be removed from your program’s mailing list?
A: Yes, you may. To remove yourself from the program’s mailing list, email a request to unsubscribe from our mailing list with your name and address to discovery@gsd.harvard.edu.