

SMART LABEL - HOST INNOVATION AWARD 2025: HOSTMILANO AND POLI.design'S INTERNATIONAL CONTEST GETS INTO FULL SWING

The 7th edition of the award dedicated to the most innovative Ho.Re.Ca. products kicks off: a springboard for emerging designers and a reference for established brands. The deadline is 30 April 2025.

Milan, 10 October 2024 – The **Ho.Re.Ca. industry** is back to growth. In its analysis of a report by **FIPE**, the Italian association of public establishments, **Bain & Company Italy** highlights a **4 to 5 percent revenue increase** in 2024. In turn, a **McKinsey & Company** study shows tourism –a relevant contribution to the out-of-home business– represents about **10 percent of Italy's GDP**.

These figures are fostering investment: on the one hand, through the creation of **phygital experiences** and, especially, by integrating **artificial intelligence**; on the other, in the development of **eco-friendly materials**, multisensory interactions, biomaterials, and carbon-free production processes. These innovations and innovative design approaches will have an increasing impact on restaurants and hospitality.

For the past thirteen years, the relationship between innovative design and Ho.Re.Ca. has been explored by **Smart Label - Host Innovation Award**, the award promoted by **HostMilano** and **Fiera Milano** in partnership with **POLI.design** and under the patronage of **ADI - Association for Industrial Design**. The award is a reference for designers who want to offer the market cutting-edge answers that stand out in terms of change, functions, technological development, and environmental, social and economic sustainability. During the previous six editions, a total of about **950 applications** were submitted, with more than **280 products** awarded.

"We are currently experiencing a challenging time where the return of Smart Label - Host Innovation Award is even more significant, as it represents a recognition of world-class advanced innovation. It's a feather in the cap of an exhibition that is already the undisputed global benchmark for the industry," comments **Simona Greco, Exhibitions Director at Fiera Milano**. *"Smart solutions and attention to sustainability, not only environmental but also social, are essential factors for the resilience and growth of companies. Due to its characteristics, the Ho.Re.Ca. industry often anticipates general trends: for this reason, the ideal context to*

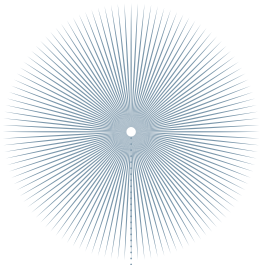
promote innovation is a leading international platform for professional hospitality such as HostMilano.”

*“In the first quarter of this century, hospitality seems to be dominated by the digital in terms of access to goods and services, as the ability to plan and visualize the user experience draws on networks and AI,” explains **Matteo Ingaramo, Professor at POLI.design.** “Never before has the material and tangible dimension of the out-of-home experience become so crucial for increasingly high and informed user expectations, where attention to sustainability and performance are expected to reach the highest levels. Designing a full and perceptible integration between these two aspects may be the key to interpreting tomorrow’s hospitality market, where the material and immaterial are more connected than ever.”*

The nominated projects explore four macro-areas: **Smart Label, Innovation Smart Label, Green Smart Label, and Special Mentions.** Over time, many proposals have emphasized **co-creation and user experience**, shared products and activities where users increasingly become part of processes, thanks to devices and technologies empowering them. These include award-winning **automated or semi-automated systems** for real-time food preparation. A certainly important trend is **sustainability**: recycled materials and technologies that reduce consumption are highly valued by the contest. **Connectedness** is the third theme. Smart and connected objects that create ecosystems to optimize use, initiate planned and preventive maintenance processes, control costs and avoid malfunctions or block the supply chain, such as IoT projects capable of connecting different realities and generating ecosystems for use by the supply chain). Finally, solutions that meet **new food styles** and facilitate food inclusion, i.e., those **“flexible” products** that meet user needs and preferences, such as devices to manage preparations in parallel and, therefore, respond to special nutritional needs or specific ethical choices.

For the seventh edition too, prizes will be awarded during **HostMilano**, the world’s leading exhibition for professional hospitality and out-from-home, that will be held **at fieramilano - Rho from 17 to 21 October 2025.** A committee composed of Politecnico di Milano professors and industry experts will evaluate proposals for the Smart Label, Innovation Smart Label and Green Smart Label categories. Special Mentions are also planned for food & beverage products. The deadline for submissions is **30 April 2025.** Here, full details on [application rules](#).

As for the previous editions, awarded products will be displayed in the **Smart Label area** during HostMilano 2025, and **an INDEX** will be released. collecting product images and histories. The area will be complemented by the **Design Talks**, refresher seminars dedicated to architects and experts in the hospitality



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sector that will delve into the themes of sustainable innovation in design, concepts and formats. This initiative is another outcome of the partnership between **HostMilano and POLI.design**, under the patronage of **NEWH - The Hospitality Industry Network**.

Host 2025 will be held at **fieramilano - Rho from 17 to 21 October 2025**.

For updated information on the event: host.fieramilano.it, [@HostMilano](https://www.instagram.com/HostMilano).

POLI.design

Founded in 1999 by Politecnico di Milano, POLI.design is an international university center for design education. It has always promoted a unique ecosystem for research as well as postgraduate and professional studies for individuals, companies and organizations. Together with the School of Design and the Department of Design, it is part of the Design System of the Politecnico di Milano, a hub that aggregates resources, skills, facilities and laboratories that look to the future of design (1st in Italy, 3rd in Europe and 7th in the world for the QS World University Rankings 2024 for the Art & Design disciplinary field). POLI.design offers young graduates and professionals the opportunity to attend Master's and Executive Courses, programs that explore the culture of design at 360 degrees. It also responds to the needs of organizations by providing tailor-made training solutions. With a strong international attitude, the center promotes strategic partnerships with leading universities, schools, institutions, companies and corporations, consolidating its position as a true industry hub in the world.

HOST

HostMilano is the world's leading trade fair dedicated to the world of professional hospitality and catering, a must-attend event for operators in the Ho.Re.Ca. (Hotels, Restaurants, Catering) industry. Established in 1966 and organized by Fiera Milano, HostMilano brings together the industry's leading international players every two years, offering a comprehensive overview of the latest trends, technologies and innovations related to foodservice, catering and hospitality. With highly qualified exhibitors and buyers from all over the world and a packed program of events, competitions, show-cooking and workshops, HostMilano is the point of reference for those who want to keep up to date, do business and networking, and discover the innovations that will shape the future of the industry. The main thematic areas include professional catering, bakery, pizza and pasta, coffee, tea, bar and coffee machines, vending, ice cream, patisserie, furniture, tableware and technology. With its cross-cutting offerings ranging from professional equipment to the most innovative formats, HostMilano is confirmed as the ideal place for operators who want to anticipate trends and create new business opportunities.

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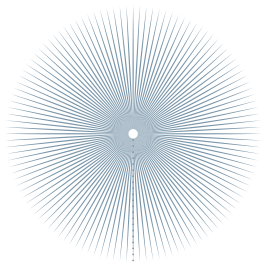
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