



AIA Candidate Questionnaire

Josh Flowers, FAIA – Candidate for 2025-26 AIA Secretary

1. PRIORITY ISSUES

AIA has taken bold steps to move the organization forward and address both environmental and social responsibility. How can AIA most effectively balance these major initiatives at the national level? What role do you see each level of AIA taking to provide resources to help architects be better prepared to help clients and communities across the country? And what support can AIA provide to components to ensure a coordinated approach?

To effectively integrate environmental and social responsibility into our services as architects, it's important to promote AIA architects as global leaders skilled at providing solutions to challenges affecting the planet. By prioritizing people, planet, and profit, we ensure that our designs contribute positively to society, the environment, and the prosperity of AIA members, firms and the profession. AIA architects, through sharing innovative approaches and expertise, can address these issues on a global scale, while providing solutions that are sensitive to regional and local needs. Through a coordinated approach facilitated by AIA, these solutions can be shared and implemented at all levels, maximizing our impact and advancing sustainability and social equity across borders.

2. VALUE OF DESIGN

What can AIA do to help members communicate the value of design to clients, communities, and the public at large?

As society increasingly recognizes the vital role of design in shaping a positive future, AIA can equip members to articulate the transformative power of architecture in addressing societal challenges and advancing the common good by integrating design insights into communication strategies. Through workshops, sharing success stories, advocacy for design excellence, engagement with media and public relations, education initiatives, and networking opportunities, AIA empowers its members to effectively communicate the value of design and foster a greater appreciation for the importance of architecture in shaping our world. The [Chief Architect initiative](#) stands as an example of how AIA can share goals and resources across components to address local issues that generate global impact. Originating from an understanding of how an architect serving at the cabinet level of a mayor's administration can meet the complex challenges facing cities today, this initiative provides a framework for collaboration and resource-sharing.

3. THE ECONOMY

As we head into uncertain times, the economy will undoubtedly influence the profession's health and welfare. What role(s), programs and activities should national AIA initiate to support AIA Components and the individual member?

Having first become involved with the AIA during the Great Recession, I understand the challenges we face now, especially considering AIA's current budget deficit and its impact on components and ultimately members. In response, AIA must consider several initiatives to

support components and individual members: financial assistance programs, professional development initiatives, advocacy efforts, networking and mentorship programs, resource sharing platforms, and wellness and support services. These efforts are crucial in helping our community navigate economic challenges and emerge stronger and more resilient.

4. ENCOURAGING ENGAGEMENT: THE MEMBERS' VOICE

*How can AIA create better opportunities for members to engage with the organization at **all** levels without duplicating efforts? And how can the organization evolve culturally to ensure the members' voice is valued and included?*

To create better opportunities for members to engage with the organization at all levels, AIA can implement a cohesive communication and coordination strategy. This involves streamlining communication channels, ensuring clear dissemination of information, and coordinating activities across the organization. Utilizing technology platforms for member engagement, such as online forums, webinars, and virtual events, can facilitate broader participation while minimizing duplication of efforts. AIA can also better engage the Strategic Council, which now has direct representation from every state, to facilitate dialogue and develop changes in communication with members, ensuring that their voices are heard and valued in decision-making processes.

To evolve culturally and ensure that members' voices are valued and included, AIA must not merely wait for feedback but must proactively ensure that its governance structure is focused on member outreach and generating changes based on a culture that fosters awareness of member needs. This proactive approach entails actively seeking input from members to understand their needs, concerns, and aspirations. AIA should prioritize diversity and representation in leadership positions and decision-making processes to reflect the demographics and perspectives of its membership. Implementing regular feedback mechanisms and accountability measures can demonstrate a commitment to listening to and acting upon member input. Promoting a culture of continuous learning and growth, where members are encouraged to contribute their unique talents and ideas, can foster a sense of belonging within the organization. Overall, by embracing inclusivity and transparency, AIA can create a supportive environment where every member feels valued and empowered to actively engage in shaping our shared future.

5. PRACTICE

How can AIA improve coordination across the organization to better prepare, package, curate resources to support architectural practice at all scales?

AIA could advance practice by further investing in both the [Framework for Design Excellence](#) and the [Guides for Equitable Practice](#), to develop comprehensive and accessible resources to support the future of the profession. This entails establishing a centralized resource hub, consolidating information, tools, and best practices for practice at all scales, while fostering collaboration to ensure alignment of goals and effective communication among different groups within the AIA. Actively engaging with stakeholders, including AIA members, firms, educators, policymakers, and industry partners, is essential to understanding their needs and priorities, which can inform the development of tailored resources and establishing the nexus between people and projects. Leveraging technology platforms and digital tools can streamline the delivery of resources and facilitate access for architects. Additionally, implementing feedback mechanisms allows for continuous improvement and refinement of resources to better meet the evolving needs of the architectural community. Furthermore, AIA should explore and implement the Strategic Council recommendations on AI to ensure architects are able to realize the potential created by new technology. These recommendations include establishing an AI Advisory Panel to provide the profession with expertise on the impact of AI and an industry consortium of related design professions to position AIA to lead the industry in effective and ethical adoption of AI that puts people first.