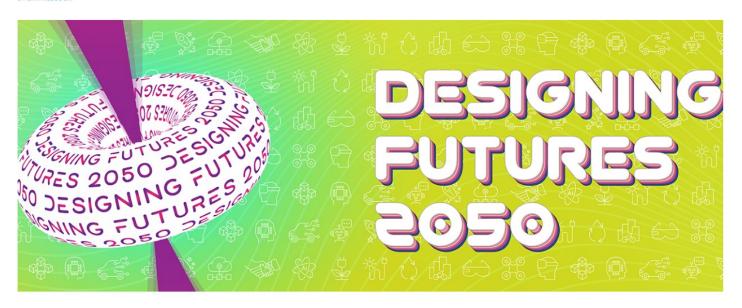Home > Blog > BE OPEN Reveals the Winners of the Designing Futures 2050 International Competition
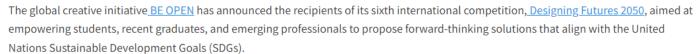
BLOG

BE OPEN Reveals the Winners of the Designing Futures 2050 International Competition

BY **SAM ALLCOCK** ·

The global creative initiative BE OPEN has announced the recipients of its sixth international competition, Designing Futures 2050, aimed at empowering students, recent graduates, and emerging professionals to propose forward-thinking solutions that align with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Launched in 2019, the BE OPEN competition program was established to raise awareness among young professionals in the design and engineering fields about the pressing global issues outlined in the SDGs. Previous editions of the competition have focused on Goals 2, 7, 11, 12, and 13.

BE OPEN's founder, Elena Baturina, shared her thoughts on the program: "For six consecutive years, BE OPEN has championed the UN SDGs through global student design challenges. Every year, we receive hundreds of remarkable, insightful, and imaginative submissions from young creatives across the globe. This continuous engagement confirms our belief that educating and inspiring youth is the most effective route toward impactful change. Our mission is to nurture a generation capable of addressing future challenges through creativity, knowledge-sharing, and collaboration."

The 2024 UN SDG Report, presented by Secretary-General António Guterres, paints a stark picture: only 17% of SDG targets are on track, while nearly half are seeing limited or moderate progress, and over a third are regressing. The aftermath of COVID-19, rising geopolitical tensions, conflict, and climate disruptions have significantly hindered advancement. Guterres stresses the urgent need for renewed global collaboration to accelerate progress.

In response, the Designing Futures 2050 competition sought to spotlight practical applications of sustainable principles by encouraging creative minds to contribute to a global shift toward responsible development. The competition encouraged participants to reinterpret the SDGs in light of present-day realities and propose actionable, scalable strategies.

Entrants could submit their work under three thematic categories: Tackling Today's Challenges, Imagining Tomorrow's World, and Rethinking the SDGs.

A distinguished international jury, including experts in future studies, design, and sustainability, evaluated the submissions. Panelists included Professor Jennifer Gidley (former President, World Futures Studies Federation), Victor Vahidi Motti (Alternative Planetary Futures Institute), Ashton Margarete Moseley (University of Johannesburg), Grace Young (Student Energy), Michelle Aljure Duque (CORPDES), and Darcy Rincon (Inspira System, Universidad de los Andes).

Competition Results

- First Prize (€5000): Redefining Global Healthcare: Adjusting the SDGs for Scalable Practical Impact by Ajisafe Damilola Ifeoluwa (Nigeria)
- Second Prizes (€2500 each):
- – Ecovironment: Transforming Plastic Waste into Sustainable Construction Materials by Foday David Kamara (Rwanda)
- – AGASA – Algae for Sustainable Action by Adnan Hasyim Wibowo (Indonesia)

Due to identical scoring by the jury, both Ecovironment and AGASA were granted Second Prize honors.

Additionally, the Founder's Choice Award, selected personally by Elena Baturina from among 50 honorable mentions, will be announced in June 2025.

Alongside monetary prizes, winners will receive access to educational resources and be invited to attend a major sustainability-focused event to present their projects to global stakeholders.

BE OPEN emphasizes the essential role of creative thinking in achieving sustainable development. Innovation and design are not optional but central to realizing the UN's SDG framework.

About BE OPEN

BE OPEN is an international platform dedicated to promoting creativity and innovation. Founded by Austrian philanthropist and entrepreneur Elena Baturina, the initiative supports emerging talent through competitions, exhibitions, workshops, and cultural events. Its mission is to connect the next generation of thinkers with global leaders in fields ranging from art and philosophy to design and business. A core priority of BE OPEN is fostering creative education across all ages to cultivate a society capable of generating non-traditional solutions to modern challenges.

TAGS: DESIGNING FUTURES 2050