

AIA CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE

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My responses compliment and support this framework and perspective of the American Institute of Architects.

1 • 98,000 • 200 • 1 ... a Möbius beginning of what we can do together...

- 1 • The Architect...** *the extraordinary power of one, the individual architect being the focus of the AIA.*
- 98,000+ • Architects in the AIA...** *the power of the many, the power of collective genius and invention.*
- 200+ • Components of the AIA...** *the critical link, fulcrum, and pivotal lever arm of the AIA.*
- 1 • The AIA...** *the power of one with the power of the many, a force multiplier internally and externally*

1. PRIORITY ISSUES Integration of our efforts and message is essential - environment, society, economy - an ecology, one holistic discussion at various scales and with multiple orders of magnitude. A national sharing of information is vital for the multiplicity of initiatives being accomplished by our members and Components, joined with the activity taking place in communities and states across the country by our neighbors, citizen groups, non profits, community foundations, the business community, and governments. There are many organizations and individuals who embraced environmental and social responsibility for a longer time and with a greater focus than the AIA. Acknowledge them, respect what they have accomplished. This goes to our ability and willingness to CONNECT • COOPERATE • COORDINATE • COLLABORATE internally and externally, leveraging our work with others at all levels. Here is an organization methodology for a holistic integration and communication of our priorities.

Can we have a unified voice in all senses of the word, while fostering group harmony and expressing individual creativity as an organization? One example is to adopt a methodological framework acknowledging the vast interests of the AIA and its members, but providing an integrating core, a center. The premise is that if our ideas and initiatives - are addressed and incorporated by common reference themes - we would have naturally occurring interrelationships. By virtue of formulating and implementing activities with this framework, there would be a systematic integration of the key components of our AIA ecology, making it diverse, stronger, resilient, possessing positive dynamics and synergies for our ecology itself, making our organization increasingly sustainable. This natural integration would build, one idea, one initiative, one plan, and one design at a time into a much more interwoven, interdependent, and productive AIA ecology across the 1 • 98,000 • 200 • 1 continuum of the AIA . Every initiative should clearly state its relevance, support, enhancement of the strategic plan, and provide this guidance and responsibilities across the AIA:

- What - action is to be undertaken
- Why - the action is to be undertaken
- Where - the action is to take place
- Who - is responsible for the action
- When - the action will start and finish
- How - the action will be accomplished

We can effectively connect with our communities in multiple ways. One, our Disaster Assistance Program is ready with disaster response, recovery, mitigation, and preparedness. This is a great door opener for AIA Components with community leaders. We developed strong national resources to support the Components, members, and communities, and now by rebuilding sustainably with DIRRT - the *Design Innovation Rapid Response Team*: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/14KyoGGHXU9WIBFq4tmlh8qhkuWsiLV2k/view?usp=sharing> Two, we can connect by re-creating the successful national network and resources we accomplished with the award winning "Learning By Design" program and the Sourcebook for incredible K-12 architecture design education experiences. Both were community and school system door-openers, providing education service, as attested to in two Architectural Record editorials: https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Q1jb66n0DV4VoU0cZcbAkS_aWFS7X3fQ/view?usp=sharing https://drive.google.com/file/d/1LZPMQFsGvP_4_W9cnekOg9vh3P2Q04Ia/view?usp=sharing

2. VALUE OF DESIGN Addressing the decades old issue of the "value" of architects and what we do, requires an approach we have shied away from for far too long. Compile the quantitative data and couple those metrics with the qualitative stories of good design, dollars and resources saved, human and ecological health enhanced, carbon captured, greenhouse gas emissions reduced, how climate action and human/environmental equity is addressed, how and why the places we design result in worker satisfaction, increased efficiencies, increased learning by students, higher school attendance, better health, lower life cycle costs, *and more*. This information demonstrates the value of architects and our power of design. Harken back to our conducting post occupancy evaluation, environmental/behavioral research design for the buildings and spaces we create. These evaluations can inform our designs yet to be, and effectively communicate that information and the stories of design to our clients and the public.

When the oil embargo occurred in the early 1970's consumers began to pay attention to, and purchase, fuel economical automobiles. Then energy efficiency in buildings gathered momentum. Whether people wished to save the planet or not, fuel efficient vehicles and buildings became a quantitative pocket book issue, not only to home owners but also to larger property owners. When authoring environmental legislation and submitting testimony, I include the supporting rationale demonstrating the

economic benefits of the legislation as well as the environmental and the aspirational. That is what we, and the AIA should do. Tell our stories of design with quantitative data and the qualitative benefits of our buildings. The metrics and the stories work for both.

3. THE ECONOMY I see two questions here. One is the national economy. Two is the AIA economy. In the 05/15/2024, "Construction Dive" report, Anirban Basu, chief economist of the Associated Builders and Contractors, related that construction costs increased 3.5% over the first four months of this year, signaling "...another sign that inflation is accelerating and suggests that interest rates are set to stay higher for longer." Ken Simonson, chief economist at the Associated General Contractors of America, mirrored Basu's analysis, with concerns about rising input costs impacting bids and project prices. Simonson continues, "Prices for construction inputs has risen faster than contractors' bids every month so far in 2024." The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics Producer Price Index data released in April reports a 42.1% increase in construction inputs since February, 2020.

The value of private sector real estate assessments, particularly office buildings, is decreasing, as a result of COVID, leaving property managers and developers with depreciated assets. Building occupancy rates are down, further devaluing the built environment's value. Couple that with the high cost, the time required for financing, and the sometimes inexplicable supply chain issues, we have our design/construction industry facing an uncertain future. Larger architecture firms may have a greater capacity to weather all this, which likely will include layoffs, but the consequences of the economy will certainly impact the sole practitioner, and the small to the medium size firms. The advantage of smaller practices have is their ability to adapt and turn on a dime quickly and effectively.

I have no answer for the national economy. My ability to withstand economic downturns is centered in a practice that is multidisciplinary and eclectic, providing a wide range of services not typical to architecture practices. They include being a design and architecture consultant to a Great Britain nano-technology company combining graphene and aerogel in advanced applications, private sector and government consultancies, and serving as a successful grant writer for municipalities and non profit organizations.

Then there is the economy of the AIA. I am not quite understanding if the proceeds from the sale of the AIA contract documents was fully expended to backfill an AIA budget short fall in the past several years, or if any of the document sale proceeds remain. Then there is the cost of the AIA headquarters renovation. Will those costs increase? If so, by how much? In the past few years, most if not all construction costs have increased, and significantly. The potential impact of both, on membership dues is obvious.

Suggested here are several initiatives, all based on investing in our human and intellectual resources. One - adopt a policy to maintain ownership of all intellectual property developed by the AIA, copyright, trademark, design patents, patents. Two - increase the capacity and capability of the AIA Foundation. There are hundreds of millions of dollars available in the interest areas of architects that we are passing up in which members can partake. Three - establish an AIA Research Corporation as an idea incubator, potentially leading to venture capital investment. Open the Research Corporation to all AIA members, especially the younger members, and include entrepreneurial/business coaching. AIA members would share in their venture's revenue and the intellectual property as partners with the AIA. Three - increase the \$\$\$ capital for our legislative capital. Encourage all members to contribute at least \$5, if not \$10, to the AIA PAC. With a goal of 100,000 AIA members we can annually raise between \$500,000 and \$1,000,000.

4. ENCOURAGING ENGAGEMENT: THE MEMBERS' VOICE Increase the number of At-Large Directors that are directly elected by the members, through the delegates to the annual meeting. Provide the 98,000+ members and the At-Large Directors with an easily accessible, direct, and open communication platform. Provide the members with a directory and access links to the multiple AIA Basecamp/discussion portals. Trust is not built, or rebuilt. Trust is earned. We need an open access, all idea, all member portal.

One idea is but a simple beginning. I have at times learned what the AIA President, AIA President-Elect, and the CEO/EVP do in the course of their duties. How many members know of that? AIA leaders should communicate their activities to the members, ideally on a monthly basis. I am not speaking of a reporting what meetings or events they attended. I speak of substance - reporting the outcomes of the meetings, connections made, collaborative programs dreamed of, initiated. Why on a monthly basis? Simply, with frequent information, our members and Components can begin to understand the AIA better, answering basic questions What is our leadership doing? Why are they doing it? How does what they are doing benefit our members and our Components?

It also provides an opportunity for a member or Component to connect in a timely fashion with the national AIA leadership and each other: "Oh you are doing that? I happen to know so-and-so...", or..."I/we are very involved in this policy/program that can add to what you are trying to accomplish." Grow and nurture our relationships, our organizational, professional, and personal ecosystems.

5. PRACTICE As can be seen, I am running out of the 2 page limit. This response is straightforward. Searching the AIA website I did not find any reference to the former Architect's Handbook of Professional Practice, a valuable resource in my becoming an architect and starting my successful practice. The latest versions found were circa 2013, 2014. The foundation exists for assembling its body of knowledge electronically. A parallel example is the AIA Disaster Assistance Handbook. Reflect the wide variety life cycle balance/professional practice status of architects. Our practices are not homogenous. Yes there are common threads and best practices, but embrace the expanding universe of architecture practice. Make it a business model, relevant, informative, and a must-have!