



# The Common App for Awards Alignment

The goal of the Awards Alignment program is three-fold; to align awards programs to support the values of the Institute embraced by the Big Move, to simplify the process of multiple award submissions so that firms of all sizes and resources can fairly compete, and to collect, track, and make available to the membership consistent data of our work. By providing award juries with broader and more consistent performance information, projects may be evaluated more holistically in multiple aspects of performance.

## What is it?

- The Common App is a suite of consistent project data entry fields that cover both general project information and simple performance metrics. The performance metrics are aggregated and automatically generate the “spider graph”, a single graphic output that can provide a jury with a high level view of project performance (see page 2).

## Why does it matter?

- By including project performance metrics, the awards programs will better align with the values of the Institute and reinforce the Framework for Design Excellence.
- Simplicity of the awards program submission process and consistency across AIA Awards Programs will ease the financial and time burden on firms submitting for awards and level the playing field for all firms of all resources.
- Using the awards program to collect consistent project metrics across all levels of the Institute will allow the AIA to build a robust database of building performance that can be used to track our collective progress towards a more sustainable future. The data will also be leveraged for strategic research, advocacy, and practice support.
- The performance metrics included in award applications will serve as a standing reminder of the importance of incorporating high performance strategies into all design projects. The Top Ten Toolkit is available as a resource to help all firms understand and leverage these strategies in their design work.

## What types of questions are included?

- 30 questions on project performance are included in The Common App, spanning all 10 measures from the Framework for Design Excellence.
- The questions are designed to be simple, yet meaningful. Most are Yes/No questions that focus on design strategies and process.
- Some questions provide an external link so that relevant metrics can be looked up online.
- Other than energy, the 30 questions require no technical expertise to answer and require less than 20 minutes to answer.
- No single strategy, third party certification, or process is required and no answer is penalized.

## What the Common App is Not:

- The COTE Top Ten submission process
- A requirement that all projects to pursue sustainability strategies
- Focused primarily on energy
- An onerous, time consuming process
- Substitute for Knowledge Community specific criteria for jurying



The project performance spider graph

## The Framework for Design Excellence

**Measure 1: Design for Integration:** What's the big idea? How does the project demonstrate the intersection of design excellence and building performance?

**Measure 2: Design for Community:** How does this project make the most of its surrounding community, integrate with it, and give back?

**Measure 3: Design for Ecology:** How does this project respond, connect, and contribute to the surrounding ecosystem?

**Measure 4: Design for Water:** How does the project use water wisely and handle rainfall responsibly?

**Measure 5: Design for Economy:** How does the design show that higher performance can be cost-effective?

**Measure 6: Design for Energy:** How much energy does the project use, is any of that energy generated on-site from renewable sources, and what's the net carbon impact?

**Measure 7: Design for Wellness:** How does the design promote the comfort and health of those who spend time in it?

**Measure 8: Design for Resources:** How were the decisions about the materials used based on an understanding of their impact, especially carbon impact?

**Measure 9: Design for Change:** How does the project design anticipate adapting to new uses, adapt to climate change, and support resilient recovery from disasters?

**Measure 10: Design for Discovery:** What lessons for better design have been learned through the process of project design, construction, and occupancy?



**What do we need from you?**

- The Common App is in its second Beta Test phase. At this time both the Housing and Community Development and the Committee on Architecture for Education will be utilizing it on their upcoming call for entries with other KCs anxious and willing to incorporate it into their awards programs later in the year. To ensure that this next testing phase is as up to date as it can be, we are looking for other Knowledge Communities to review the App, test drive it with one of your projects and provide us with constructive feedback. We truly want this platform to be universal and applicable to as many constituents as possible - your critique is welcome and will only make the platform better.
- Please send comments, questions, feedback to both Anne Schopf ([aschopf@mahlum.com](mailto:aschopf@mahlum.com)) and Corey Squire ([corey.squire@gmail.com](mailto:corey.squire@gmail.com))