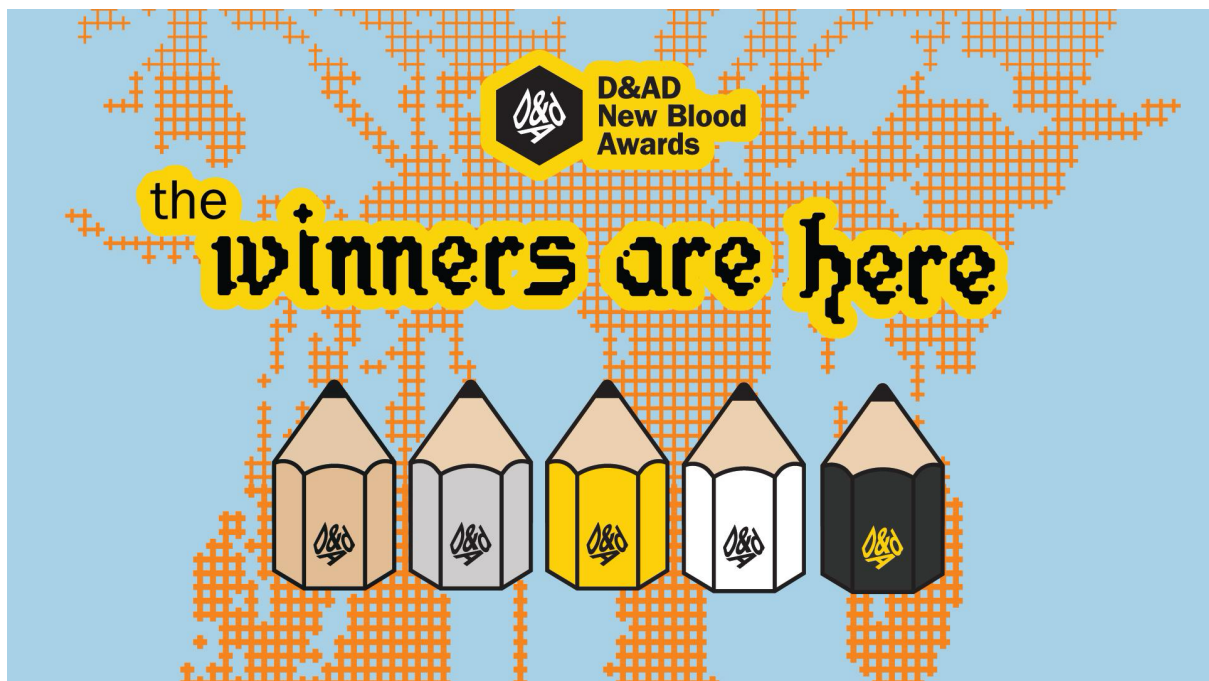


D&AD New Blood Awards 2026: menstruation project wins both of the year's top honours



- **Blood Stocks**, from Denmark, created for the Canesten brief, was the only project to take both a Black Pencil and a White Pencil, the award reserved for creativity that does good in the world.
- **175 Pencils** were awarded to winners in 29 countries this year, with the only two Black Pencils going to Denmark and Kuwait.

LONDON, 30 June 2026, The work that defined this year's D&AD New Blood Awards, announced tonight at The Steel Yard in London, was not a product launch or a brand film but a proposal to treat menstruation as a medical asset. Of the year's two Black Pencils, the rarest of the awards, one went to an entry from Denmark and the other to Kuwait.

In all, **175 Pencils** were awarded across the 2026 programme: **2 Black Pencils** (the highest D&AD New Blood accolade), **4 White Pencils** (for work that uses the power of creativity to do good), **24 Yellow**, **42 Graphite** and **103 Wood Pencils**. Winners spanned **29 countries**, drawn from over **7,000 entrants** across **78 countries**, judged by **165 judges** against the same standards applied to the D&AD Awards, in response to 19 briefs set by leading global brands including Twix, HSBC, Duolingo, L'Oréal, Tuborg, Wise, Carrefour and Canesten. This was the most global group of partners in D&AD's history.

Blood Stocks, created in response to the Canesten New Blood Brief in collaboration with Design Bridge & Partners, was developed by Jens Kühnel and Kirstine Vilsen from DMJX (Danish School of Media and Journalism), Denmark. The concept reimagines a topic long burdened by stigma through a first-of-its-kind donation model linked to the menstrual cycle, transforming monthly donors into active stakeholders in women's health research. It was the single most decorated project of the year and the only one to take both a Black Pencil, D&AD's highest accolade, and a White Pencil, the award reserved for creativity that does good in the world.

The year's second Black Pencil went to Young Explorer: Independence with a Snap, created for Wise by Mohammed Al Sane of Kuwait. It addresses the moment a child begins to need financial independence while parents still want a safety net, centring on "The Snap" a physical card that snaps apart to mark a handover of trust, paired with digital features such as an activity map and tap-to-transfer.

The other three White Pencils went to Play Aid, by Daniela Santucci and Santiago Cáceres at Miami Ad School Madrid, Spain (Affinity and Canva brief), which redesigns the inside of humanitarian food-aid packaging as printed play boards, giving children living through conflict something to play with at no extra shipping weight or cost. 2Integrate, by Guus Vercoutere and Mats Mondy at LUCA School of Arts, Belgium (Duolingo brief), partners with UNHCR to turn language learning into a survival tool, helping asylum seekers communicate in urgent, real-world situations as they rebuild their lives. And Launch Pads, by a four-strong team at Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts, Singapore (Affinity and Canva brief), designs period products for girls who start their periods young, built to make a first period feel ordinary rather than taboo.

In terms of global reach, Denmark was the standout among smaller nations, taking a Pencil in all five tiers: Wood, Graphite, Yellow, White and Black. The UK led globally with 51 Pencils, followed by Spain (19), France (16), Denmark (15) and the United States (11).

For 46 years, D&AD's New Blood Awards have set live briefs from global brands, with this year's briefs downloaded 227,000 times in over 90 countries. With 65% of last year's winners already in creative employment, a New Blood Pencil has become one of the clearest early signals of who the industry should be watching.

This year's Awards also reflects the long-standing support of Design Bridge and Partners, who have now reached a total of 111 Pencils through their practice of introducing the brief-sponsorship opportunity to clients.

David Patton, D&AD CEO, said: *"What strikes me most this year is how global New Blood has become, we had our highest ever number of international briefs this year and the only two Black Pencils awarded went to work made in Denmark and Kuwait."*

New Blood is the world's largest programme for students and emerging talent, but scale and reach are only part of the story. By setting students real briefs from leading brands, we give them the skills to progress and help bridge the gap between education and industry, wherever in the world they're starting out. None of it would be possible without our partners, university tutors and the wider creative community, 1,000 of whom came to support the students at our private view, to kick off the New Blood Festival last night."

The D&AD New Blood Festival with Adobe, the free annual showcase of the UK's best graduating creative talent, is taking place this week at Protein Studios in London. It features work from over 40 university courses alongside exclusive exhibitions of New Blood Award winners, plus talks from Anthony Burrill, Josh Akapo, Seen Studios and Mother, to name but a few.

For information on all of the winning entries, please see the dandad.org/awards/new-blood-awards

-Ends -

Notes to editors

For more information please contact: Laura.mcturk@dandad.org

Images can be found here: https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/165ej9e0Fb8tq-9ear8XTaDfyQHwA0l1e?usp=drive_link

Pencil totals (2026) 175 Pencils awarded: 2 Black, 4 White, 24 Yellow, 42 Graphite, 103 Wood

Black Pencil winners (2)

- Blood Stocks: Canesten, Jens Kühnel & Kirstine Vilsen, DMJX, Denmark (also a White Pencil)
- Young Explorer: Independence with a Snap, Wise, Mohammed Al Sane, Kuwait

White Pencil winners (4)

- Blood Stocks: Canesten, Jens Kühnel & Kirstine Vilsen, DMJX, Denmark (also a Black Pencil)
- Launch Pads: Affinity and Canva, Joanna Feodora Likito, Kirani Nayla Wibowo, Sanjana Ballal & Valerie Tan, Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts, Singapore
- Play Aid: Affinity and Canva, Daniela Santucci & Santiago Cáceres, Miami Ad School Madrid, Spain
- 2Integrate: Duolingo, Guus Vercoutere & Mats Mondy, LUCA School of Arts, Belgium

Pencils by country

Country	Black	White	Yellow	Graphite	Wood	Total
United Kingdom	0	0	7	14	30	51
Spain	0	1	2	5	11	19
France	0	0	1	8	7	16
Denmark	1	1	3	1	9	15
United States	0	0	3	1	7	11
Singapore	0	1	0	0	6	7
Australia	0	0	0	2	3	5

Brazil	0	0	0	2	3	5
Germany	0	0	2	1	1	4
Italy	0	0	0	1	3	4
Kazakhstan	0	0	1	2	1	4
Vietnam	0	0	1	0	3	4
Belgium	0	1	0	0	2	3
Colombia	0	0	1	0	2	3
Sweden	0	0	0	0	3	3
Canada	0	0	0	0	2	2
China	0	0	0	0	2	2
India	0	0	0	1	1	2
Korea, Republic of	0	0	0	1	1	2
Kuwait	1	0	1	0	0	2
Malaysia	0	0	1	0	1	2
New Zealand	0	0	0	1	1	2
Ecuador	0	0	1	0	0	1
Hong Kong	0	0	0	0	1	1
Indonesia	0	0	0	0	1	1
Netherlands	0	0	0	0	1	1
Portugal	0	0	0	1	0	1
Turkey	0	0	0	1	0	1
United Arab Emirates	0	0	0	0	1	1
Total	2	4	24	42	103	175

By region: Europe 118, Asia & Pacific 32. North America 13, Latin America 9, West Asia & Africa 3.

By discipline (top categories): Advertising 78, PR 49, Graphic Design 48, Product Design 45, Marketing 38.

Entries may be submitted across multiple disciplines, so category totals exceed the total number of Pencils.

Pencils by brief

Brief	Black	White	Yellow	Graphite	Wood	Total
Affinity and Canva	0	2	1	4	8	15
Monotype & Penguin	0	0	1	3	11	15
Canesten	1	1	1	3	6	12
HSBC	0	0	1	2	8	11
Tuborg	0	0	4	2	5	11
CensHERship & The Case for Her	0	0	3	2	5	10
Twix	0	0	1	2	7	10
Wise	1	0	2	2	5	10
giffgaff & Big Issue	0	0	2	2	6	10

Duolingo	0	1	1	2	5	9
L'Oreal	0	0	1	2	6	9
Canal+	0	0	1	2	5	8
Nothing	0	0	2	2	4	8
War Child & Secret 7"	0	0	0	4	4	8
Carrefour	0	0	0	3	4	7
D&AD	0	0	0	1	5	6
Novartis	0	0	1	1	4	6
21GRAMS	0	0	1	1	3	5
Kahf	0	0	1	2	2	5
Total	2	4	24	42	103	175

About

D&AD

D&AD is a global creativity non-profit that celebrates, stimulates and enables excellence in design and commercial creativity. Through its world-renowned Awards and education programmes, D&AD aims to generate funding to champion the next generation of creative talent to drive positive change in the industry and beyond. The global steward of creative excellence in commercial creativity. For more, visit: dandad.org.