
Cresta Awards 2026

A guide to entering



Key Dates

Open for entries	2 February
Super Early Bird	2 February - 8 April
Mid Season Special	9 April - 27 May
Standard Rate	28 May - Closing
Entries Close	22 July
Judging	August
Winners Announced	22 September

Fees

	Single	Campaign
Super Early Bird*	\$395	\$695
Mid Season Special	\$495	\$795
Standard Rate	\$595	\$895

* Submit 5 or more entries in any category and your order qualifies to save an extra 10% on the total invoice.

How to enter

Entering the Cresta Awards is simple. The first step is to register at www.cresta-awards.com

Once registered, you will be able to login at any time and make, amend and pay for entries right up until the final closing date.

When you are ready to start entering work, just login and our Entry System will guide you through the process.

If you have any problems or questions, please contact our team at info@creativestandards.org and we will try to help as quickly as possible.

The awards

In each category and sub-category there is the potential to win Gold, Silver or Bronze Cresta Awards. There is no artificial limit to the number of these awards.

It is all about the quality of work.

Awards are given only on the basis of achieving a high average across our Jury that represents the best creative standards of this year's entries.

We only award our ultimate prize, a Cresta Grand Prix, to exceptional work scoring very high averaged marks. These are rare, but are only limited in quantity by the standards of work submitted. The higher the creative standards, the more Grand Prix we award.

Anyone credited on a winning entry is entitled to order one of our much coveted and sustainably-made trophies.

One Grand Prix, Gold, Silver or Bronze trophy per winning entry is shipped free of charge to entrants. Additional trophies may be ordered via <https://journal.cresta-awards.com/shop>. A Shortlist trophy is available, and may be ordered at the Cresta shop (link above).

Our trophies are made to order in a craft workshop and can take two to three months to arrive following the winners announcements.

Judging process

Cresta is unlike other awards in that it has a semipermanent Grand Jury of very carefully selected senior industry leaders, from all over the world.

Each year we refresh the jury with a particular emphasis on gender and ethnic balance. By the time judging starts, more than 120 of the world's brightest and best will be ready to review your entries.

Because they are in significant part a permanent jury they are able to track the industry's developing creative standards (from which the name Cresta derives) and maintain the highest standards in their judging.

Also, unlike most other awards, our jury members work separately to assess submissions. There is no group discussion, and no chance of politics or group pressure affecting the results. Every entry is assessed on 'a level playing field'. We believe this makes for the fairest system.

The jury's Shortlist will be announced early September 2026. And the Winners late September.

Who can enter?

1. Any client, creative agency, digital agency, design company, production company, post-production company, or individual professional may enter.
2. Where the work is a collaborative effort by more than one agency in a network, this can be acknowledged in the credits. Or, if more than one agency wishes to enter the item and have their name as the entrant, they must enter separately and each pay the appropriate fee.
3. If more than one company enters a piece of work and that work goes on to be shortlisted or win an award, all entrants will be equally credited and featured in any publicity.

Does your work qualify?

1. Work submitted must have been published, broadcast or released between 1 January 2025 and 31 July 2026. Work that has previously won or been shortlisted cannot be re-entered.
2. It must have been commissioned by, created for and approved by a client.
3. It must have appeared in a commercial or public environment.
4. We cannot accept any work specifically made for this or any other competition.
5. Work must be submitted as it appeared, and not altered in any way for the purposes of competition. (Except where required for music rights purposes.)
6. If a judge raises questions about the validity of any work, you will be required to provide evidence to support the entry.

Who should you credit?

Cresta is dedicated to recognising great creative talent. So credits should primarily be used to identify the main originators of the idea or the execution.

Our entry system will guide you through all other credits. And we are delighted to recognize everyone who has contributed to the work. You can add to or amend credits at any time up until the closing date.

Fees

Our fees are charged in US\$.

We accept payment by credit, charge or debit card, but at checkout there is also the option to pay by bank transfer. Payments made via bank transfer should be immediate and no later than 14 days. No work will be accepted into the competition until full payment is received. Card transactions will be subject to a 3% processing fee, and bank transfers to a fee of \$48.

Please note that UK entries will be subject to VAT.

What is a Pre-Order Entry?

This unique feature of Cresta enables you to purchase 'blank' entries during our discount Super Early Bird or Mid-Season periods, and then complete the entries at any time right up to closing.

It means you can take advantage of our lowest fees even if work is either not yet ready to enter, or you haven't quite decided what to enter.

To purchase one or more of these entries, just choose Pre-Order at the Category Selection stage after login. You can choose either a single or campaign entry.

Once you've purchased your 'blank' entries all you have to do is contact us when you are ready to upload your entries and we will switch your pre-ordered entries to the categories you have chosen, and then you can complete the entries as normal.

It's simple and could save you a considerable amount on entry fees.

Categories

We aim to have a comprehensive and comprehensible choice of categories. If you feel we have missed out a category important to you, please let us know. You can also contact our team at info@creativestandards.org if you are unsure where to enter your work.

1: Moving Image

Commercials for TV, Cinema, Social and Viral. Single or campaign entries. For short form video, see Social category. For brand funded video, see Brand Content.

- TV or Cinema Commercial up to 30 seconds
- TV or Cinema Commercial 31- 60 seconds
- TV or Cinema Commercial over 60 seconds
- Viral Video (any length)
- Music Video
- Film Trailers
- Game Trailers
- TV Trailers

2: Digital

Websites, Micro-sites, Apps, Ads, Banners, Games, etc. for any device. Single or campaign entries.

- Campaign Websites and Micro-Sites
- Integrated Digital Campaigns (min. of 3 platforms/technologies)
- Online Display Advertising (banners, pop-ups, takeovers)
- Online Video Ads
- Branded Apps and Games

3: Print and OOH

Newspaper, Magazine or other Publication Ads, Billboards, Posters. Single or campaign entries.

- Print Ad
- Large Format Billboard Poster
- Small Format Poster
- Interactive Poster
- Innovation in Print or OOH

4: Ambient & Experiential

For Ambient entries, work should be on or in unusual or unexpected places, may be known as guerrilla marketing. Experiential should be immersive, live and memorable experiences for consumers - encompassing live marketing and event marketing experiences. Single or campaign entries.

- Ambient
- Experiential
- Game Trailers
- TV Trailers

5: Social & Influencer

Social media campaigns, videos, ephemeral content and other social-based work.

- Best use of Instagram
- Best use of YouTube
- Best use of WhatsApp
- Best use of Facebook
- Best use of TikTok
- Social Campaign (integrated use of 2 or more of above)
- Influencer Campaigns
- Innovative use of Social Media
- Real Time Advertising
- Short-Form Ephemeral Content (Snapchat, Instagram Stories etc)
- Short-Form Social Video up to 10 seconds

6: Audio

All forms of audio-led communication, including radio advertising, branded podcasts, and audio creativity that leads in any media. Single or campaign entries.

- Radio Advertising (any length)
- Branded Podcast (any length)
- Innovative use of Sound/Audio

7: Brand Content

Film/video, AR, VR, games or other entertainment made with intent to support a brand's marketing strategy.

- Brand-Funded Film/Video (fiction)
- Brand-Funded Film/Video (factual)
- Branded Game
- Brand VR/AR
- Other Brand-Funded Content

8: Direct

Any marketing item created with intent to produce a direct response from consumers. Can be any media. Single or campaign entries.

- Print
- Film/Video
- Online Ads
- Email Newsletter
- Physical Items and Dimensional Mail

9: Integrated Campaign

Any campaign incorporating work from at least two of the above disciplines.

Integrated Campaign Sector Sub-Categories

Entrants into categories 1-9 entrants should also choose a sector sub-category from the list below:

- 01: CONSUMER PRODUCT OR SERVICE
- 02: CORPORATE
- 03: PUBLIC INTEREST OR CHARITY

10: Healthcare

Health and wellness marketing is highly regulated and often requires specialist creative knowledge and skills. These categories recognize the growing importance of healthcare marketing. Entries may include work in any medium. Single or campaign entries.

- OTC Medicines
- Prescription Medicines
- Devices
- Healthcare Services (hospitals, care homes, insurance etc)
- Wellness (work supporting healthy life-style choices)
- Mental Health Campaign
- Public Awareness (public health information campaigns)

11: B2B

Any work for this fast growing and improving specialist sector of marketing communications. Single or campaign entries.

- Print and OOH
- Film/Video
- Games/VR/AR
- Experiential or Ambient
- Website/Micro-Site
- Online Marketing

12: Luxury & Fashion

The creation of very high value brands is an area in which the marketing very often defines the brand as much as the product itself. These new awards reflect the specialist understanding and boundary-pushing creativity needed to build and maintain brands in these globalised and unique markets.

- Luxury Goods (Accessories, Watches, Leather Goods, Jewellery, etc)
- High Fashion Apparel
- Beauty (Perfume, Skincare, Make-up etc)
- Luxury Retail
- Other (Travel & Vacations, Hotels, Property, Financial, Experiences)

13: Creative Technology and The Future

This category rewards creativity applied to established or new technology. It also looks for innovative ideas that show the way forward.

- New App
- Online Journey (UX)
- Digital Brand Transformation of the Year
- Creative use of Data
- Use of AR or VR
- Integrated use of New Technologies

(For use of AI use Category 30)

14: Digital Design

Design projects primarily using digital technologies, can be online, physical installations or any other use of design in a digital environment.

- Website or Micro-Site
- Integration of Multiple Technologies
- Online Identity
- OOH Digital Installations
- Data Visualisation
- Innovative use of New Technologies

15: Design

All other single or mixed media design projects, covering print, identity and physical installations or spaces used primarily as part of a marketing initiative.

- Logos
- Brand Identity
- Brand Naming
- Packaging
- Annual Report/Brochure/Publication
- Editorial Design
- Experiential/Spatial/Environmental
- Installations or Displays
- Brand Transformation
- The Future of Design

16: Film Craft

- Outstanding Direction of a Commercial
- Outstanding Cinematography in a Commercial
- Outstanding Direction of a Brand-Funded Film
- Outstanding Cinematography in a Brand-Funded Film
- Outstanding Editing of a Commercial or Brand-Funded Film
- Outstanding Production Design
- Outstanding Scriptwriting
- Outstanding Art Direction
- Outstanding Sound Design
- Outstanding Effects and Colour Grading
- Outstanding Animation
- Use of Music (original & licensed)
- Use of Humor
- Film Craft Campaign

17: Print Craft

- Outstanding Art Direction
- Outstanding Copywriting
- Outstanding Typography
- Outstanding Photography
- Outstanding Illustration
- Craft Campaign

18: Digital Craft

- Innovative New Techniques
- Typography
- Use of Animation
- Use of Photography
- User Journey
- Innovative Coding
- Outstanding Digital Illustration

19: Brand Purpose

As consumers increasingly consider their purchases to be an extension of their views, beliefs and lifestyle, this category rewards those brands with strategies and creative executions that provide powerful connections with today's evolving and more ethically demanding marketplace.

20: Brand Transformation

Have you taken a tired, traditional brand and transformed it, making it fit for the modern age? Perhaps you've taken a 'bricks and mortar' business and made it a major online success. Or strategically and creatively re-positioned a brand so dramatically it has been completely revitalised.

Work in any media accepted.

21: Cultural Impact

Work that seeks to have a significant, positive effect on social and/or environmental change within or across communities or nations. Can be any medium.

- Single Entry
- Campaign Entry

22: Brand Storytelling

Work that combines fact and narrative to build a connection between brands and their markets. Can be any medium, anything with a story...

- Single Entry
- Campaign Entry

23: Start-Up Launch

Design, marketing and online work to launch a completely new business, can include all forms of communication and design. Any medium.

- Campaign Entry (multiple elements should be entered)

24: Long Term Creativity

Campaigns in any medium (or mix of) that have run consistently for 4 years or more. Work in this category may have been entered into awards individually in previous years. At least 4 examples must be entered including executions across the full period of the campaign. Supporting material showing the effectiveness of the long-term approach will be used to judge entries.

25: Creative Strategy

Entrants should demonstrate via creative examples, a case film or up to 750 word document how strategy development has shaped a new creative approach.

26: Creative Commerce

From retail shopper marketing to online store development and data driven sales optimisation, this category is growing in importance, innovation and creativity. We have introduced new sub-categories to find the best work in the sector.

- Shopper Marketing
- Integrated Promotions
- Online Stores
- Digital Activations
- Social Commerce
- Call-to-Action Campaign

27: The 'Wish we'd thought of that' Award

Innovative thinking in any medium or discipline that will impress your peers and have them wishing they'd thought of it first. Surprise us.

28: The #OMG Award

A special category for work that defies categorization and simply makes us say "#OMG, how did they do that" or "how did they persuade the client to go with that". Shock us, or make us laugh out loud, or go silent in admiration. Any media accepted.

29: The Media Magic Award

The innovative use of media can be as creative as it is effective. Show us how you challenged the norm and created something special in any mix, individual or one-off media.

30: Creative Use Of AI **UPDATED**

This award recognizes the highest standards of creative excellence achieved using AI technology. It champions creative work that would be difficult, if not impossible to create without AI. It also recognizes campaigns where AI has been used to increase the impact, effectiveness and reach of a project.

Entries are judged on:

- Concept and idea
- Innovation, aesthetics and craft
- How AI meaningfully enabled the work (not just that it was used)

Choose from sub-categories or contact us for advice:

- Outstanding use of AI in Advertising:
 - Outstanding AI-Led Concept & Creative Direction (AI fundamentally shaped the idea, not just execution)
 - Outstanding AI-Generated Imagery / AI-Generated Film (where the primary visual output is AI-created)
 - Scalable AI Use in Advertising (e.g. personalization, localization, adaptive campaigns)
- Outstanding use of Generative AI to Create Non-Photorealistic Video (animation, Claymation, stop-motion, etc.)
- Outstanding use of AI in Music/Sound Design
- Outstanding use of AI in Gaming and Interactive
- Outstanding Hybrid Craft: AI Integrated with Live Action/Photography/Film/3D/Animation
- Outstanding use of AI for Short or Long Format Films

31: The Creative Effectiveness Award

In no more than 1000 words and/or a 3 minute video persuade us that your work achieved outstanding effectiveness within the objectives set by the client.

32: Finance **NEW**

Financial services marketing is often highly regulated and demands special creative knowledge and skills. This category gives special recognition to the quest for excellence in a fast-changing and challenging market. Entries may include work in any medium, single or campaign entries. The category is open to all forms of financial communications that seek recognition for their achievements in creativity and/or innovation. Besides being able to win any of the main Cresta Awards, entrants will also be put forward for consideration for the overall Financial Services Creativity Winner (ie. an additional prize for which entry is automatic and without any additional fee).

The Special Trophies

Following the announcement of the winners in September, we award seven special major trophies. These leading honors are not awards that require entry, or can be separately entered. They are decided by the Jury's overall voting and additional Jury decisions.

Network of the Year
Agency of the Year
Independent Network of the Year
Independent Agency of the Year
Production Company of the Year
The Jury Award (chosen by the Cresta Jury Chair)
The Alan Page Award for outstanding writing

What 'assets' will you need?

We want every entry to look as good as it possibly can when it arrives on the judging screen. So please follow the guidelines below, wherever possible. If you are unsure about anything or wish to discuss other formats etc, please contact info@creativestandards.org

All entries must be made online. We do not accept any 'physical' entries.

VIDEO

1. Should be entered as an MOV or MP4 file.
2. Any entry over 5 mins in length should be accompanied by a video case study (max 3 mins).
3. Non-English language entries should be dubbed or sub-titled in English.
4. Campaign entries should be uploaded as separate files.
5. Entries must have been aired in a commercial or public environment in the form submitted.
6. The names of entrants, production companies or agencies must not appear at any point on the uploaded file.

Specifications for entries as follows:

Resolution: Standard Definition Source Material
minimum: 720 x 480

High Definition Source Material: 1920 x 1080

Frame Rate: Original Frame Rate (23.98, 24, 25, 29.97, 50, 59.94, 60)

Codec: H264 or Mpeg4

Best Quality Data Rate: Minimum 5,000kbps / Maximum 10,000kbps

Sound: AAC 48KHz File size: 1 GB maximum

PRINT

1. Single item entries should be uploaded as a JPEG.
2. Campaign entries should be uploaded as separate JPEGs.
3. Video/slide case studies, where appropriate, should be uploaded as either MOV or MP4 files. (3 mins max).
4. Entries must have appeared in a commercial or public environment in the form submitted any point on the uploaded file.
5. Non-English language entries should be accompanied by an English translation, uploaded with the entry.
6. The names of entrants, production companies or agencies must not appear at any point on the uploaded file.

Specifications for entries as follows:

Specs for JPEG uploads: Resolution: Landscape Images:
Approx. 2400 x 3000 pixels

Portrait Images: Approx. 3000 x 2400 pixels 300 dpi

Equivalent to 203mm x 254mm (8 in x 10 in)

Color Mode: RGB File size: 25 MB maximum

DIGITAL

1. Single entries or digital components of integrated campaigns etc must be entered as a URL.
2. If the entered item is no longer live, you should submit a URL directed to a landing page containing links to the work.
3. The work must be submitted in the form originally available to consumers/target.
4. You should supply all relevant User Names & Password.
5. If necessary, your landing page should contain an English language translation and any other material to assist judging.
6. Entries should not show the names of entrants unless it is an integral part.

What about rights?

1. By entering these awards you have assigned us Rights to use your entry for publicity and to hold the entered assets in our archive.
2. This publicity may include social media, editorial print, online and broadcast, on and offline advertising and use on our websites, and the websites of our brand partners.
3. If any entry includes licensed music, you should make sure that you or your client is able to assign us the Right to use that music for both the awards and any publicity purposes.
4. Unless specifically otherwise requested, Cresta archives all shortlisted and winning entries and may make them available to view via our website. Cresta reserves the right to retain all and any submitted entry and potentially use it to publicise the awards and Cresta work.
5. If you want certain elements of your entry to only be available to the Jury and not on public view, you should let us know as soon as possible. This particularly applies if your work is chosen for the shortlist or wins a trophy. We cannot take responsibility for any information/video/ music/material you submit being used without the appropriate permissions.
6. As the entrant, and in the event of any dispute over usage, you agree to indemnify Creative Standards International Limited against any liability and/or costs related to its use of your entry material.