**AIA**

# Strategic Council Handbook

Revised August 2017

**Welcome**

The Council does transformational work on behalf of AIA members, and this handbook offers a framework for action. Importantly, this handbook also offers a clear picture of the relationships that advance the work of a functioning Council—always in service of the profession and always looking to the future.

The language and concepts contained herein reflect AIA's values, chief among them transparency and inclusiveness, which underpin all of the Council's activities.

I believe this handbook will serve as a recruitment tool for future Council members and as a useful compendium for AIA chapter leaders.

As the Council's activities evolve, I hope is this handbook will continue to be a living set of principles that Councilors can thoughtfully refine or expand as needs arise.

As a resilient organization, AIA has capably represented the interests of its members for more than a century and a half. But, as a future-focused organization, AIA must become as nimble as it has been resilient. The Strategic Council was formed—and this handbook was written—with that purpose in mind.

Jason Winters, AIA
Principal, Kezlo Group
2017 Strategic Council Moderator

**AIA Strategic Council**

The Strategic Council advances the architecture profession by informing the Board and other Institute bodies about important professional issues and opportunities. Although it's not a governing body of AIA, the Council's work is vital to AIA's ability to serve the profession.

Section 6.5 of the Institute Bylaws defines the Council's mission, responsibilities, and composition. Although this handbook provides valuable information, we encourage you to read the Bylaws for a comprehensive description of the Council's role.

**Role of Councilors**

Council members or "Councilors" provide a much-needed link to their constituencies and to AIA members in general, seeking input and communicating Council actions. In this way, they identify issues that are most relevant to the architecture profession and society. Councilors whose actions support and promote AIA's mission, vision, strategic plan, and policies will advance the overall interests of AIA and its members.

The Council approaches its tasks with an emphasis on an outward and forward-focused vision. In this spirit, the Council focuses on long-term goals and outcomes of AIA's work rather than administrative or programmatic efforts to achieve those goals.

The Council acts in alignment with AIA's mission and vision:

**AIA mission**
AIA is the voice of the architectural profession
and a resource for its member in service to society.

**AIA vision**
The American Institute of Architects:
Driving positive change through the power of design.

The Council also aligns with the AIA's Statement of Values:

**We stand for equity and human rights.**
Access to good design is a fundamental right, and architects are the agents of change to make this right a reality. We stand for human and civil rights, the universal respect for human dignity, and the unbiased treatment of all persons in employment, civic, and business transactions regardless of race, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, physical abilities, or religious practices. Our commitment to tolerance is evidenced not just by the policies we adopt, but in the words we speak, the actions we take, and the buildings we design.

This is why we advocate for protecting and expanding laws that reflect these values, such as fair housing policies, civil rights protections, and accessibility to the built environment for all.

**We stand for architecture that strengthens our communities.**
Infrastructure is more than roads and bridges. It is the public buildings that are the bedrock of our communities—like schools, hospitals, libraries, police and fire stations, parks, and government buildings. For too long, policymakers allowed these spaces to deteriorate, reducing safety and diminishing the quality of life for millions across the nation. Architects are uniquely positioned to guide policymakers to make informed decisions about reinvesting in our communities' essential buildings and spaces. That is why we advocate for policies that invest in well-designed civic infrastructure.

**We stand for a sustainable future.**
At a time when the world is feeling the damaging effects of excessive carbon in our atmosphere, AIA will continue to advocate for policies that protect the environment by encouraging the design, preservation, and construction of high-performing buildings. Reducing the carbon footprint of buildings is not just good for the environment; it's good for business. According to a 2015 study, from 2011 to 2014, the green construction market generated $167.4 billion in GDP, supported over 2.1 million jobs and provided $147.7 billion in labor earnings. That is why we advocate for policies that lead to energy efficient, carbon neutral buildings.

**We stand for protecting communities from the impact of climate change.**
Global warming and man-made hazards pose an increasing threat to the safety of the public and the vitality of our nation. Rising sea levels and devastating natural disasters result in unacceptable losses of life and property. Resilient and adaptable buildings are a community's first line of defense against disasters and changing conditions of life and property. That is why we advocate for robust building codes and policies that make our communities more resilient.

**We stand for economic opportunity.**
Architects, the backbone of the nation's design and construction industry, are entrepreneurs and small businesses. Working in offices, storefronts, and home offices in every community, design firms do more than simply create great spaces: They create well-paying jobs and opportunity. But with narrow profit margins and increasing costs of running a firm, many struggle just to meet their business plans.

**We stand for federal policies that help firms thrive, not hold them back.**
That means a tax code that treats architects fairly, small business programs that provide loans and financing support, and programs that give small firms the chance to compete. That is why AIA advocates for policies that ensure small firms remain strong contributors to the nation's economy.

**We stand for investing in the future.**
A generation of young people is being held back by a lack of access to education and the crushing burden of student debt. Nowhere is this truer than in architecture, where recent graduates are often forced to leave the profession to pay down student loans. Without a pool of qualified architects to design buildings, projects will not move forward, stifling economic development. That is why AIA advocates for policies that provide better access and financing for young people to enter and remain in the profession of architecture.

**We speak up, and policymakers listen.**
Together, AIA members carry a powerful voice for the values they uphold in their practices each and every day. As natural facilitators and problem-solvers, architects stand ready to develop new policies that create a better, stronger, and more equitable and sustainable society. Through a culture of values-based advocacy, AIA members are committed to engaging in the policy-making process and to focus the power of design on solving the challenges facing our great nation.

**Composition**

The Council Moderator, elected by the members of the Council, facilitates Council Assemblies and serves as the main connection point between the Council and the Board. The Moderator ensures deliberations at Assemblies are timely, fair, orderly, thorough, efficient, and directed. The Moderator's term is one year.

In addition to the Moderator, other members of the Council are:

- current AIA officers: President, First Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer, each serving terms concurrent with their office;

- the immediate Past President, who serves for one year;

- Regional Representatives from the Institute's 19 regions whose terms are three years;

- At-large Representatives who are elected by the Council each year for staggered two-year terms (up to five member or non-member representatives) who reflect the diversity and broader interests of the profession;

- an Associate Representative who is selected by Associate members and serves a one-year term;

- a Student Representative who is selected by the Board of the American Institute of Architecture Students and serves a one-year term;

- a CACE Representative who is selected by the members of The Council of Architectural Component Executives and serves a one-year term; and,

- AIA's EVP/Chief Executive Officer.

The Council may appoint additional representatives (subject to Board approval) to ensure that its size, composition, and competencies support the Council's goals of flexibility, diversity, and representation. These representatives serve one-year terms. The maximum Council size is 60 members.

Unless otherwise specified, each representative's term of office begins at the adjournment of the annual meeting of the Board (in December).
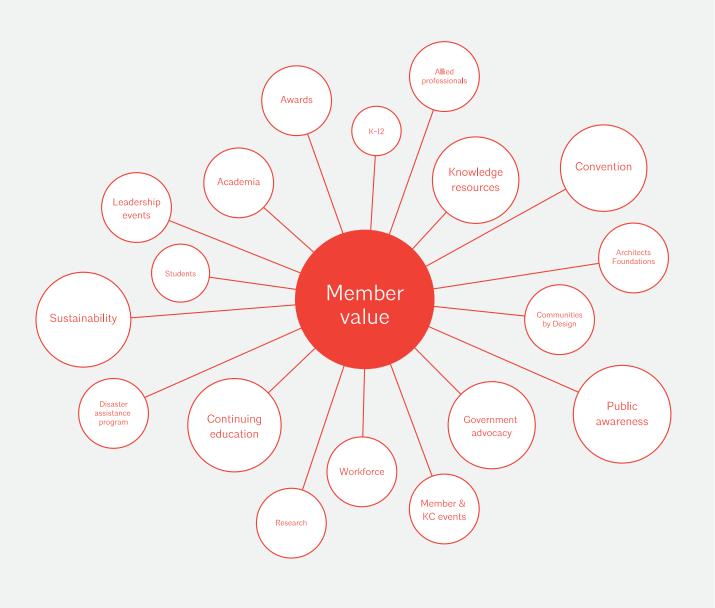
If a Council member is selected to serve on the AIA Board of Directors, that person's service on the Strategic Council will conclude when Board service begins. If there is a vacancy in any Strategic Council office before the member in that office has completed his or her term, those who selected that member shall select a successor to serve out the term.

Any representative may be removed with or without cause by those entitled to elect the representative to office.

Should a Council member accept employment with AIA, the member will immediately resign from the Council.

# **AIA** at-a-glance

Thirteen architects met in the New York office of architect Richard Upjohn in 1857. That was the beginning of AIA. Today, we provide more than 87,000 members the community, advocacy, and knowledge to design a better world. And at the center of everything we do is member value.

Awards

Allied professionals

K-12

Academia

Knowledge resources

Convention

Leadership events

Students

Member value

Architects Foundations

Sustainability

Communities by Design

Disaster assistance program

Continuing education

Government advocacy

Public awareness

Workforce

Research

Member & KC events

**Conduct**

The Council expects ethical and businesslike conduct of itself and its members. Council members must avoid any conflict of interest with respect to responsibilities as Council members and are required to sign the AIA Conflict of Interest Policy each year of their term. Any conflict in responsibilities—including responsibilities to advocacy or interest groups or membership on other boards or staffs—must be resolved in the favor of AIA members. Member interests should take precedence over any Council member's individual consumption of organization services.

Council members may not speak for AIA or the Council unless expressly authorized by the Council and the AIA President. When speaking on their own behalf to the press, public, or other entities, Council members are expected to exhibit and communicate the values and perspectives of the Council's actions as a whole.

### Engaging members locally
Councilors are expected to regularly meet (in person, via telephone, etc.) with their constituencies to gather input and feedback on Council activities.

In addition to the general feedback loop with their constituency, Councilors may choose to establish their own personal advisory group or "cabinet" whose purpose is to offer insight and feedback on AIA issues as offered by the Board or Council, the profession, and society. Cabinet members should provide diversity of thought and perspective to Councilors. Councilors also may select Cabinet members whom they'd like to nurture as a future leader.

### Engaging with AIA staff
While they work closely with AIA staff, individual Council members may not attempt to exercise individual authority over AIA's EVP/Chief Executive Officer or other AIA employees.

**Assemblies**

The Council meets in gatherings called "Assemblies." The calendar for the Assemblies is published in the fall of the previous year and includes face-to-face meetings (generally, two in-person Assemblies each year), as well as webinars.

Assemblies are used to conduct brainstorming and visioning sessions and to discuss progress against issues identified at the beginning of the year. The Steering Committee notifies Council members of upcoming Assemblies two weeks before the scheduled date and shares pertinent details including time, place, and, purpose of the Assembly. The Steering Committee also prepares the agenda and the record of the Assembly.

Assemblies are characterized by openness, interaction, and collaboration. Councilors shall be prepared to attend all Assemblies and participate fully. Issues shall be taken up only through the Council acting as a whole. Decisions made shall be accepted and supported fully. Council deliberations should be considered confidential unless otherwise noted.

In addition to Assemblies, the Council also may gather to conduct structural work via webinar or conference call. While non-Assembly meetings may involve more reporting than interaction, they provide opportunities for Councilors to voice their concerns and ideas between Assemblies.

A majority of the entire voting membership of the Council constitutes a quorum for the transaction of business. Every action of the Strategic Council shall be by a majority vote of those present and voting at an Assembly unless otherwise required by the Bylaws. The Council may take action without meeting if all Council members consent to the action in writing.

After each Assembly, a written record is prepared and includes Councilors in attendance and actions taken. At the discretion of the Steering Committee or the Council, reports and other documents considered at an Assembly may be included. The Steering Committee will review the record of each Assembly, and the Council will approve the record at its next regular Assembly.

**Committees**

There are generally three Council committees: Steering, Best Practices, and Strategic Planning. In accordance with the Bylaws and subject to Board approval, the Council may form committees as it finds appropriate or necessary. The following principles apply to committees established by the Council (including task forces, think tanks, and task groups):

- Council committees may not speak or act for the Council except when formally given such authority for specific and time-limited purposes.
- Committees ordinarily assist the Council by preparing alternatives and examining implications for Council deliberation.
- Council committees are to avoid over-identification with organizational parts rather than the whole.
- Council committees cannot exercise authority over staff.

### Steering Committee
The Steering Committee organizes and prepares agendas for Council Assemblies. It's also responsible for helping to ensure the appropriate diversity, knowledge, skills, and abilities are present on the Council (including At-large Representatives).

Composition of the Steering Committee is at the discretion of the Moderator but generally includes a representative from each class, Council Committee chairs, and the First Vice President/President-elect.

### Best Practices Committee
The Best Practices Committee recommends procedures and processes by which the Strategic Council will conduct its business. Additionally, the Best Practices Committee presides over Council elections, reviews Council processes, and recommends process changes, as appropriate.

The Best Practices Committee also will conduct an annual evaluation of the Council's work and make recommendations to the Council for its continuous improvement.

### Strategic Planning Committee
On a regular cycle (generally, five years), the Council reviews the current Strategic Plan and solicits feedback to develop the next iteration.  The Strategic Planning Committee coordinates the Council's role in the strategic planning process.  The committee also reviews the work of the Council for alignment with the Strategic Plan during non-planning years.

### Other appointments & assignments
In addition to the Council Committees, work groups have been formed to focus on issues relevant to the profession (and as may be requested by the Board). Throughout the year, the work groups may be developing short-, medium-, and long-term recommendations to the Council and the Board on those issues.

Council members may be appointed to one of the Board's committees or advisory groups (Finance and Audit, Government Advocacy, Knowledge, Public Outreach, or Secretary's Advisory), to juries, or to task forces throughout the year. Time commitments for each assignment depend on the group's charge and funding.

**Classes**

For ease of reference, Councilors are identified by class—the year most of its members will retire from the Council. (For example, Regional Representatives whose terms begin in December 2017 are the members of the Class of 2020, even if their terms end prior to that).

Classes do not have any authority separate from the Council as a whole, but they may gather via conference call from time to time to share information on work groups and other assignments and to provide feedback to the Steering Committee on matters of interest.

Each year, retiring Councilors will have an opportunity to briefly address their colleagues during the week of the final Assembly, where the retiring Councilor is conferred the Louise Blanchard Bethune Fellowship Medal to recognize their service to AIA and their continued commitment to AIA's mission.

**Class of 2017**

J. Christopher Ball, AIA

Charles L. Desmone, AIA

Brian P. Dougherty, FAIA

Chris A. Hudson, AIA

Daniel L. Kirby Jr., FAIA, AICP, LEED AP

Chere R. LeClair, AIA

Tania Salgado, AIA

Jessica A. Sheridan, AIA

Rob E. Walker IV, AIA

Drew White, FAIA

Jason C. Winters, AIA

**Class of 2018**

Ric. Abramson, FAIA

Illya Azaroff, AIA

Richard T. Connell, FAIA

Sandra L. Dickenson, AIA Member Emeritus

Timothy C. Hawk, FAIA

Donna J. Kacmar, FAIA

Kristina Kotlier, Assoc. AIA

Mark L. Levine, FAIA

Steven W. Miller, FAIA

Jack R. Morgan, AIA

Sherryl Muriente, Assoc. AIA

Patrick P. Panetta, AIA

Jonathan D. Penndorf, FAIA

Jaime E. Sobrino, AIA

James A. Walbridge, AIA

**Class of 2019**

Philip J. Bona, AIA

Janis Brackett, AIA

J. Scott Busby, AIA

Keshika De Saram, Assoc. AIA, AIAS

Michael L. Elliott, AIA

Jeffrey S. Ferweda, AIA

Brian J. Frickie, AIA

Kelly M. Hayes McAlonie, FAIA

Darren C. Heine, AIA

David L. Huotari, AIA

Judy L. Johnson, AIA

Matthew C. Johnson, AIA

Heather Baugus Koury, Hon. AIA

Michael D. Lingerfelt, FAIA, LEED AP

Yu-Ngok Lo, AIA

Richard C. Master, FAIA

Luke E. McCary, AIA

Ross J. Miller, Assoc. AIA

Bruce D. Turner, AIA

Laura Weiss, Assoc. AIA

**Funding to attend
AIA meetings**

AIA funds Councilors' attendance at Assemblies and select national AIA conferences.

**Grassroots**
Councilors attend the Grassroots Leadership Conference as AIA leaders and may be asked to serve as workshop facilitators or in other similar roles.

**Conference on Architecture/Annual Meeting**
Councilors serve as voting delegates-at-large at AIA's annual business meeting. In addition, the Strategic Council as a whole has the authority to sponsor resolutions at the annual meeting.

In addition, there may be additional funding provided in the annual operating budget for travel to meet with a Councilor's constituency.

Thank you for your interest in the AIA Strategic Council.
Please contact StrategicCouncil@aia.org with any questions or comments.