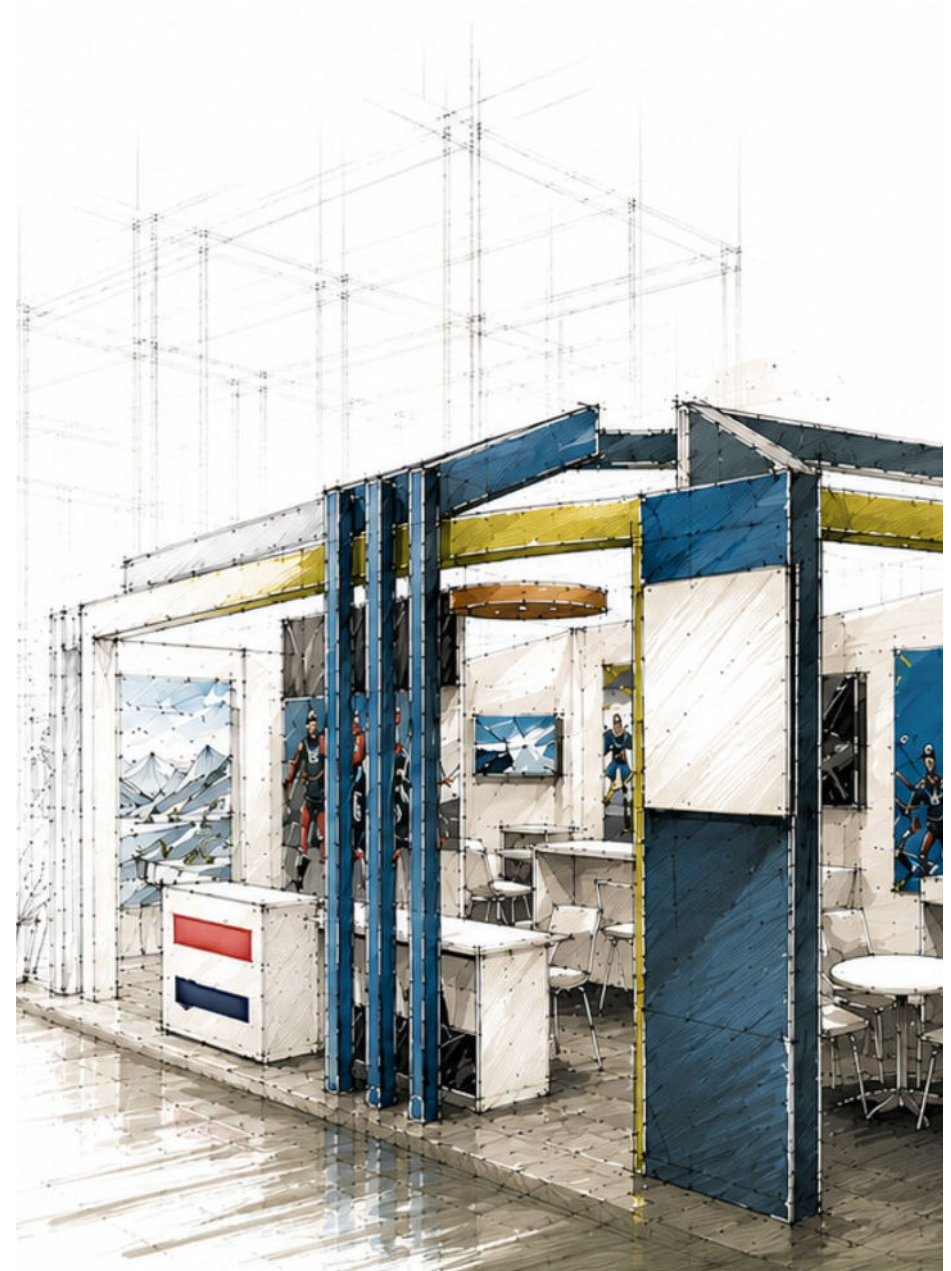


5 Star Plus Sustainable Exhibition Stand Competition

Competition Brief





Design Brief

Design of an innovative, sustainable exhibition stand design concept that can be applied to the client's future exhibition booths.

The objective of this competition is to reimagine the way exhibition stands are designed. Students will be expected to find new, creative, and innovative approaches to design a sustainable exhibition stand.

Sustainable means:

- The exhibition stand is expected to produce less CO2 emissions during production, transportation and build-up, as well as less waste than current solutions (including aluminium frame solutions) on the market.
- The exhibition stand shall be based on a highly modular system that can be reconfigured for different exhibitions, layouts, and applications, with most components being reused many times.
- Companies often do not know what size stand they will require until only a few months before an exhibition, therefore the modularity must allow the stand to be reconfigured into different layouts and sizes.
- The modularity should apply primarily to the stand structure. Furniture, movable elements and digital screens may be rented or custom-produced where appropriate.

- The exhibition stand should be capable of being assembled into different shapes, not just rectangular forms. Consider triangular, trapezoidal, diamond, angled and other abstract configurations. Smaller modules may require different base shapes in order to create a wide variety of overall stand layouts.
- Branding surfaces may either use sustainable materials or existing solutions such as printed fabric graphics or adhesive graphics.

Stand Size

- Size: 56m² (8m × 7m)
- Maximum height: 6m
- Stand type: Island stand (open on all four sides with no neighbouring walls)

Required Functional Areas

- Product display areas
- Storage space
- Meeting/discussion area with seating
- Coffee and refreshments bar
- Reception area
- Digital/interactive elements

Visual Requirements

The stand should have:

- A modern, visually appealing and balanced appearance.
- An interesting architectural form.
- Dynamic, abstract shapes rather than conventional rectangular layouts.
- A design created from the modular system itself.

Choose One Client

1. Department for Business and Trade

UK Pavilion showcasing eight British brands (fashion, cosmetics, footwear).

2. Lululemon

Sports fashion brand using innovative materials.

3. Vienna Airport

Exhibition promoting passenger services and air cargo through graphics, digital media, and displays.

Demonstrating Flexibility

To prove that the modular system can be adapted to different requirements, produce concept mock-ups for:

Small stand

- Size: 21m² (7m × 3m)
- Maximum height: 4m
- Stand type: Corner stand with two walls

Large stand

- Size: 120m² (10m × 12m)
- Maximum height: 6m
- Stand type: Island stand

One concept sketch or mock-up for each size is sufficient.

The intention is simply to demonstrate how the modular system can be reconfigured for different exhibition requirements.

The coffee bar is optional for the 21m² stand.

Design Focus

The emphasis of this competition is sustainability and innovation rather than simply branding or product display.

Students are encouraged to consider the following areas.

1. Materials

Investigate alternative materials instead of traditional exhibition construction materials.

Examples include:

- Recycled plastics
- Bio-based materials
- Chitin and other natural composites

Materials must still satisfy exhibition safety regulations.

2. Modularity

This is expected to be the strongest element of the proposal.

Consider:

- How individual modules connect.
- How modules can be dismantled.
- How they can be reused.
- How completely different exhibition layouts can be created from the same components.

The objective is for exhibitors to achieve an entirely new appearance at each exhibition without manufacturing an entirely new stand.

3. Interfaces

Develop innovative methods of connecting the modules.

Consider systems similar to:

- Lego
- Matador

Connections should provide:

- Structural stability
- Ease of assembly
- Durability through repeated use

Additional Design Considerations

1. Prioritise Brand Visibility

Although sustainability is important, exhibitors still require:

- Strong branding
- Clear corporate identity
- Visitor attraction
- Effective product presentation

2. Design for Circular Materials

Materials should be:

- Reusable
- Durable
- Repairable
- Recyclable
- Easy to separate

3. Minimal Storage

Components should occupy as little storage volume as possible.

4. Optimise Transportation

The stand should:

- Reduce transport volume
- Minimise weight
- Be capable of flat-pack transportation
- Simplify logistics

5. Enable Rapid Assembly

Construction should minimise:

- Installation time
- Labour requirements
- Number of tools required
- Complexity

Some exhibitions allow only:

- 15 hours for installation
- 2 hours for dismantling

6. Economic Viability

The proposal should demonstrate that sustainability can be achieved without significant additional cost.

7. Adaptability

The system should remain effective despite:

- Different stand sizes
- Different exhibition venues
- Different exhibitors
- Different products

8. International Suitability

The design should accommodate:

- Fire regulations
- Local building regulations
- Transport restrictions
- Customs requirements
- Climate variations
- Material availability

9. Reduce Material Consumption

The proposal should minimise:

- Waste
- Unnecessary materials
- Disposable components
- Replacement parts

While maximising efficiency throughout the product life cycle.

10. Apply Circular Design Principles

Every proposal should demonstrate:

- Design for Reuse
- Design for Disassembly
- Design for Repair
- Design for Recycling
- Design for Long Product Life



Submission Requirements

1. Front cover with student details
2. Design development sketches (minimum one page)
3. Concept mood board
4. Sustainable materials presentation board
5. Design rationale
6. Sustainability rationale
7. Floor plan with furniture and dimensions
8. Key elevations
9. Visuals (minimum one page)
10. Mock-ups or development sketches demonstrating different stand sizes
11. Technical drawings explaining the modular system and connection interfaces

All the submission requirements should be submitted as a single PDF document.

All entries must have your name and student number on the front cover.

Failure to do so would result in the entry not being judged.

Student Briefing

A briefing session will be organised for all participating students to explain the competition and answer questions.

Day/time to be confirmed.

Further Research

Students are encouraged to review exhibition stand projects and articles produced by 5 Star Plus to gain a better understanding of professional exhibition stand design.

www.5starplusdesign.com



Assessment Criteria

Proposed Evaluation Criteria	
Criteria	Points (Maximum Points: 100)
Modularity & flexibility of reusability of components	30
Overall Innovation of Design Approach	15
Holistic Design Approach (consideration of all of the design requirements)	15
Achieved overall sustainability score: reduction in CO2 emissions, reduction in waste, sustainable materials	15
Branding and product display	5
Customer journey, clear circulation and way-finding	5
Visitor experience, integration of digital technology where appropriate	5
High-quality visual presentation	10

Competition Launch Date

10th August 2026

Closing Date for Submissions

14th September 2026

Winners Announced

28th September 2026

1st Prize

£250.00

2nd Prize

£150.00

3rd Prize

£100.00

All winners will receive a certificate and a trophy from the NDA.

All winning entries will be featured on the NDA website and on various social media platforms by the NDA and Five Star Plus to celebrate their achievement and give good coverage and exposure to the wider public and industry.

All entries to be sent to competitions@nda.ac.uk on or before the closing date of the 14th September 2026.



Terms and Conditions

1. About the Competition

1.1 The 5 Star Plus Sustainable Exhibition Stand Competition (“the Competition”) is organised by **NDA Foundation**, trading as the National Design Academy (“NDA”), in partnership with **5 Star Plus (“Five Star Plus”)**.

1.2 The Competition provides eligible NDA students with an opportunity to respond to a professional design brief developed in partnership with Five Star Plus.

1.3 Entry to the Competition is free. By submitting an entry, entrants agree to be bound by these Terms and Conditions and by the requirements set out in the Competition Brief.

1.4 These Terms and Conditions should be read together with the Competition Brief. In the event of any inconsistency concerning the administration of the Competition, these Terms and Conditions will take precedence.

2. Eligibility

2.1 The Competition is open to NDA students and alumni who have been invited or identified as eligible to participate in the Competition.

2.2 Entrants must be actively enrolled with NDA at the time their entry is submitted or be a member of the alumni community.

2.3 Entries must be submitted by individual students unless NDA expressly confirms otherwise.

2.4 NDA reserves the right to verify an entrant’s eligibility before judging an entry or awarding a prize.

3. Competition Dates

3.1 The Competition will launch on 10 August 2026.

3.2 Entries must be received no later than 14 September 2026 (closing date).

3.3 Entries received after the closing date may not be considered.

3.4 The Competition results are expected to be announced on 28 September 2026. NDA reserves the right to amend the announcement date where reasonably necessary and will inform entrants of any significant change.

4. How to Enter

4.1 Entrants must prepare their submission in accordance with the Competition Brief.

4.2 All required elements must be submitted as one PDF document.

4.3 The entrant’s name and student number must appear on the front cover of the submission. Entries without this information will not be judged.

4.4 Completed entries must be submitted to competitions@nda.ac.uk by the closing date.

4.5 Entrants are responsible for ensuring that their submission is complete, legible, and capable of being opened and viewed.

4.6 NDA accepts no responsibility for an entry that is not successfully received because of circumstances outside its reasonable control. Where an entrant believes that a technical problem has prevented successful submission, they should contact NDA as soon as reasonably possible.

5. Entry Requirements

5.1 Entries must respond to the design challenge and submission requirements contained in the Competition Brief.

5.2 Entrants are responsible for ensuring that the design work they present as their own is their original work.

5.3 Where an entrant includes third-party material for reference or illustrative purposes, including images used within mood boards, the source should be appropriately acknowledged where practicable.

5.4 Entrants must not knowingly include material that infringes another person's intellectual property or other legal rights.

5.5 Any trademarks, logos, brand identities, or other materials associated with the example clients identified within the Competition Brief remain the property of their respective owners. Their inclusion within the Competition Brief does not transfer any rights in those materials to entrants.

5.6 NDA reserves the right not to judge, or to disqualify, an entry that materially fails to comply with the Competition Brief or these Terms and Conditions.

6. Judging

6.1 Eligible entries will be assessed against the evaluation criteria and marks published in the Competition Brief.

6.2 Entries will be assessed out of 100 marks against the following criteria:

- Modularity and flexibility of reusability of components – 30 marks
- Overall innovation of design approach – 15 marks
- Holistic design approach – 15 marks
- Achieved overall sustainability score – 15 marks
- Branding and product display – 5 marks
- Customer journey, clear circulation, and way-finding – 5 marks
- Visitor experience, integration of digital technology where appropriate – 5 marks
- High-quality visual presentation – 10 marks

6.3 Judging will be undertaken by a panel appointed for the Competition by NDA and Five Star Plus including NDA Academy Director Pauline Riley, Deputy Director Andrea Bedworth-Cook, Senior Tutor Sarah Yazji, Tutor Martin Nealon, and Five Star Plus Managing Director Barbara Seidelmann.

6.4 The panel will determine the first, second, and third placed entries by reference to the published assessment criteria.

6.5 The judges' decision will be final in relation to the professional and creative assessment of entries. NDA will, however, consider concerns relating to an administrative or procedural error in the conduct of the Competition.

7. Prizes

7.1 The following prizes will be awarded:

- First Prize: £250 cash prize, certificate and trophy
- Second Prize: £150 cash prize, certificate and trophy
- Third Prize: £100 cash prize, certificate and trophy

7.2 The cash prizes will be paid to the winning entrants using arrangements confirmed by NDA following announcement of the results.

7.3 Cash prizes will be paid in pounds sterling (GBP).

7.4 The prizes are personal to the winning entrants and may not be transferred to another person.

7.5 The award of a prize does not constitute payment for, purchase of, or transfer of ownership of the winning design or any intellectual property rights in it.

8. Intellectual Property

8.1 Entrants retain ownership of the intellectual property rights in their original work submitted to the Competition.

8.2 Entry into the Competition does not assign or transfer ownership of an entrant's design or intellectual property rights to NDA or Five Star Plus.

8.3 By entering the Competition, entrants grant NDA and Five Star Plus a non-exclusive, royalty-free licence to reproduce, display, and share their submitted work only insofar as reasonably necessary for:

- a. administering and judging the Competition;
- b. displaying or presenting Competition entries;
- c. educational purposes connected with the Competition; and
- d. promoting and publicising the Competition, its entrants and its outcomes, including through websites, social media, digital communications, presentations and other publicity materials.

8.4 Where an entrant's work is published or displayed by NDA or Five Star Plus, all efforts will be made to identify the entrant as the creator of the work.

9. Publication and Publicity

9.1 As stated in the Competition Brief, winning entries are intended to be featured on the NDA website and may also be featured through NDA and Five Star Plus social media and other communications to celebrate the winners and provide exposure to the wider public and industry.

9.2 By entering the Competition, entrants acknowledge that, if selected as a winner, their name, winning position, and submitted design work may be published for these purposes.

9.3 NDA and Five Star Plus may reproduce the whole entry or selected images or extracts from it where reasonably necessary for publicity and presentation purposes.

9.4 NDA and Five Star Plus will not materially alter an entrant's design in a manner that misrepresents the entrant's work when using it for Competition publicity.

9.5 Participation in the Competition does not constitute consent to receive unrelated commercial marketing from Five Star Plus or any other third party.

10. Personal Data

10.1 NDA will process personal information provided in connection with the Competition for the purposes of administering the Competition, confirming eligibility, communicating with entrants, conducting the judging process, awarding prizes, and publicising the Competition and its winners.

10.2 Personal information may be shared with Five Star Plus and members of the judging panel where this is reasonably necessary for the administration and judging of the Competition.

10.3 Student numbers will be used for administrative and identification purposes and will not be included in public announcements or publicity.

10.4 Personal data will be handled in accordance with applicable data protection legislation and NDA's relevant privacy information.

10.5 Personal information collected for the Competition will not be provided to Five Star Plus for unrelated direct marketing purposes solely because a student has entered the Competition.

11. Conduct and Disqualification

11.1 NDA reserves the right to disqualify an entry where there are reasonable grounds to believe that:

- a. the entrant is not eligible to participate;
- b. the entry has been submitted after the Closing Date without prior agreement;
- c. the entry materially fails to comply with the Competition Brief;
- d. the entrant has submitted work belonging to another person as their own;
- e. the entry infringes third-party rights;
- f. false or misleading information has been provided in connection with the entry; or
- g. the entrant has otherwise attempted to gain an unfair advantage in the Competition.

11.2 Where practicable and appropriate, NDA will give the entrant an opportunity to respond before making a final decision to disqualify an entry.

12. Changes to or Cancellation of the Competition

12.1 NDA reserves the right to make reasonable changes to the administration or timetable of the Competition where circumstances outside its reasonable control make this necessary.

12.2 NDA will not materially alter the Competition, its judging criteria, or prizes after entries have opened unless exceptional circumstances make this unavoidable.

12.3 If the Competition must be suspended or cancelled, NDA will notify entrants as soon as reasonably practicable.

13. Liability

13.1 NDA and Five Star Plus will take reasonable care in administering the Competition but will not be responsible for loss arising from circumstances outside their reasonable control, including failures of electronic communication systems or other technical problems.

13.2 Nothing in these Terms and Conditions excludes or limits any liability that cannot lawfully be excluded or limited.

14. Queries and Complaints

14.1 Questions concerning the Competition Brief, submission requirements, or administration of the Competition should be directed to competitions@nda.ac.uk.

14.2 Any concern that the Competition has not been administered in accordance with these Terms and Conditions should be raised with NDA in the first instance.

14.3 A disagreement with the professional or creative judgement of the judging panel will not constitute grounds for a complaint.

15. Governing Law

15.1 These Terms and Conditions are governed by the laws of England and Wales.

15.2 Nothing in these Terms and Conditions affects any legal rights that an entrant may have which cannot lawfully be excluded or restricted.