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JANA REVEDIN FOUNDER, GLOBAL AWARD FOR SUSTAINABLE ARCHITECTURE

The Global Award for Sustainable Architecture, founded in 2006 by architect and researcher Jana Revedin, annually honors five architects committed to a sustainable and innovative approach to architecture. Under the patronage of UNESCO, the award shines a light on professionals whose work responds to the ecological, cultural, and social challenges of our time.

An architect, urban planner, and professor, Jana Revedin advocates for a resilient and participatory form of architecture, one that integrates local communities and traditional know-how. Through the Global Award, she champions a vision in which architecture becomes a vital driver of sustainable development and social cohesion.



What is the theme of the 2025 edition of the Global Award for Sustainable Architecture?

The Scientific Council of the Global Award for Sustainable Architecture seeks to identify the most pressing issues not only within the field of architecture but also across construction and the vast, transdisciplinary realm of research in architecture, urbanism, and landscape design. Each year, a theme is chosen to spark essential discourse.

Following "Architecture Is Experimentation" in 2023 and "Architecture Is Education" in 2024, the 2025 edition returns to the fundamentals with "Architecture Is Construction."

This choice reflects both a deep-seated need to reconnect with our territorial roots and a growing curiosity for the revolutionary advances taking place in construction and sustainable design.

The Global Award for Sustainable Architecture recognizes architects committed to social and environmental responsibility, but also to technical and scientific innovation. What trends are emerging among this year's winners under the theme "Architecture Is Construction"?

I've observed that a new generation of architects is rooting their work in their own territorial, cultural, and environmental contexts. The "International Style" defined by Hitchcock and Johnson in the 1930s and '40s—and the top-down imposition of Western design models and tabula rasa urbanism in the Global South—are no longer relevant today.

Now, three major and essential trends are emerging: territorialization, rehabilitation, and experimentation.

Let's begin with territorialization...

To territorialize is to ground your work in a specific context—taking into account its culture, traditions, and its social and political realities. It also means relying on local and sustainable resources.

In architecture, we're at the dawn of a major paradigm shift: our relationship with nature, geography, geology, climate, and all living beings—not just humans—is returning to the forefront through a genuinely holistic approach.

Rehabilitation?

To rehabilitate is to restore value to what already exists. Rather than demolishing and rebuilding, it's about intelligently leveraging the grey energy already invested in the built environment—with creativity and enthusiasm.

The key word here is transformation. Increasingly, architects are moving away from monumentalism, which comes at the cost of excessive land use, unnecessary infrastructure, and unsustainable energy and water consumption.

The importance of rehabilitation over flashy tabula rasa projects was eloquently championed by Marco Dezzi Bardeschi and the school of monument preservation he defended, in alignment with the Venice Charter on the conservation and restoration of heritage. It's an approach worth rediscovering—because, as he put it, "We must add resources to a context, rather than subtracting from it."

And experimentation?

Experimentation lies at the heart of today's most urgent challenges. Through a transdisciplinary lens, it's crucial to move away from the comfortable repetition of rigid and meaningless models, and instead explore what I call right-tech: lightweight, recyclable structures, the use of geo- and bio-sourced materials, and inventive technological solutions focused on green energy, mobility, logistics, and construction systems.

We must fully commit to research—accelerating recycling and upcycling, improving water and energy resource management, and optimising supply chains. Our laureates boldly embed experimentation into the very core of their architectural and urban design processes, naturally involving users and their life cycles.

It is therefore no surprise that among the recent Global Award winners, we find not only architects but also landscape designers, transdisciplinary researchers, and architects who are also anthropologists, botanists, ecologists, and educational activists.



GLOBAL AWARD FOR SUSTAINABLE ARCHITECTURE

What were the key criteria that guided the selection of the 2025 Global Award laureates?

For the theme “Architecture Is Construction,” we defined six key criteria. Our five laureates—working in vastly different professional, political, and scientific contexts across the world—not only met these standards but exceeded them.

The six criteria are:

- Innovation
- Transdisciplinarity
- Adaptability
- Rehabilitation
- Right-tech
- Empowerment

How do you see the future of the award and its role in transforming the field of architecture?

The Global Award for Sustainable Architecture has repeatedly proven to be a forerunner in the world of architecture. Several of its laureates have gone on to receive the Pritzker Prize, often seen as the Nobel of architecture—not for ego-driven monumentalism, but for a political commitment to empowering communities and territories.

“Architecture serves society,” declared Walter Gropius when founding the Bauhaus in 1919. Today, a new generation of architects is following in that tradition—placing all forms of life at the heart of their practice and rethinking the discipline in light of contemporary challenges.

I believe in their commitment.

