

# (PRIME) CHAIR

## 12TH INTERNATIONAL INDUSTRIAL DESIGN COMPETITION

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Competition Organizer:  
Festival lesa, z.o.o., so.p.

Application deadline for the  
competition:  
August 28, 2026

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More than 500 authors  
from 50 countries  
around the world have  
participated in the (Prime)  
Chair International  
Competition so far.

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50 chair prototypes have  
been created as a result of  
the past 12 competitions.



FESTIVAL LESA

## ABOUT US

The Forests Stretch from Horizon to Horizon Across the Verdant Expanse of Kočevska... With over 80% forest coverage, it is almost surprising that wood, this priceless natural resource, was once well-utilised but has been so underused in recent decades. Global and local circumstances in the past decades nearly erased the value of wood and the importance of local forest-wood chains. This neglect led to a steep decline in the wood processing industry across Slovenia, and consequently, to fewer enrolments in vocational secondary programs focused on woodworking. We found ourselves in a situation where we could only helplessly watch raw logs leave our forests and cross our national borders, unprocessed.

Climate change and the crisis of globalisation have brought us back to the idea that wood is an excellent raw material—but it must be used differently: enriched with new knowledge and design, crafted using modern technology in harmony with the refined skills of traditional craftsmen. It is no surprise, then, that wood is becoming one of the key materials in the green transition. In 2013, as a response to this situation, the Kočevje Grammar and Secondary School launched the initiative for the Festival of Wood, with strong support from the Municipality of Kočevje. We aimed to create a platform for reflecting on the opportunities offered by our forested region. We wanted to remind the local population of the value of wood as a natural asset—something that should not be taken for granted, even if it often is—and hoped to raise awareness of the high-quality natural environment we live in.

We wanted to connect with local entrepreneurs, as well as scientists in Slovenia and abroad. In short, our goal was to raise awareness and transform our attitude toward forests and wood—something we can be truly proud of. This new awareness naturally brings with it the knowledge and skills to process wood and, ultimately, to sell it successfully with as much added value as possible.

## THE PURPOSE OF THE COMPETITION

The Festival of Wood invites open applications to the 12th International Contest (Primal)Chair. The grand jury will select 2 authors or groups of authors of the two winning chairs, who will be presented at the award ceremony during the Festival of Wood 2026.

Participation in the contest is open to all designers, students and authors worldwide and above 18 years.

When thinking about Kočevsko, a picture of a magnificent forest landscape with intact nature and a diverse animal world, featuring bears, wolves, and lynxes, emerges in one's mind. But Kočevsko has another special secret hiding in the endless forests as a precious pearl. These are silent in secret remnants of primaeval nature in Europe, in fact, the few rare virgin forests in Europe. Slovenia has 14 virgin forests, 6 of them are in the region of Kočevsko on an surface of almost 219 ha. The largest is the virgin forest Krokav which was put on the UNESCO World Heritage list in 2017.

**The Festival of Wood invites open applications to the 12th International Industrial Design Contest for two wooden chairs as a tribute to the primaeval forests of the Kočevsko region.**

By taking part in this design competition, you get a chance to materialise your design idea of the connection between the primaeval forest and a contemporary human and raise awareness of the user about the importance of coexistence between man and nature.



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## AWARDS

### EXPRESSIVE CHAIR A TRIBUTE TO THE RICHNESS OF THE KOČEVJE FORESTS

that expresses a deep connection with the untouched nature and the silence of the Kočevje virgin forest in an expressive, artistic, and symbolic way.

- Cash prize of €1,500 (pretax)
- Prototype production of the chair
- Certificate
- Free accommodation (one room/award) in Kočevje (October 15–17, 2026)
- Participation in the 2026 Festival of Wood awards ceremony
- Expert-guided tour of the Krokav virgin forest

### INDUSTRIAL CHAIR FOREST DESIGN FOR THE FUTURE

awarded to a chair based on similar general principles as the expressive chair but adapted for industrial production and commercial appeal.

- Cash prize of €1,500 (pretax)
- Prototype production of the chair
- Certificate
- Free accommodation (one room/award) in Kočevje (October 15–17, 2026)
- Participation in the 2026 Festival of Wood awards ceremony
- Expert-guided tour of the Krokav virgin forest

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## KEY DATES

Call for entries:

5th June 2026

Deadline for questions:

August 14, 2026

Deadline for entries:

August 28, 2026

Selection of winners by the grand jury:

7th September 2026

Award ceremony Festival of Wood 2026:

15th October 2026, Kočevje

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## COMPETITION ORGANIZER

The jury will evaluate design proposals based on four main aspects:

1. **Design perspective:** innovation, functionality, aesthetics, feasibility
2. **Material selection:** emphasis on the use of wood as the primary material
3. **Market potential:** practical value and commercial applicability
4. **Presentation:** clarity and quality of the proposal presentation

Each jury member will evaluate submissions independently based on each criterion.

The jury's decisions are final.

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## THE CONTEST IS INVITED BY

Festival lesa, z.o.o., so.p.

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## COMPETITION PARTNERS

Municipality of Kočevje, Kočevski Les, Kočevsko, Kočevje Grammar and Secondary School, Kočevje Business Incubator Partners



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## MEMBERS OF THE EXPERT JURY



**Prof. Janez Suhadolc**  
Architect, designer and carpenter, retired professor at the Faculty of Architecture in Ljubljana



**Prof. Salih Teskeredžić**  
Architect and product designer, a professor at the Sarajevo Academy of Fine Arts, cofounder and creative director of Gazzda brand, winner of multiple international design contests.



**Nikola Radeljković**  
Founder and member of Numen/ForUse group, artistic director of the brand Nunc and a guest teacher at numerous design schools.



**Andrej Palman, dipl. inž.**  
Carpentry engineer, retired expert associate of Business incubator Kočevje.



**Špela Šubic**  
Museum counsellor and curator at the Museum of Architecture and Design (MAO). A significant part of the industrial design collection under her care consists of seating furniture, primarily chairs.



**Prof. Rok Kuhar**  
Architect and product designer, Head of the Industrial Design Department at the Academy of Fine Arts and Design in Ljubljana, cofounder of Studio Raketa that works in the field of graphic and product design.



**Tomaž Sešlar**  
Founder of the company Rexdesign d.o.o.. An expert on the works of Niko Kralj, who has revived many of his nearly forgotten creations.



**Asst. Prof. Mojca Perše**  
Architect specializing in design and interior architecture, Vice Dean for Artistic Activities and Head of the Laboratory for Creative Industries at the Faculty of Design. She is also a lecturer in the Department of Interior Design and Product Design.



**Doc. Primož Jeza**  
Architect and interior designer, assistant professor at the Department for Interior design and Vice-dean for Artistic activities at the Faculty of Design in Ljubljana, Head of the Laboratory for Creative industries at the Faculty of Design in Ljubljana.



**Albin Škalič Ing. lesarstva,**  
Carpentry engineer, CEO of the company Murales.



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## PARTICIPATION AND SUBMISSION OF WORKS

- Proposals may be submitted by individuals or groups of authors from anywhere in the world.
- Participants must be at least 18 years old.
- Each participant may submit a maximum of two design proposals.
- Design proposals must be submitted via the Festival of Wood website using the official application form: <https://festival-lesa.si/pages/prijava-na-prastol-2026>
- All mandatory fields in the application form must be completed; otherwise, the application will be considered invalid.
- Visual presentation of the proposal (drawings, plans, and visualisations showing the proposal in its intended use) must be submitted as a PDF file / minimum 225 dpi / A3 landscape format / colour / up to 5 pages.
- The written concept explanation must be at least 1,500 characters, including spaces.
- Submitted CAD files must be compatible with AutoCAD, SketchUp, or Rhinoceros software (all files must be combined into one ZIP archive).
- The competition material must be submitted in either English or Slovenian.

**Important: The name(s) of the designer(s) or any identifying marks must not appear in the written explanation or any of the uploaded visual materials. Failure to comply with this rule will result in disqualification.**

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## JUDGING CRITERIA

The jury will evaluate design proposals based on four main aspects:

- 1. Design perspective:** innovation, functionality, aesthetics, feasibility
- 2. Material selection:** emphasis on the use of wood as the primary material
- 3. Market potential:** practical value and commercial applicability
- 4. Presentation:** clarity and quality of the proposal presentation.

Each jury member will evaluate submissions independently based on each criterion. The jury's decisions are final.

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## OTHER INFORMATIONS

- All inquiries related to the content of the public competition will be accepted via email until August 14, 2026.
- Responses will be sent to participants or published on the Festival's website.
- The jury will complete its work and inform participants of its decision, including the selection of awarded and exhibited works, no later than 7th September 2026, via the organiser's social media channels.
- The competition results will be officially announced at the awards ceremony on 15th October 2026.
- The organiser reserves the right to amend the public competition should such changes be necessary to ensure the integrity of the selection process. Any changes will be published on the Festival of Wood website.



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## COMPETITION TERMS AND CONDITIONS

- By submitting competition materials, participants agree to all terms of the competition as outlined in the call or reasonably inferred from it.
- Winners grant permission for the prototype and submitted materials to be used for exhibitions, photography, and promotional purposes related to the Festival of Wood and the competition.
- Winners are required to actively participate in the creation of the prototype and preparation of materials for the publication of the winning projects, following instructions provided by the organiser via email.
- Prototypes of the awarded designs will be produced in two copies – one for the Festival of Wood and one for the author for permanent ownership.
- The prize is non-transferable. The winner is not entitled to financial compensation for the produced prototype.
- If a participant submits more than two proposals, only the last two submitted entries will be considered for evaluation.
- Prototypes must be fully feasible to produce in Slovenia and must be made from locally available wood.
- The organiser will not reimburse any costs incurred by authors of non-awarded entries in connection with their participation in the competition.
- The expert jury reserves the right to exclude any participant who violates the participation rules, provides false or misleading information, or otherwise compromises the integrity of the competition.
- Participation is not permitted for jury members, their family members, or close associates. A jury member will recuse themselves from evaluating any submission in which they are personally involved or if they voluntarily choose to abstain.
- The organiser is not responsible for errors related to the functioning of the website, network, or other communication components that may result in a missed submission deadline.
- Copyright is guaranteed following the Copyright and Related Rights Act. By entering the competition, the participant guarantees that they are the sole holder of all copyrights (moral and economic rights) to the submitted work and that no third party holds any copyrights or industrial property rights that could lead to claims against the competition organiser. The participant assumes full responsibility for any claims made by third parties arising from authorship or plagiarism.
- The organiser will cover the shipping costs for delivering the prototypes to the winners of the Prime chair 2025 competition in both categories. All other associated costs (e.g. customs duties) are the responsibility of the participant. stroške (carina ipd.), nosi udeleženec natečaja.



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LET THE DESIGN OF THE CHAIR  
TAKE YOU TO THE EDGE OF TIME  
AND MATTER

CONNECT WITH THE FOREST  
SIGN UP  
CREATE

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EXPERIENCE THE PRIMAЕVAL  
FOREST

"A primaеval forest – a woodland where  
the axe has never sung... an experience of a  
world without humans, a world without a  
boundary between life and death..."



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