

Passive House Award 2014: categories and selection criteria

The Passive House Institute opened entries for the 2014 Passive House Award, an international recognition of high-efficiency building. Below we summarise the categories, the requirements and the criteria the jury used to assess each project.

Meeting future energy needs on sustainable terms requires a shift in how we build. The 2014 Passive House Award, organised by the Passive House Institute, was created to distinguish the buildings and urban developments that best demonstrated that shift on an international scale. At PAPIK Group we follow these calls because they set the benchmark for Passivhaus construction worldwide.

Categories

The call recognised two main categories of entry:

- Individual buildings: single-family and multi-family homes, as well as non-residential buildings.
- Neighbourhoods and entire regions: projects under construction or already completed.

Entry requirements

Individual buildings

Entries in the individual buildings category had to be certified Passive Houses or EnerPHit buildings, in accordance with the international criteria of the Passive House Institute. Certification had to be carried out by the Passive House Institute itself or one of its accredited certifiers, and the project had to be certified and registered in the International Passive House database before 30 September 2013. All buildings had to demonstrate the use of on-site or nearby renewable energy to cover the remaining energy demand.

Neighbourhoods, regions and cities

Entries in the regions and neighbourhoods category could be in the planning phase, under construction or fully completed. Any project larger than a single building could take part: a group of buildings, a street, a neighbourhood, an entire city or a broader area. The category was open to all market actors, from builders to town councils, including clubs, associations and regional governments. Projects had to show a comprehensive approach, in which both energy efficiency and the use of on-site or nearby renewable energy were valued. At least one building had to be certified in accordance with the international criteria of the Passive House Institute, as a Passive House or EnerPHit building, and the corresponding certification, issued by the Institute or one of its accredited certifiers, had to be submitted with the entry. Certified buildings had to be registered, at a minimum, in the International Passive House database.

Buildings submitted in the individual buildings category could, at the same time, form part of a project entered in the neighbourhoods, regions and cities category. Buildings constructed as pilot projects and certified by the Passive House Institute as EnerPHit or Passive House also counted as certified buildings for the purposes of the neighbourhoods and regions category.

Selection criteria

During selection, the jury paid particular attention to projects that demonstrated one or more of the following:

- A strong ratio between construction costs and the efficiency achieved, compared with conventional construction in the same area.
- Outstanding architectural design.
- Intelligent renewable energy concepts.
- Intelligent retrofit concepts.
- The ability to overcome difficult conditions, such as demanding climates or regulatory and financial obstacles.
- The use of effective financing or regulatory systems.
- The deployment of successful awareness campaigns.

Awards

For each of the two main categories, buildings and regions or neighbourhoods, one winner was selected, along with a number of special recognitions. The prize money depended on the number of special recognitions selected and on the funding the Passive House Institute secured through its sponsors. The submission deadline was set for 30 September 2013.

The value of these awards goes beyond the trophy. They establish a shared language of quality, from the new-build Passive House standard to the EnerPHit standard for energy retrofit, and they make clear that efficiency and architectural coherence are not competing goals.

An international award does not reward theory but the finished, certified building: proof that high energy efficiency can be built, measured and lived in.