

2026 International Archive of Women in Architecture Milka Bliznakov Prize

Application deadline: Jan 15, 2026

Elizabeth Keslacy, Virginia Tech

The IAWA Center invites architects, scholars, professionals, students, and researchers to honor IAWA founder Professor Milka T. Bliznakov through research on women in architecture and related design fields. This research, in concert with the preservation efforts of the IAWA, is intended to help fill the current void in historical knowledge about women's professional achievements. The prize is designed to facilitate in-person research in the IAWA archive and produce scholarship related to the work of women who shaped the designed environment, thus preserving for posterity a record of their achievements.

The Board of Advisors of the International Archive of Women in Architecture Center (IAWA) presents this Annual Prize of \$5000. The prize is awarded in two stages. After proposals are submitted and evaluated, a Milka Bliznakov Research Prize Residency Candidate will be named and awarded \$2500 to facilitate travel to the Archive in Blacksburg, VA. After the Candidate has completed research and writing, and submitted their work to the IAWA, the Award Winner will be named and a further \$2500 awarded.

PROPOSAL CONTENT:

The proposal must outline the work the applicant plans to complete at the Archive to produce an original project, research, or scholarly work that advances the recognition of women's contributions in design. The proposal shall draw upon the IAWA collections while reflecting upon the broader context.

The proposal should include the following elements:

1. Outline of research to be completed, including a listing of the specific IAWA collections to be consulted in the research. See the guide to the collections here:
<https://guides.lib.vt.edu/iawa/collections>
2. Proposed schedule for residency to include a talk open to the Virginia Tech university community and the general public.
3. Intended product of the research, a copy of which is to be donated to the archive upon completion. Examples of the product of research may include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - Research paper
 - Visual or physical original work that references or utilizes research from the Archive
 - Article, chapter, book, or report documenting the activities and work of the residency (may be self-published)
 - Conference paper, presented at the IAWA Symposium and/or other conference
 - Notebook or sketchbook produced during the residency

SUBMISSION MATERIAL:

- + 500-word proposal
- + maximum of 5 related images
- + curriculum vitae of the applicant/s

The proposal should be submitted electronically as a PDF to iawacenter@vt.edu; using the subject heading: 2026 Milka Bliznakov Research Prize. The file must be received by January 15, 2026 and should be addressed to:

IAWA Center Executive Committee
ATTN: Paola Zellner Bassett
Chair, International Archive of Women in Architecture
School of Architecture
Virginia Tech

AWARD STAGES:

The proposals will undergo a blind-peer review process to select the one that best demonstrates an important advancement to the recognition of women's contributions to architecture and the related design fields while encouraging the use of the collections and growth of the International Archive of Women in Architecture.

STAGE 1

The IAWA will announce the 2025 MBRP Residency Candidate on February 15, 2026. The candidate will receive the first installment of \$2500 after arrival at the IAWA to support the residency in Blacksburg, VA.

STAGE 2:

The final work must be completed by December 15, 2026. Upon completion and submission of the research product the candidate will receive the second installment of \$2500 to become the 2026 MBRP Award Winner. The final product will become a part of the Archive to contribute to the historical record. The 2026 MBRP Award Winner must plan to present the work (in person or virtually) at the 2027 IAWA Symposium, usually held in Blacksburg, VA in late March.

If further information is required, please contact Awards Director Elizabeth Keslacy at: iawacenter@vt.edu

Reference:

STIP: 2026 International Archive of Women in Architecture Milka Bliznakov Prize. In: ArtHist.net, Dec 1, 2025 (accessed Jan 27, 2026), <<https://arthist.net/archive/51260>>.