

# RAIA VIC Chapter | Student Ideas Prize Design Brief 2026

## Introduction

### ***Ableist architectures: toward accessible, equitable, and enabling built environments***

The 2026 theme focuses on improving the accessibility of the built environment for individuals with both visible and invisible disabilities. Students are challenged to approach accessibility not merely as a matter of compliance but as a catalyst for innovative ideas, fostering the creation of spaces that are inclusive and enriching for all.

#### *Key considerations:*

- ***Going beyond the minimum:*** there is rising importance of students understanding compliance with the NCC and AS1428.1-2009. Importantly, the NCC and provisions of AS1428.1 2009 are only bare minimum compliance requirements and do not provide inclusive environments for many people with disabilities. We encourage projects that go beyond the minimum.
- ***Diverse abilities:*** we ask students to consider the variety of abilities that can and should be considered in design that benefits the broad community.
- ***Inclusive and enabling design process:*** Where possible, students are encouraged to use inclusive and enabling design processes (designing with people with diverse abilities, where possible and/or well-considered design process)
- ***Extended considerations*** may include design ideas related to neurodivergence, universal design, assistive technology (soundscapes in public spaces), adaptability, and sensory engagement.

Within their design projects, students are asked to provide innovative idea/s on ***ableist architectures*** - accessible, equitable, and enabling built environments as well as considerations for enabling design processes that enrich their project and communicate these ideas to an architectural and public audience.

## Consultants/Partners

Project consultants/partners include:

- Victorian Enabling Architecture Committee (VEAC)
- AIA materials working group

## AIA Competition Committee

The Competition is offered by the Victorian Chapter Education Committee. The Student Design Competition Working Group, consisting of Kirsten Day (University of Melbourne/Norman Day + Associates), Katie Skillington (University of Melbourne /EmAGN), John Sadar (Swinburne University of Technology), and Akari Nakai Kidd (Deakin University), have managed the development of the Competition Brief following from ideas initiated by the Education Committee members.

## The design challenges

In addition to innovative and excellent design, we are asking students to communicate their ideas and the value of their project to a non-academic audience. Your project will be a medium to large scale project.

Please keep in mind that the focus of this competition is the application of your idea/s to the design.

How is your idea about *ableist architectures* illustrated through your architectural project?

## Submission Requirements

There are three key parts to your submission including your verbal presentation, visual documentation, and a statement explaining your ideas and how it applies to your architectural design.

### 1. *Verbal presentation: Mp4 recording*

This must be done using a Pecha Kucha format – 20 slides and 20 seconds per slide. This means that your final presentation will be no more than 7 minutes long.

Planning your Pecha Kucha presentation:

- You will need to undertake some research on the Pecha Kucha style of presentation.
- There should be 20 distinct slides – not a series of videos.
- The recording should be images only and specific to your project.
- In this presentation, you are not to identify yourself (name or image of your face) or your university.

Your slides should be curated into 3 sections:

- a) Introduction of your idea
- b) Application of your idea to your design
- c) Benefits of your idea to the broader architectural profession

Please keep in mind that this is not a repeat of your studio project. This is a reflection on your ideas concerning *ableist architectures* and how you have addressed this idea via design work.

### 2. *Visual presentation: PDF document*

You are required to upload four (4) A2 landscape-orientated presentation boards as a single PDF document. This presentation should be no more than 10MB. Your presentation boards are to be curated to provide standard architectural information about your design complimented by diagrams/text explaining the project in relation to *ableist architectures*.

As a guide:

- Sheet 1 information about the site (location plan, site plan, roof plan, sun, wind etc.)
- Sheet 2 specific to the external form of the building (plans, elevations, sections)
- Sheet 3 sections and descriptions of interiors (key sections, key interiors)
- Sheet 4 relevant details, landscape concepts and renders

You should use diagrams and axonometric drawings to illustrate key ideas throughout the presentation. You can curate the above information as you wish, however it is expected that this information is included. These boards will be viewed in two different scenarios – on screen and in an exhibition. Please ensure that text is legible, and that relevant dimensions or scale bars are included. It is advisable to keep key drawings to a similar scale for clarity.

### *3. Statement*

200–300-word statement outlining the project’s design intentions including project title.

### 4. How to Enter

- All Entries must be submitted via the Australian Institute of Architects website – 2026 Victorian Student Ideas Prize <https://www.architecture.com.au/student-ideas-prize>
- After accessing the 2026 Victorian Student Ideas Prize page click on the entry portal <https://forms.gle/vGBCw4Udf4FEunHDA>
- Remember to follow each of the carefully described steps.
- All entries must be received by Friday, **10 July 2026**.
- **Students are reminded not to identify themselves or their universities in any of file names that they upload for their entry (including video presentation). Follow the steps outlined within the Entry Portal.**

## **Further Information**

For further questions related to this prize, please email:

**E:** [vic@architecture.com.au](mailto:vic@architecture.com.au)

Please include “2026 Victorian Student Ideas Prize” in your subject line