



Position Description: First VP/President Elect

Role Overview

The President-elect of AIA California serves a pivotal role in the leadership transition and strategic direction of the organization. This position is a one-year term that automatically progresses to the presidency in the subsequent year. The responsibilities encompass both preparatory and active leadership functions, ensuring continuity and effective governance.

- **Leadership Preparation:** Collaborate closely with the current President to understand ongoing initiatives, organizational priorities, and strategic goals, ensuring a seamless transition into the presidency.
 - **Strategic Oversight:** Engage in high-level planning and decision-making processes, contributing to the development and refinement of AIA California's strategic objectives.
 - **Committee Involvement:** Serve as a member of the Executive Review Committee, participating in evaluations and decisions related to executive leadership compensation. Co-chair the Planning and Finance Committee with the President-Elect, guiding strategic planning and financial decision-making.
 - **Representation:** Attend events, programs, and meetings on behalf of AIA California, representing the organization's interests and fostering relationships with key stakeholders; serve in absence of the President or other elected officers.
 - **Governance and Policy:** Assist in the implementation of Board-directed policies and provide governance guidance, ensuring alignment with the organization's mission and objectives.
 - **Liaison to California Representative Council (CRC):** Serve as a partner to the CRC Speaker, facilitating CRC operations and ensuring effective communication between the Council and AIA California leadership. Act as the primary connection between AIA California and the CRC, ensuring effective communication and collaboration.
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Key Responsibilities

- **Strategic Leadership**
Primary oversight of AIA California's strategic goals and initiatives; ensure alignment with member needs and emerging industry trends.
- **Fiduciary Oversight**
Serve as co-chair of the Planning & Finance Committee charged with developing organization's annual Operating Plan and Budget, set the membership dues rate, review and understand financial reports, and key policies to safeguard the financial health and integrity of the organization.
- **Governance & Policy**
Help shape and uphold policies that govern the profession; participate in decisions related to advocacy, licensure, sustainability, equity, and practice innovation. Participate in the election process, selecting candidates for elected positions.

- **Member Engagement**
Represent the voice of members across the state; seek input from local chapters and constituents and communicate key decisions and initiatives back to them. Serve as a partner to the California Representative Council (CRC) speaker; review and respond to the annual CRC Strategic Insight Brief.
- **Advocacy & Representation**
Serve as a public and professional representative of AIA California; engage with stakeholders including government agencies, educational institutions, and allied organizations. Establish advocacy positions, review and take action on legislative and regulatory initiatives impacting the profession.
- **Participation & Commitment**
Attend and actively participate in board meetings, committee assignments, and key events; be prepared and ready to collaborate. Represent the organization in absence of the President or as needed.

Serve concurrently on the California Architectural Foundation (CAF) Board of Directors (CAF is the charitable 501c3 organization of AIA California.)

Term & Time Commitment

- **Term Length:** 2-year term
- **Meetings:** Monthly leadership meeting, approximately 6-8 meetings of the Executive Committee, 4-6 board meetings (in person and virtual), along with committee work, events, and ad-hoc meetings
- **Time:** Estimated 15-20 hours per month, depending on issues and engagement level

Ideal Qualifications

- AIA membership in good standing (as specified by the role)
- Demonstrated leadership within the architecture profession or AIA components
- Commitment to advancing the mission of AIA California
- Ability to collaborate and contribute in a constructive, mission-driven manner
- Understanding of the architectural practice landscape in California

Key Qualities of Ideal Candidates

- **Builds consensus** — Brings diverse perspectives together to help the group find common ground and a path forward.
- **Leads without preaching** — Influences through listening, curiosity, credibility, and relationships rather than telling people what they should think or do.
- **Listening before leading** — Seeks to understand the experiences and perspectives of members, components, volunteers, and other leaders before forming conclusions.
- **Creates alignment** — Connects people, priorities, and initiatives to a larger organizational purpose and helps translate broad goals into collective action.
- **Centers the member experience** — Keeps the question “How does this serve our members and the profession?” at the heart of decision-making.

- **Builds trust** — Is transparent, consistent, approachable, and willing to have difficult conversations.
 - **Shares leadership** — Creates space for others to contribute, recognizes expertise, and is comfortable not being the person with all the answers.
 - **Thinks strategically** — Looks beyond immediate issues and considers the long-term health, relevance, and impact of AIA CA.
 - **Understands governance** — Respects the distinction between governance, strategy, and implementation and helps others understand their respective roles; supports the professional staff.
 - **Represents the whole organization** — Can move beyond personal interests, geographic perspectives, or individual priorities to advocate for the interests of AIA CA as a whole.
 - **Navigates complexity** — Comfortable operating in situations where there isn't an obvious answer and where multiple perspectives have legitimate merit.
 - **Develops other leaders** — Uses the position to strengthen the leadership capacity of the organization rather than simply accomplishing their own agenda.
 - **Brings optimism and possibility** — Helps people see what could be possible and creates energy around moving forward together.
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What You'll Gain Through Service

Statewide leadership experience and the opportunity to lead at one of the largest and most influential levels of the AIA, shaping issues that affect the profession across California.

A wider perspective and exposure to the diverse needs, challenges, and opportunities facing architects and firms across different regions, practice types, and career stages.

A broader professional network to build relationships with architects, component leaders, industry partners, policymakers, educators, and other influential voices throughout California and the nation.

Experience leading through complexity. This position will provide opportunities to practice consensus-building, navigate competing perspectives, and move an organization forward when there isn't an easy answer.

Influence on the future of the profession, shaping AIA CA's priorities, programs, advocacy, and response to the forces transforming architecture and practice.

Leadership development. The chance to grow as an organizational leader — not just as an architect or subject-matter expert — with experience in governance, strategy, facilitation, and organizational decision-making.

A platform for ideas. An opportunity to bring forward important ideas and help turn them into collective action, while learning how to build the support necessary to make change happen.

A deeper understanding of AIA and insight into how the state, local components, and national organization can work together — and where AIA CA can have the greatest impact.

The opportunity to develop other leaders by identifying, mentoring, and empowering those who follow.

A meaningful legacy, leaving AIA California stronger, more connected, and better positioned for the future.