

News story: UK Pavilion at Astana Expo 2017 scoops 2 design awards

The UK's interactive installation at the 'Future Energy' Expo 2017 in Astana, Kazakhstan has won a silver exhibition design award from the organising body of the global event, The Bureau International des Expositions (BIE).

An international jury composed of 9 members visited each pavilion of the 115 countries and 22 international organisations participating. In the larger pavilion category (more than 700 square metres), the UK Pavilion won silver.

The UK Pavilion, which was part of a wider UK showcase in the region, has also been voted runner up in the Best Pavilion category by Exhibitor magazine. For almost 30 years, Exhibitor magazine has been running the world's most prestigious exhibit-design competition, honouring the very best of trade show exhibits. The structure was judged by an international panel of multidisciplinary design, marketing, and communications experts, with one judge citing it as:

Without a doubt the most unique of all the pavilions at Expo 2017.

The competition entries for both awards included pavilions representing countries from all over the world.

UK Pavilion designer Asif Khan commented:

Hearing that half a million people visited the UK Pavilion in just 3 months, and then finding out that we won silver medals in 2 of the pavilion awards has really touched me.

The impact of Expo 2017 on Kazakhstan will take years to fully comprehend at the country level, but my feeling is that if we opened up the imagination of even one Kazakh youngster, the aims of our project will be met.

Closer to home, our success really shows the value of UK government breaking from tradition and trusting new voices in design and architecture. I congratulate and am sincerely grateful to the huge team who enabled our project to become reality.

One of Exhibitor's panel commented:

The United Kingdom's artistic and interactive interpretation of a yurt was beautiful. The environment that element created was unique and powerful. The structure was like a rare and precious element

that compels humans to gravitate toward it and interact with it. Touching the spokes was like playing a giant harp that wraps around you and emits light instead of music.

Asif Khan was part of a collaboration of British talent that included music legend Brian Eno. It highlighted UK innovations and discoveries that have changed the way we live our lives and connect with others.

The UK Pavilion, supported by the Department for International Trade, shows the UK at its creative best and over the last 3 months has been sharing the UK's brilliant scientific and engineering expertise across the energy and mining industries with the theme of 'We are Energy', exploring new ways to harness the various sources of energy that surround us and secure a greener future.