

# **"OPEN SOURCE COMMUNITIES" BY BELLTOWER WINS GRAND PRIX IN LEXUS DESIGN AWARD 2020**

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**TOKYO, Japan** (September 1, 2020) –Lexus International has announced that BellTower from Kenya is the Grand Prix winner of the Lexus Design Award 2020. BellTower’s entry, entitled “Open Source Communities,” was selected for the coveted award from among 2,042 total submissions from 79 countries. Judging criteria for this 8th edition of the Award were based on the three key principles of the Lexus brand: Anticipate, Innovate and Captivate in the quest for a Better Tomorrow.

The winning design “Open Source Communities” addresses challenges often found in developing countries by using smart open-source planning to design affordable communities with sustainable clean water resources. Accepting the award, John Brian Kamau said ” It was a great honor for us as BellTower, to be one of the 6 finalists and then win the Grand Prix of Lexus Design Award 2020. Our journey began with many challenges. However, we persevered to showcase our ambitious concept. Our experience has taught us invaluable lifelong lessons. All our future designs will be aligned with the key principles we learned as part of the Lexus family. ”

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Considering this year's unique circumstances, Lexus innovated to create its first ever virtual jury as part of this process that supports and nurtures the next generation of creative talent. The Grand Prix winner was announced after each of the six international finalists presented to our panel of esteemed judges explaining how they would create a Better Tomorrow. The program's four mentors, who supported and guided the finalists for six months, were also on hand for the grand finale of the Lexus Design Award 2020.

Announcing the panel's decision, program judge and Studio Gang Founding Principal Jeanne Gang said, " At different moments in time, design has celebrated bold aesthetics, extreme functionality, and even humor and wit.

But today, with our world plagued by the enormous issues of climate change and social inequality, there is a design imperative for systemic design solutions. The Grand-Prix winner expands our definition of design to include systems of finance for community projects and engages the critical role clean drinking water plays in citizens' ability to thrive. By addressing the way that the project will come into being and be sustained economically, the designers broaden our thinking about what design is and could be. While the project is an apparatus to collect and store rainwater for safe drinking, it is also a financial game plan for empowering a community.”

Lexus sincerely thanks the six finalists of the Lexus Design Award 2020 for their hard work and is grateful for the passion and commitment of our judges; Paola Antonelli, Jeanne Gang, John Maeda, and Simon Humphries; and mentors; Joe Doucet, Bethan Gray, Philippe Malouin, and Shohei Shigematsu.

The trophy presented to the winner was designed by Hideki Yoshimoto, a winner of the Lexus Design Award 2013 and now an established professional designer himself based in London. In Yoshimoto's words, “This trophy will be the face of the Award for years to come, so I tried to create a simple, dignified form, free of affectation, in a design where boldness and subtlety coexist. Artisans carve the trophy from smoke-seasoned wood and lacquer made in the traditional Kawatsura style from Akita Prefecture in Japan. Handcrafting each trophy imbues it with heart and soul to resonate with the winner's creative passion.”

For more information, please visit [LexusDesignAward.com](https://www.lexusdesignaward.com)

Lexus Design Award 2021 is open for entries until October 11. Please note the details at our website, below.

<https://discoverlexus.com/highlights/entries-open-for-lexus-design-award-2021>

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