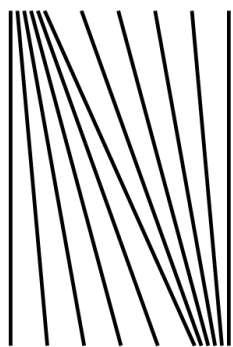


ENTRY RULES



Best of NeoCon 2023

Best of NeoCon 2023
Submission Platform
Opens March 1

Final Submission
deadline is May 19
@ 11:59 p.m. EDT

Onsite judging is
June 9-10

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Please download, digitally circulate, and/or print this information for all parties involved in completing your entry or entries. Then, visit the [Best of NeoCon Submission Platform](#) to enter.

Acoustics and Privacy	Acoustic Solutions Panels / Partitions / Screens / Space Dividers Work Pods	
Flooring	Carpet: Area Rugs Carpet: Broadloom Carpet: Modular Hard Surface Flooring: Natural Materials Hard Surface Flooring: Vinyl / LVT Specialty Flooring	
Furniture	Benching Case Goods Collections for Collaboration Conference Room Furniture Education Solutions Enhancements to Furniture Systems Furniture Systems Lounge Furniture Collections Seating: Benches Seating: Conference Seating: Ergonomic Desk/Task Seating: Guest Seating: Modular	Seating: Sofas & Lounge Seating: Stacking Seating: Stools Tables: Café Tables: Communal Tables: Conference Tables: Height-Adjustable Tables: Occasional Tables: Task Storage Work from Home Solutions Workplace Accessories
Healthcare	Healthcare: Flooring Healthcare: Guest & Lounge Seating Healthcare: Patient Seating Healthcare: Storage and Accessories Healthcare: Textiles	
Interior Products and Solutions	Architectural Products Demountable Walls Signage & Wayfinding Surfacing Materials & Finishes Wall Treatments	
Lighting	Lighting: Decorative Lighting: Task	
Outdoor	Outdoor: Fabrics Outdoor: Shade Outdoor Furniture: Seating Outdoor Furniture: Tables	
Technology	Technology: Accessories & Support Devices Technology: Integrated Solutions Technology: Product Specifications Software Technology: Workplace Solutions Software	
Textiles	Textiles: Performance & Specialty Textiles: Upholstery	

The Competition anticipates one Gold Award and one Silver Award in each category. There are also cross-category awards for Innovation, Sustainability, and Business Impact, and one Best of Competition Award. All products in all categories will be considered for the cross-category and Best of Competition awards - an entrant cannot submit an entry directly for these awards.

The Best of NeoCon 2023 honors new products introduced to the U.S. market since June of 2022. There are 56 product categories. The competition is presented by NeoCon and managed by Eileen McMorrow.

Eligibility

Manufacturers who are tenants of theMART and exhibitors of NeoCon, June 12-14, 2023, are eligible to enter new products introduced since June 2022.

Each entry must be the work or property of the Competition entrant (manufacturer) or submitted by a firm authorized to represent the manufacturer (such as an industrial designer). If a public relations firm or representative is completing the entry form, there is section to provide contact details. Competition management will contact PR with any questions before reaching out to the entrant company. The Competition entrant will provide full NeoCon exhibitor company contact details including names of product managers, designers, presenters, and their cell phone numbers to connect during judging.

By entering the Competition, the entrant warrants that the submitted images are the property of the submitter; that the images do not infringe on the copyrights, trademarks, moral rights, rights of privacy/publicity, or intellectual property rights of any person or entity; that no other party has any right, title, claim, or interest in the images; and agrees to indemnify, defend, and hold Merchandise Mart Properties, Inc., and its parents, members, managers, trustees, affiliates, subsidiaries, employees, and agents harmless from any and all claims, damages, injuries, costs, and expenses related to entrant's submissions. Employees of NeoCon, the Competition manager, Competition partners/vendors and each of their affiliates, subsidiaries, and agents, as well as their immediate family members (spouse, parent, child, sibling, and their respective spouses, regardless of where they live) or persons living in the same households of such individuals, whether related or not, are not eligible to enter. Entrants must be at least 18 years of age as of the date of entry. COMPETITION IS VOID WHERE PROHIBITED.

NeoCon Privacy Policy

By entering the Best of NeoCon, manufacturers will automatically receive information about the Best of NeoCon by mail, email, or phone. This information may come from MMPI, NeoCon, or companies affiliated with NeoCon. Entry will be used as described in the Entry Rules and in [MMPI's Privacy Policy](#). You will be asked to agree the [Terms of Service](#).

Judging

Jurors are interior designers, architects, and corporate, institutional, government, and healthcare facilities executives. Entries will be pre-judged/screened digitally two weeks before the in-person judging dates on Friday, June 9, and Saturday, June 10, prior to the opening day of NeoCon, Monday, June 12. All decisions are final.

Submission

The [Best of NeoCon](https://bestofneocon.secure-platform.com/a) Submission Platform is run on OpenWater:
<https://bestofneocon.secure-platform.com/a>

Entry Fees & Deadlines

- Three entry submission dates and entry fees are offered.
- Payment is via credit card.
- Non-U.S.-based companies may pay by ACH/bank direct deposit.
- There are no refunds for paid fees after judging has been completed.

<u>Entry Type</u>	<u>Fee</u>	<u>Date @ 11:59 p.m. EDT</u>
Early	\$700.00	March 1 through April 21
Regular	\$800.00	April 22 through May 5
Late	\$900.00	May 6 through May 19

Product Introduction

Contract/commercial furniture and furnishings manufacturers may enter products in the competition that are new to the U.S. market since June 2022 and have not been entered into the Best of NeoCon competition in June 2022.

NO PROTOTYPES are permitted. Products should have SKU numbers and be available to ship by November 1, 2023. Entrants must be official NeoCon 2023 tenants/exhibitors via theMART Floors 1, 3, 6, 10, 11, 14, 15, and the 7th Floor Expo Hall.

A general Product Description of 200 words maximum is required and not scored.

Number of Entries per Manufacturer: Unlimited

Each manufacturer/brand may enter as many products into the competition in as many categories as they wish. Any product may be entered in one or more categories as the product fits, and products that cross categories may be entered into different categories, where they will be evaluated by different teams of jurors. There are 56 product categories.

If a product is entered into an additional category, an additional entry fee must be paid, and an additional digital entry must be completed. An entrant can duplicate an existing entry and use the drop-down menu to select the category.

Category Assignment

Each product is reviewed online by the Competition management team. If the reviewers deem a product is better suited to another category, an email will be sent to the entrant explaining why or requesting a call to review the product's merits so we can define the best category for judging. The review team also may determine if it should be entered in more than one category.

Sometimes after the jury receives the presentation, they determine that it belongs in a different category. If so, the entry will be redirected to the team for that category, and the other jury will come to the showroom or booth to review the product.

Multiple Category Entries

If a manufacturer wishes to enter the same product into more than one category, the entry steps are duplicated for that category entry, perhaps with new text about why it can also be judged in a second or third category. There is a fee for each entry in each category.

For any product entered in more than one category, it is likely that it will be judged by independent jury teams. In-person judging is conducted according to the showroom's floor-based time schedule. A first team to arrive will tell you which category they are judging. A second team usually will follow for the additional category. Please be certain the product presenter remains in the showroom/booth until all categories/products entered are judged.

Marketing & Promotional Benefits

A Digital Guide to all Entrants and Winners will be showcased on the NeoCon website, and a link to it will be emailed to the NeoCon database. Listings will be:

- Alphabetical by manufacturer with product name, category, showroom/booth location.
- By category with manufacturer and product name, category, showroom/booth location.

All Entrants will receive:

- Entrant visibility by category on the NeoCon website through April 2024.
- Entrant signage for display at showroom/booth during NeoCon
- Entrant promotion (with entry opt-in) on NeoCon social media channels. (Entrant social media handles will be requested with entry registration.)

All Winners will receive:

- Winner promotion on Best of NeoCon/NeoCon website by category and designated award through April 2024.
- Winner promotion on Best of NeoCon/NeoCon social media.
- Winner promotion via Best of NeoCon/NeoCon press release and media efforts.
- Winner signage package for display at showroom/booth during NeoCon
- Winner digital asset package for winner's promotional use.

Jury & Judging Schedule

The jurors will review all entries in their assigned categories digitally before arriving at the showroom or booth. They will view the images and video (if provided), and record comments and questions before, during, and after the product presentation. If requested, those juror comments will be made

available to winners in the two weeks after the close of NeoCon.

The manufacturer will have the opportunity to present information in-person to the jury teams, composed of interior designers, architects, and facilities managers, in theMART showroom or booth.

IMPORTANT: PLEASE READ CAREFULLY

The jurors will conduct in-person evaluations (estimating 300 products) over two days and eight floors of theMART to announce winners at 8:00 a.m. on Monday, June 12.

Judging will be conducted BY FLOOR. Each NeoCon floor will have a dedicated time slot. Please review judging times by floor (see timetable below) and arrange for product presenters to be in the showroom/booth to present the product when the jury arrives. **The competition is not able to grant "pre-scheduled" judging times.**

Manufacturers will have 7 to 15 minutes to present their products to the jury, based on the product category or the complexity of the product. Please designate the ideal presenter and train an alternate person in the event of an emergency or travel delays. We advise making presenter travel arrangements BEFORE completing the entry form. (This may require scheduling air travel and hotel rooms for arrival up to three days before NeoCon officially begins.)

Failure to follow all entry rules may disqualify entries.

The order of floor judging is determined by theMART. All times are CDT.

Judging will be on Friday, June 9, and Saturday, June 10.

Friday, June 9

Floor 10, 11 (1100 through 1191), 14	8:45 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.
Floor 6, 11 (1194 through 11-136)	1:30 p.m. - 3:30 p.m.
Floor 3	1:30 p.m. - 5:30 p.m.

Saturday, June 10

7th floor Booths 7-1000 to 7-6000 (Northside)	8:30 a.m. - 10:30 a.m.
7th floor Booths 7-7000 to 7-10000 (Southside)	10:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.
Jury Category Scoring & Deliberation	12:30 p.m. - 2:30 p.m.
Finalists for Best of Competition reviewed	3:00 p.m. - 5:30 p.m.

Product Finalists (usually four to six) for the Best of Competition are selected from the Gold Award winners. They are reviewed by all jury members from all teams. If a product is a finalist, product presenters and marketing managers (whose cell phone numbers are on the entry form) will be called and asked to return to the showroom or booth to present to the entire jury.

Best of Competition Process

Any jury team can nominate a Best of Competition Product Finalist, though some teams may not designate any of the products they reviewed as Best of Competition-winning products. A jury member makes the case for other teams to evaluate their Best of Competition-nominated product. Once all cases are made and the collective jury agrees, finalist manufacturers are called.

The manufacturer will receive a phone call ONLY IF a product is a Best of Competition Finalist.

Between 3:00 p.m. and 4:30 p.m. on Saturday, we will call the cell phone numbers of the two to three people listed as presenters for the product until we reach one. Only one of them needs to return to the showroom/booth to meet the entire jury, who will receive finalists' product presentations to determine the overall Best of Competition. The whole jury moves as a group in theMART from showroom to showroom until all finalist presentations are completed.

The jury gathers, and a democratic run-off vote is held to determine The Best of Competition. The jurors and competition director are sworn to secrecy until we announce the winners at The Best of NeoCon Awards Event on Monday morning.

Entry Criteria: Questions for Juror Evaluation

The jurors for your product will review all entries in their assigned categories digitally before arriving at the showroom or booth. They will review the answers to the criteria questions; view the images; and video (if provided); and record comments and questions before, during, and after the product presentation. Jurors proceed to scoring after they evaluate all product entries in the category.

The scale is weighted 1-10 for all scoring; 1 is the lowest and 10 is the highest.
If requested, juror comments will be available to winners two weeks after the close of NeoCon.

Criteria/Questions/ Word Count

Aesthetics & Innovation / 175 words

Describe how this product makes an aesthetic contribution and adds to the beauty and comfort of any commercial interior. Does it possess innovative or unique qualities?

Built Environment Solution, Durability, Functionality & Quality / 350 words

Explain the product's unique contribution to the built environment and where it is most likely to be specified. What problem does it solve? How is it better than existing solutions? Address the product's quality standards, expected durability, and any performance warranty.

Industry Certifications & Standards

What industry certifications or industry standards does the product hold or meet? *See list on following page.*

- ADA
- AWI Woodworking Quality Certification
- ANSI/BIFMA Standards Compliant
- BIFMA Compliant Registry
- BIFMA LEVEL
- Beyond Neutral
- CARB
- California Proposition 65
- Canadian Electrical Code
- Canadian Safety Standards
- Clean Air/Clean Air Gold
- Cradle to Cradle Certified Declare (Intl Living Future Institute)
- Environmental Product Declaration (EPD) from UL Solutions
- FEMB Level
- FloorScore (SCS)
- FSC Chain of Custody
- GBI/Green Globes
- Green Business Bureau
- GREENGUARD/GREENGUARD Gold
- Green Label Plus
- Green Seal
- Health Care Without Harm Healthy Interiors Criteria
- HHI - Healthier Hospitals Initiative
- HPD Open Standard
- Indoor Advantage/Indoor Advantage Gold (SCS)
- International Building Code
- International Fire Code
- ISO14000-ISO9001
- ISO9001 Quality
- ISO45001 Health & Safety
- ISO14000 Environmental Management
- LEED (contributes points)
- Living Building Challenge
- Living Product Challenge
- Martindale
- MAS Certified Green
- National Building Code of Canada
- NFPA 70 National Electrical Code
- NFPA 1 Fire Prevention Code
- NFPA 101 Life Safety Code
- OEC Certified
- OEKOTEX 100
- Reach
- Red List Free
- UL/ETL listed for UA & Canada
- UL Listed carbon neutral
- WELL Building Standard
- Wyzenbeek
- Other (List in next field)
- N/A

Additional Industry Certifications & Standards /100 words

Please provide any additional industry certifications or industry standards the product may have that are not listed with the previous question.

Environmental Sustainability / 275 words

Does the product have a sustainable manufacturing process or use recyclable or biodegradable components? Does it qualify for industry environmental certifications, standards, or labels, other than those indicated in the previous question? Please list all that apply.

List Pricing in U.S. \$: List a price or price range; figures only please.

Product Images for Jurors, Gallery of Entrants, Social Media & Promotions

Entrants will upload product images (minimum 3, maximum 7) to be viewed by the jurors when evaluating the entry and for potential promotional usage on NeoCon social media channels.

Please note the requested nomenclature (explained below as “image name”).

If the product image is under embargo, they will be able to indicate in the Image Permissions at the end.

Image 1 for Judging Use & Social Media

- Dimensions: MUST be 1080 x 1080 pixels (tile size for the Entrant Product Gallery)
- File type: JPG
- Image Name: *Category_MfgName_ProductName_Credit*

Images 2-7 for Judging Use

- Dimensions: 1080 pixels wide by 608 pixels to 1350 pixels high.
- File type: JPG
- Image Name: *Category_MfgName_ProductName_Credit*

Image for Instagram Stories

One product image for potential promotion on NeoCon Instagram stories.

- Dimensions: 1080 x 1350 pixels
- File type: JPG
- Image Name: *Category_MfgName_ProductName_Stories_Credit*

Instagram Story Swipe Up Link

- Please provide the URL you would like your Instagram Story to swipe up to.

Images for Winners' Presentation/Hero Shots

Provide three product images for the large-format winners' presentation and for promotion on neocon.com

Critical note: The dimensions for the next three images are larger than the previous images. Please resize accordingly.

- Dimensions: (minimum): 1920 pixels wide by 1200 pixels tall
- File type: JPG
- Image Name: *Category_MfgName_ProductName_Credit*

NOTE: The company logo may be used as a placeholder image, if final images are not ready. Payment can be made before the entry is complete, and images can still be replaced **by May 19**. If a manufacturer cannot complete their entry by May 19, then the manufacturer should withdraw entry from the competition.

Image Permissions

Entrants will be asked to authorize image permissions as follows:

- Yes. Pre-Event. Entrant authorizes permission for images to be used for promotion pre-event.
- Yes. Post-Event. Entrant authorizes permission for images to be used for promotion post-event.
- No. Entrant DOES NOT AUTHORIZE permission for images to be used for promotion pre-event or post-event.

Video

Video of products, vertical format preferred, is an option that will be used as part of the judging process. Video must be product focused. Refrain from uploading video about the manufacturer/company or management.

- Length (maximum): 3 minutes
- File type: MPEG, MPG, MP4, OGG, MOV, FLV
- Video Name: Category_MfgName_ProductName_Video

Note: Vertical videos *are more likely to be used* for Best of NeoCon social media promotions.

Entrants will be asked to indicate if they authorize permission for video to be used for promotion: pre-event, post-event, or not at all.

Company Logo

Entrant will upload the company logo as a Vector logo in file types AI, EPS, PDF, or SVG.

Best of NeoCon 2023 Table of Important Dates

Submission platform opens	Wednesday, March 1, 2023
Early deadline@ \$700 per entry	Friday, April 21 @ 11:59 p.m. EDT
Regular Entry@ \$800 per entry	Friday, May 5 @ 11:59 p.m. EDT
Final Entry@ \$900 per entry	Friday, May 19 @ 11:59 p.m. EDT
Last day for image upload	Friday, May 19
Virtual judging begins	Friday, May 26
First day of judging in theMART	Friday, June 9
Second day judging	Saturday, June 10; completed by 2:00p.m.
Finalist judging After 3:30 p.m. up to 5:30 p.m.	If a product is a FINALIST for Best of Competition, the marketing contact names/showroom presenters will receive a phone call, and all jurors go to finalists' showrooms for a presentation.
Awards Event	Monday, June 12

Payment & Receipt

Payment is made digitally via [Best of NeoCon Submission Platform](#) at the end of the entry process. You may use placeholder text in the response boxes and the company logo as placeholder images to pay before the entry information is complete.

Note: There are three deadlines with increasing fees, so it is prudent to pay early. The entrant has control over the entry and may log in and out of the system to complete an entry at any time before May 19 @ 11:59 p.m. EDT.

Payment is via credit card for domestic U.S.-based companies. Non-U.S. companies will have the option to pay by direct debit from a checking account via ACH.

- Invoicing is NOT available.
- After the credit card check-out occurs, a receipt will be auto e-mailed.
- ACH payment is available for non-U.S. based companies that do not wish to use a non-U.S. bank-issued credit card. After the ACH payment is processed, a receipt will be auto-e-mailed.
- Entry fees are **not refundable** after judging takes place.

Awards/Recognition/Prizes

The Competition anticipates one Gold Award and one Silver Award in each category. However, the Jury reserves the right to not issue a Gold or Silver Award in categories where products score significantly lower than overall scores indicated for winning products. In categories with few entries, the jury reserves the right to give Gold only, or Silver only, or no award.

There are also Innovation Awards, Sustainability Awards, and one Best of Competition Award. The Innovation Awards and Sustainability Awards are determined from a consideration of all products in all categories by each team. An entrant cannot submit an entry directly for these awards.

The number of awards can range from one to four per category; in most cases, there is one Gold Award and one Silver Award. However, ONE product will receive both the Gold Award in its category and the overall Best of Competition Award. Some products will also receive an Innovation Award or a Sustainability Award.

Competition coordinators and jurors reserve the right to reassign a product entry to a more appropriate category.

The criteria used to judge the competition entrants is based on the information submitted by each manufacturer on the digital entry form regarding product qualities. The manufacturer will have the opportunity to present that information and more in-person to the jury in theMART showroom or booth.

The criteria are collectively scored on a scale of 1 (being the lowest) and 10 (being the highest).

The Best of NeoCon assigns and distributes awards that are recognition-based, not monetary prizes. There is no retail value to the awards. Representation of the awards consists of a physical award and showroom/booth winner signage.

Best of NeoCon Award Definitions

Best of Competition–The winner is one of four to five finalists nominated from approximately 275 entries judged by the teams. All 50 jurors, who are interior designers, architects and facilities managers, receive a presentation by the manufacturers of the finalists. The collective jury considers the merits of the finalists and holds a runoff vote to determine the Best of Competition.

Gold Award–The top winner in its category as determined by numeric score and consultative discussion among the five to six jury team members.

Silver Award–The second-highest performer in its category as determined by numeric score and consultative discussion among the five to six jury team members.

Innovation Award–Identifies products that offer a unique solution that the judges deem as “innovative.” The product reflects the practical implementation of ideas that result in the introduction of new goods or improvement to a type of existing product. Innovation winners may be similar to others but also offer a new idea, method or approach as part of the solution. Jury members are broadly familiar with NeoCon exhibitors and their specification experience enables them to identify innovative products.

Any Best of NeoCon entrant is eligible to be considered for one of up to 15 Innovation Awards offered. Gold, Silver and Sustainability Award-winners are also eligible for Innovation Awards.

Sustainability Award–All entrants answer these Environmental Sustainability questions: Does the product have a sustainable manufacturing process or use recyclable or biodegradable components? Does it qualify for industry environmental certifications, standards, or labels?

Based on the answers and the jurors' evaluation of the product, any Best of NeoCon entrant is eligible to be considered for one of up to 15 Sustainability Awards offered. Gold, Silver and Innovation Award-winners are also eligible for Sustainability Awards.

NEW! BUSINESS IMPACT AWARD

In 2022, the Best of NeoCon Innovation Award winners also were reviewed and judged by a group of business press, representing Fast Company, The New York Times, Forbes, The Economist, and others, as part of the Business Innovation Awards. Aimed at recognizing exceptional solutions through a business-oriented lens, seven outstanding products received the added honor of the Business Innovation Award. New this year, the **Best of NeoCon Business Impact Award** is an evolution of last year's Business Innovation Award program and will build on its success.

In their evaluation of all the Best of NeoCon entrants, the Best of NeoCon jury will answer these questions to determine which product or products to nominate for Business Impact Award consideration:

How does this product or solution contribute to business productivity and/or have an impact that benefits the end-user's business goals?

Please define reasons the Business Impact Awards jury should consider this product. Consider adaptability, ergonomics, ESG, productivity contribution, sustainability and tech-integration.

Those nominated will be reviewed by the business media jury for their vetting and consideration for the **Best of NeoCon Business Impact Awards**.

These Best of NeoCon jury selections, in addition to the Best of Competition winner, will be revealed to the business press jury on Sunday morning. At this time, the business jury will begin visiting showrooms and booths of those exhibitors. Best of NeoCon Business Impact Award candidates are evaluated by the degree to which they contribute to a more successful business and better enterprise-oriented, built environment across verticals. Criteria include: adaptability, ergonomics, ESG, experience, productivity contribution, sustainability and tech-integration.

Awards Promotional Elements

- The June 12th Awards Presentation
- A showcase on the NeoCon website
- Promotion on Best of NeoCon social media channels
- A post in the Gallery of Winners on the submission platform
- A digital asset package for winner's promotional use (digital asset packages will be electronically distributed to winners within hours of the June 12th Awards Presentation event).

Awards Presentation Event

The Best of NeoCon will announce the award winners by category on Monday, June 12, the opening morning of NeoCon at a location inside theMART. NeoCon will invite company executives to attend the Awards' presentation where winners will be notified for the first time and receive the physical award and signage for their showrooms/booths. **Please provide executive contact details on the entry form for further information.**

Winners' List

Winners will be listed by manufacturer, product name, and category on the NeoCon website on June 12, after the winners have been verified and notified.

Presented by NeoCon

[NeoCon](#) is the world's leading platform and most important event of the year for the commercial design industry since 1969. A launch pad for innovation, NeoCon offers ideas and introductions that shape the built environment today and into the future. In 2023, NeoCon will be held June 12-14. The three-day event serves as the annual gathering place for the commercial design world's manufacturers, dealers, architects, designers, facility managers, design organizations, and media. With more than one million square feet of exhibition space, the show launches thousands of new products and covers a spectrum of vertical markets including Workplace, Healthcare, Hospitality, Retail, Education, Public Space, and Government, providing unparalleled access to the latest and most innovative solutions in commercial design. The industry's major manufacturers as well as hot emerging companies showcase products and services in categories including Furniture, Fabrics, Flooring, Interior Building Products, Interior Finishes, and Technology. The exhibition is complemented by CEU programming and keynote presentations that offer expertise and insight into relevant topics as well as the future of commercial design.

NeoCon/Merchandise Mart Properties, Inc.
222 Merchandise Mart Plaza, Suite 470
Chicago, IL 60654.

Please do not contact theMART, the managers and producers of NeoCon, for anything related to the Best of NeoCon Competition.

Competition questions will be answered by the Best of NeoCon Team, directed by Eileen McMorrow:

First: Email Best of NeoCon Team at bestofneocon@themart.com

Second: Call Best of NeoCon Team at 973.509.5287