



CERTIFIED  
LIGHTING  
DESIGNER

## Candidate Handbook

For Practicing Architectural  
Lighting Designers

Get



# Introduction

This handbook provides information needed prior to applying for the Certified Lighting Designer (CLD). The CLD is an evidence-based assessment for individuals who practice architectural lighting design. Evidence will consist of:

- Written information, including descriptions of projects
- Documentation (project exhibits)
- Signed attestation form for each project

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Dear Applicant,

Thank you for your interest in the Certified Lighting Designer (CLD) certification. Certification is a vitally important step forward for professional lighting design because a certification process defines a mature industry. In this respect it's essential we comply with recognized professional practices and expectations.

The CLD is intended to align lighting design with the principles and procedures of other design disciplines in the building and construction industry so that as lighting designers we meet similar proficiency checks as our project colleagues.

At its heart, the CLD is an evidence-based assessment measured against seven "Domains of Competency." These Domains were developed through an exhaustive consultation process and our research confirms that they encapsulate the essence of lighting design across the globe. As a result, the CLD provides an international standard of recognition and this is a valuable asset for individuals.

Apart from our industry's professional obligation to fulfill the standards expected of all established professions, I also hope that you'll find this certification an enjoyable experience and a prized addition to your existing qualifications and portfolio of work. Meeting the standard required to achieve the CLD will substantiate your authority, enhance your professional standing and provide prestige on an international scale.

Thank you again for your interest in the certification. The process is designed to be logical and intuitive but if you have any queries during the course of your application you're encouraged to contact support staff via [Info@cld.org](mailto:Info@cld.org) or call (+1) 312 267 2115.

The best of luck with your application.

Yours sincerely,



David Becker, CLD, Chair  
Certified Lighting Designer Commission

# Application Process Summary

Before you begin your application you will need to consider and prepare several items. These items are explained in greater detail throughout the handbook:

- Confirm you meet the eligibility criteria.
  - Review this handbook to ensure you understand the process.
  - Review the areas of competency, referred to as domains of practice to ensure that your skills can be measured against the defined criteria.
  - Review the entire application in order to understand what is required.
  - Identify 2 to 4 projects that you feel will demonstrate your competency in each of the domains and meet the criteria. You will be using these projects to complete the application.
- Of the 2 to 4 projects you select, you must:
    - > include at least two unique project types. See **section 6.0 Acceptable Projects and Exhibits**.
    - > include the attestation form for each project from a client who can attest to competence in the domains. See **7.0 Attestation Form** for more information.
    - > demonstrate competency in interior AND exterior design applications. It is not necessary to satisfy each domain with both an interior and exterior example.
  - Prepare and upload documentation supporting your responses to each item and demonstrating competency in the domains. Documentation consists of project exhibits. All markings from project photos and exhibits that identify you or your firm must be removed in order to ensure anonymity in the review process. See **section 6.0 Acceptable Projects and Exhibits** for more information.
  - Complete your application in English.
  - Sign the Code of Conduct included in the application.
  - Pay the application fee.

## 1.0

### Certification Scope

The Certified Lighting Designer (CLD) certification represents the practice of architectural lighting design worldwide.

## 2.0

### Evidence

The certification is *evidence-based*. Candidates are not required to take a test or complete any specific training to qualify for the certification. You will be assessed on evidence submitted from your portfolio and your written submission.

# 3.0

## Eligibility

Applicants must have at least 3 years' experience working as a lead lighting designer.

A lead lighting designer is responsible for:

- Creating the lighting design strategy and crafting the lighting design concepts for client projects
- Documentation related to the design solutions of the project
- Conveying and exchanging ideas with the client and the project team
- Meeting project design deadlines
- Providing advice throughout the implementation process
- Guiding the outcome of the developed and documented design

Membership in IALD or any other professional association or trade group is not required.

# 4.0

## What is Required to Earn the Certification

While membership in a lighting association is not a precondition for certification, requirements will vary depending upon whether you are a professional-level member of an approved lighting design association. See *CLD web site for the most current list of approved lighting design associations*. You do not have to take a test or complete any prerequisite education. Please carefully review the requirements. You will need to comply with either item a) OR item b) on the next page:

### a) Professional-level Members of Approved Lighting Design Associations

The certification requires you to demonstrate proficiency in five (5) areas of competency. Areas of competency are called the domains of practice.

You must be a practicing lighting designer, a current professional-level member of an approved lighting design association and you must:

- Have a sufficient number of designs to satisfy the following five (5) domains one time; Goals and Outcomes, Ingenuity, Synthesis, Science, Human Experience. See **Appendix 1**.
- Provide examples from at least two unique project types. The list of possible project types is in section 6.0 Acceptable Projects and Exhibits. The projects must have been completed within the last seven (7) years or are in the process of being implemented.
- Demonstrate competency in interior AND exterior design in your application. It is not necessary to satisfy each domain with both an interior and exterior example.
- Provide signed attestations (either letters or completed CLD attestation forms) from clients or others as evidence of your involvement and satisfactory performance in the five domains of practice and that you met the stipulations described in section 7.0. The attestation form can be found on the CLD web site [www.cld.global](http://www.cld.global).
- Sign the Code of Conduct included in the application.
- Pay the \$525 USD application fee. Go to [www.cld.global/How-to-Apply](http://www.cld.global/How-to-Apply) for more details.

## 4.0

*Continued*

### What is Required to Earn the Certification

#### b) All other applicants

The certification requires you to demonstrate proficiency in all seven (7) areas of competency. Areas of competency are called domains of practice.

You must be a practicing lighting designer working in the architectural lighting design field, and you must:

- Have completed a sufficient number of designs to satisfy each of the seven (7) domains. See **Appendix 1**.
- Provide examples from at least two unique project types. The list of possible project types is in section 6.0 Acceptable Projects and Exhibits. The projects must have been completed within the last seven (7) years or are in the process of being implemented. See **Appendix 1**.
- Demonstrate competency in interior AND exterior design throughout the application. It is not necessary to satisfy each domain with both an interior and exterior example.
- Provide signed attestations forms or letters from clients or project representatives confirming your involvement and satisfactory performance in the seven domains of practice, and that you met other requirements stipulated in section 7.0. The attestation form can be found on the CLD web site [www.cld.global](http://www.cld.global).
- Sign the Code of Conduct included in the application.
- Pay the \$625 USD application fee. Go to [www.cld.global/How-to-Apply](http://www.cld.global/How-to-Apply) for more details.

Depending on whether you are a professional-level member of an approved lighting design association – see 4.0 (a) and (b) above – the number of times you need to demonstrate your competency varies, as defined in the table below

#### Demonstrations Required

Domain	a) Professional-level Members of Approved Lighting Design Associations	b) All Other Applicants
1. Goals & Outcomes	1	1
2. Collaboration	0	1
3. Ingenuity	1	1
4. Synthesis	1	1
5. Science	1	1
6. Stewardship	0	1
7. Human Experience	1	1

#### Approved Lighting Design Associations (As of Printing)

- Association des Concepteurs Lumière Éclairagistes (ACE)
- Asociación Profesional de Diseñadores de Iluminación (APDI)
- Associazione Professionisti dell'illuminazione (APIL)
- Associação Brasileira de Arquitetos de Iluminação (AsBAI)
- International Association of Lighting Designers (IALD)

# 5.0

## The Domains

Domains are areas of competency that define ability as an architectural lighting designer. The seven domains are:

- **Goals and Outcomes:** The creation of the lighting concept that satisfies the project requirements and the design concept so the solution performs as predicted.
- **Collaboration:** The interaction with other disciplines by serving as an integral member of the team so that lighting relates to its context and adds value to the project.
- **Ingenuity:** The contribution of ideas that demonstrate innovation, creativity, originality, imagination, or resourcefulness to foster the goals of the project.
- **Synthesis:** The integration of the technical and aesthetic elements of lighting with space and form.
- **Science:** The application of the principles of light to meet project relevant technical criteria.
- **Stewardship:** The response of lighting to known and potential environmental impacts.
- **Human Experience:** The design of lighting solutions that positively affect people.

See **Appendix 2** for an in-depth explanation of the domains.



Branz Koshien | Nishinomiya, Japan

Lighting Design by Akari + Design Associates Inc | Photography © Hiroyuki Tsuda

# 6.0

## Acceptable Projects and Exhibits

### a) How to select projects and exhibits

When selecting projects and exhibits to upload for your application, please use the following guidelines:

- The exhibits must support your responses in each domain.
- Depending on the domain, the projects should either be complete or in the process of being implemented. See **Appendix 1**.
- The application cannot be completed using exclusively either interior or exterior demonstrations. It is not necessary to satisfy each domain with both an interior and exterior example.
- Exhibits must be either JPEG or PDF files of not more than 5 MB in size. A file uploaded as a single exhibit may include no more than a composition of 4 photos, images or drawings as part of that exhibit.
- Your written responses in each domain should explain what you did, how you did it, and why. It is important that you provide clear explanations using support information to validate your responses. This ensures reviewers can understand your ability and fairly evaluate your proficiency. See **Appendix 2**.
- Photographs do not need to be professionally taken; however, they need to be of good quality at a high resolution.

### b) Projects

Examples of acceptable projects include but are not limited to:

- **Artistic permanent installations**
- **Commercial** (office complexes, manufacturing facilities, laboratories, research centres)
- **Cultural** (museums, performing arts, graphic arts, monuments)
- **Entertainment** (casinos, night clubs, zoos, amusement parks, game arcades)
- **Healthcare** (hospitals, medical centres, rehab centres, aged care and assisted living)
- **Hospitality** (hotels, restaurants, resorts, spas)
- **Institutions** (educational, municipal, prisons)
- **Public spaces** (parks, gardens, streets, implemented city master plans, landscapes, façades)
- **Residential** (single and multiple units)
- **Retail** (shopping complexes, retail spaces)
- **Sport complexes** (stadia, arenas)

## 6.0

Continued

### Acceptable Projects and Exhibits

#### c) Exhibits

An exhibit is any material that supports your responses to demonstrate competency in the domain. This may include but is not limited to:

- Sketches
- Renderings
- Plans
- Specifications
- Photographs
- Details
- Calculations
- Photographs of Mock-ups or Models
- Energy Compliance Documentation such as Title 24 (USA), LEED, COMcheck, BREEAM (UK), Green Star (AUS)
- Visual Assessments
- Illumination Analysis
- Code Compliance Documentation
- Design Concept Documents
- Concept Presentations
- Diagrams
- Design Descriptions
- Social Media Posts (e.g. Instagram, TripAdvisor)

It can be useful to provide the reviewers with a general visual understanding of the project, as an overview.

#### Exhibits should:

- Be free of markings that identify you or your firm.
- Include descriptive text imposed on the image which is clear and concise, and highlights areas of relevance to the domain. If there is something in the image that you feel is particularly important, it is beneficial to draw the reviewer's attention to it with a notation or marking.
- Be submitted in PDF/JPEG format. A file uploaded as a single exhibit may include no more than a composition of four (4) photos, images or drawings as part of that exhibit.

Be aware of criteria for the type and number of exhibits you can use in your application.

See **Appendix 1** for the types of acceptable exhibits and maximum number of exhibits per domain.

## 7.0

### Attestation Form

You must submit an attestation form or letter from the client or project representative for each project used in your submission. The purpose of the attestation is to confirm that you alone, or as a lead member of a team, designed the project and were responsible for the delivery of the solutions that satisfy the relevant domains.

Therefore, the person asked to sign the form should be someone in a position to attest to the fact you completed the work in a satisfactory manner. The attestation form can be found at [www.cld.global](http://www.cld.global). If you submit a letter from your client or the project representative instead of the standard form, it is important the letter provides the same level of substantiation as contained in the CLD attestation form.

#### Language Policy

You must submit your application in English. If you have concerns about the person who will attest to your work understanding the process due to language barriers, contact the certification staff at [info@cld.global](mailto:info@cld.global).

# 8.0

## Application Review

Once received, your application is reviewed by the certification staff to confirm it is complete. Incomplete applications will be returned to you. Completed applications are sent to trained reviewers. The review process is a double-blind review process. This means the reviewers do not know the applicant's identity and they do not know the identity of the other reviewers. Once the review is complete, certification staff will communicate the outcome to you. The certification review process takes approximately 6 weeks.

**a) What happens if you achieve the certification?**

Congratulations, you are a Certified Lighting Designer! You may now use the appellation CLD after your name to demonstrate that you have the knowledge and proficiency in the established Lighting Design domains of practice. You will receive a congratulatory letter and a certificate suitable for framing, a press release, and formal announcements that you can use to let your clients know of your accomplishment. Your name will be listed on the CLD web site and a formal notification will be sent to your employer.

**b) What happens if additional information is needed to fully demonstrate competency in all domains?**

If additional information is needed to demonstrate competency, you will have one (1) opportunity to address particular omissions identified by the reviewers. In the event that you are invited to submit additional clarifying information, you must notify info@cld.global within 30 days. You will have four (4) months to submit the additional material.

**c) What happens if you do not achieve the certification?**

You will need to reapply (begin the process again and pay the application fee) if:

- You do not submit the additional information necessary to provide evidence of your competency in the requested domain(s) after 4 months.
- The reviewers determine you did not demonstrate competency in 3 or more domains.

# 9.0

## Appeals Process

Candidates have a right to appeal a decision. The following outlines the terms and conditions under which a candidate can request having a decision reconsidered (appealed).

- **Appeal of Final Decision:** Candidates have the right to appeal the final decision only after they have exhausted re-applying after the initial rejection.
- **Timeliness:** Once notified they fail to meet the criteria after an attempt to re-apply, candidates have four weeks to appeal. The CLD will then have six weeks from the time the appeal is received to respond to the appeal.

# 10.0

## Recertification

In order to maintain your CLD status, recertification is necessary every five years. Please see the web site for updates on how you can maintain your certification.



Kings Cross Square | London, UK  
Lighting Design by studioFRACTAL Lighting Design | Photography © Will Scott Photography

<b>Appendix 1</b>	<b>Demonstrations and Exhibits Requirements</b>				
<b>Domain</b>	<b>a) Demonstrations from Professional-level Members of Approved Associations</b>	<b>b) All Other Applicants</b>	<b>Some examples of Acceptable Exhibits</b>	<b>Exhibit Requirements</b>	<b>Maximum Number of Exhibits per Demonstration</b>
<b>1. Goals &amp; Outcomes</b>	1	1	Concept Presentations, Renderings, Final Documentation, Photos of Commissioned Installations.	Exhibits including photos from completed projects only.	3
<b>2. Collaboration</b>	Not required	1	No exhibits required.	Not required.	0
<b>3. Ingenuity</b>	1	1	Design Concepts, Sketches, Photos of Models, Mark ups + Detailed Drawings, Simulations, Calculations, Photos of Commissioned Installations.	Exhibits from completed or incomplete projects may be submitted.	3
<b>4. Synthesis</b>	1	1	Sketches, Visual Dialogue with Architects, Mock-up Photos, Detailed Design Drawings, Simulations, Photos of Commissioned Installations.	Exhibits from completed projects only.	3
<b>5. Science</b>	1	1	Illuminance and/or Luminance Calculations, Technical Analysis, Summarized Technical Reports, Control Diagrams and/or Schedules, Photos of Commissioned Installations.	Exhibits from completed or incomplete projects may be submitted.	3
<b>6. Stewardship</b>	Not Required	1	Letter from a client or user, articles in the press or an award that references and environmental impact, Documentation that you exceeded in meeting minimum energy requirements or codes, Documentation of your philosophy to address environmental challenges, Photos of Commissioned Installations.	Exhibits from completed projects only.	3
<b>7. Human Experience</b>	1	1	Post-Occupancy Analysis, Letters from clients citing the impact on people, Awards, Press Articles, Photos of Commissioned Installations.	Exhibits including photos from completed projects only.	3

## Domain Definitions

The following is intended to clarify the intent and provide interpretation of each domain:

### Domain 1 Goals and Outcomes

The creation of the lighting concept that satisfies the project requirements and the design concept so the solution performs as predicted.

- *Project requirements* may include
  1. delivering results that meet the objectives of the brief; that satisfy the ambitions of the client and resolve constraints of the area, and
  2. complying with time deadlines, budget constraints, energy conservation goals, regulations, best practices, etc.
- *Design concept* is what the lighting design is expected to accomplish or support.  
For example:
  - > **Identity – visual appeal to reinforce the brand identity or sense of place**
  - > **Comfort – enhanced relaxation or reduction in fatigue**
  - > **Safety – meeting defined criteria as part of creating a safe environment**
  - > **Productivity – lifting morale, increasing efficiency and output**
  - > **Orientation – overt or subliminal direction of people's attention towards a specific destination; for example, towards art exhibits, architectural elements, retail displays or directional guidance**
  - > **Functionality – meeting of defined technical criteria based on human needs and space conditions**
  - > **Mood/atmosphere – the specific feeling or ambiance created by the design**
  - > **Resources optimization – integrating solutions that maximize the efficient use of materials and/or energy**
  - > **Environmental and energy goals – using the latest technology to meet or exceed energy conservation standards including the use of natural light and optimization of electrical light**

### Domain 2 Collaboration

The interaction with other disciplines by serving as an integral member of the team so that lighting relates to its context and adds value to the project.

- *Interaction* is exchanging and discussing ideas with other people in the project team so everyone understands the feasibility and implications of the suggestions being considered.
- *Other disciplines* may include other design professionals, clients, owners, users, contracting trades.
- *Integral member of the team* is about actively participating with others in the project; to express your ideas and to understand other people's thinking; to explain and be aware of the implications of the ideas being considered as they relate to lighting design.
- *Lighting relates to the context* is about how your design solution is relevant/applicable/important to the overall scheme, the setting (space or place) or situation.
- *Adds value* is about how your contribution and interaction helped the team satisfy the project requirements and accomplish the overall design concept. It means that your contribution was beneficial to the outcome.

### **Domain Definitions**

#### **Domain 3 Ingenuity**

The contribution of ideas that demonstrate innovation, creativity, originality, imagination, or resourcefulness to solve the challenges of the project.

- *Contribution of ideas* means you provided information, suggestions, and solutions that helped you or others explore new possibilities, to make better use of resources, to take advantage of opportunities or overcome barriers.
- *Foster the goals* refers to how your input and skills contributed to solving problems in an innovative, creative, imaginative or resourceful way.

#### **Domain 4 Synthesis**

The integration of the technical and aesthetic elements of lighting with space and form.

- *Integration* is about combining elements or detailing them in such a way that the lighting components of the scheme work in harmony with other features of the space, so that the effect of lighting is seamless with the presentation of the architecture or the environment.
- *Technical elements* may include the source of light, optical control and distribution of light, the luminaires, management of natural light, electrical monitoring and control, bespoke mounting details, architectural detailing, etc.
- *Aesthetic elements* include those features and components of the lighting that enhance or contribute to visual beauty and make a space appealing.
- Any projects used for this domain must be completed in order to respond to the domain questions.

#### **Domain 5 Science**

The application of the principles of light to meet project relevant technical demands.

- *Principles of light* refer to the science, rules and theories about light, its calculable characteristics and properties; the way it is generated, radiates and is absorbed; its effect on shape and form, its influence on people's emotions and well-being; the health and sustainability of plants and wildlife and other physical elements.
- *Relevant technical criteria* include the practical, predictable and probable factors that are applicable to a specific project.

## Domain Definitions

### Domain 6 Stewardship

The response of lighting to known and potential environmental impacts.

- *Stewardship* is about acting as a protector of resources and the environment and making or encouraging decisions that consider the effect on living things, now and in the future.
- *Environmental impact* is about how the lighting solution affects or influences the use of natural resources, the plant and wildlife surrounding the space or place, and the ability to replenish for the enjoyment of people in the future.

### Domain 7 Human Experience

The design of lighting solutions that positively affects people.

- *Human experience* is about how lighting solutions positively impacts people who use the space, or are dependent on the space, and how it met the aspirations.
- *Positively affects* is about how lighting solutions provide a beneficial effect on human health, wellness, or the cultural and economic well-being of the community that use the space or place.

## Application Questions

**The following lists the information that applicants will need to provide when completing the on-line application. All responses must be in 300 words or less.**

### Domain 1 Goals and Outcomes

To support your responses for this domain please attach up to 3 exhibits. Examples of acceptable exhibits for this domain are described in the Candidate Handbook.

1. Explain the design concept and the project requirements including: client requirements, constraints, plus any other project considerations that were important to the lighting design and that met the goal of the design concept.
2. Explain the methods or tools you used to evaluate the performance or success of your lighting design describing why you believe the completed lighting design met the design concept.

<b>Appendix</b> <b>3</b> <i>Continued</i>	<b>Application Questions</b>
	<p><b>Domain 2 Collaboration</b></p> <p>No exhibits are required for this domain.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. List the role of the main project team members you collaborated with in developing the project (such as architect, interior designer, artist, end user, design trade representatives, etc.) and explain why you worked closely with them.</li> <li>2. Explain how the project developed through collaboration.</li> <li>3. Explain how your project design added value to the project.</li> </ol> <p><b>Domain 3 Ingenuity</b></p> <p>To support your responses for this domain please attach up to 3 exhibits. Examples of acceptable exhibits for this domain are described in the Candidate Handbook.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What were the challenges that required innovation, creativity, originality, imagination or resourcefulness?</li> <li>2. How did your design solutions solve the challenges you described in Question 1 above?</li> <li>3. What was innovative, original, imaginative, or resourceful in your design solution?</li> </ol> <p><b>Domain 4 Synthesis</b></p> <p>To support your responses for this domain please attach up to 3 exhibits. Examples of acceptable exhibits for this domain are described in the Candidate Handbook.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Explain the technical or aesthetic elements that required particular integration with the space or form for one aspect or one section of a project.</li> <li>2. Explain what you did to integrate the technical and aesthetic elements.</li> <li>3. Explain the end result and how the integration was effective.</li> </ol> <p><b>Domain 5 Science</b></p> <p>To support your responses for this domain please attach up to 3 exhibits. Examples of acceptable exhibits for this domain are described in the Candidate Handbook.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What were the technical demands of the project?</li> <li>2. Describe how your solutions solved the technical demands of the project.</li> </ol>

## Application Questions

### Domain 6 Stewardship

To support your responses for this domain please attach up to 3 exhibits. Examples of acceptable exhibits for this domain are described in the Candidate Handbook.

1. Explain the environmental challenges and aspirations of the project.
2. Explain your philosophy, reasoning or research in developing the project in order to address the environmental and operational challenges.
3. Explain how your design minimizes the negative environmental impact and considers the future.

### Domain 7 Human Experience

To support your responses for this domain please attach up to 3 exhibits. Examples of acceptable exhibits for this domain are described in the Candidate Handbook.

1. Explain the positive effects on people the lighting design aspired to achieve.
2. Explain how your lighting design positively impacts people who use the space.
3. Cite the research, analysis or validated past experience that supports your claim that your solution positively affects people.

## Glossary

**Demonstrations** The evidence you submit that shows competency in a domain.

**Domains** A specific area of proficiency/expertise within the profession of architectural lighting design.

**Exhibits** The illustrative evidence that you submit that support your written responses.

**Form** Physical object or material, whether manmade or naturally occurring.

**Projects** Lighting designs for commissioned work that you use in your application.

- Completed lighting design solutions that are concluded and implemented.
- Incomplete lighting design solutions that are in progress at the time of submission, and results have not been practically realised.

**Review** The evaluation of the application.

**Reviewer** Senior architectural lighting designers who are formally trained in the certification process and the assessment of CLD applications.

## NOTES

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