



# **AIA** Virginia

# 2020–2022 STRATEGIC PLAN

# BACKGROUND

During the last strategic planning cycle, the Board of Directors developed a series of strategies to become a model of a strong nonprofit and vibrant membership organization. These strategies were anchored by the consequential decision to phase out supplemental dues, to suspend the physical publication of Inform Magazine, and to transition AIA Virginia and The Branch Museum of Architecture and Design toward independence.

The 2017–2020 Strategic Plan successfully positioned the organization to set the goals outlined in this Strategic Plan. The organization’s financial health is steadily improving, allowing AIA Virginia to invest more into its membership. Because aligning our priorities was deemed vitally important, the development of this Strategic Plan occurred simultaneously with that of the Institute.

# INTRODUCTION

The following six goals represent the underlying themes that emerged from various stakeholder groups and will guide our organization’s resource allocation. If the organization’s work remains in alignment with the established goals, the result will be a vibrant and engaged membership, inspired to make an impact.

The primary goals of this plan are to:

**Invest in future generations and develop visionary leaders for service**

**Advance initiatives that promote resilient, sustainable, and equitable design excellence**

**Advance initiatives that support equity, diversity, and inclusion**

**Expand our influence by investing in strategic partnerships**

**Promote the value of membership**

**Be a model of a strong and growing non-profit organization**

In the following pages, these goals are accompanied by specific strategies and their intended results.

The plan was researched and developed by the Board of Directors and staff throughout 2019 with facilitation from Creative Might, a Charlottesville based design-thinking firm.

The planning process included the engagement of the following stakeholder groups and resources:

- Member and Non-Member Surveys
- John Braymer Leadership Circle (Past Presidents of AIA Virginia)
- Allied Members
- Firm Leaders
- Board and Staff
- AIA National Strategic Plan Update (to be adopted in 2020)

The Strategic Plan is a “living document” that will guide the decisions and allocation of organizational resources for the next three years. The Board of Directors may adjust components to accommodate changes in the profession. Its work will be advanced through the Board’s Advocacy, Education, Outreach, and Member Services councils. The targeted outcome of these goals is an organization whose members are relevant in the profession and in the community.

# VISION & MISSION

## **VISION**

Through a culture of innovation, AIA Virginia empowers its members and inspires the creation of a better built environment.

## **MISSION**

AIA Virginia is the voice of the architecture profession in the Commonwealth, dedicated to serving its members, advancing their value, and improving the quality of the built environment.

In alignment with the Vision and Mission, AIA Virginia aspires to:

### **1. SERVE**

Through exemplary member service, engagement, and support, communicate the value of membership and connect the profession

### **2. ADVOCATE**

Through legislative and regulatory advocacy, advance the ideals of the profession

### **3. EDUCATE**

Through professional development programming, equip members of the profession for success

### **4. OUTREACH**

Through public outreach initiatives, communicate the value of design and how it impacts our lives, our communities, and our world

### **5. GOVERN**

Through transparent governance and effective stewardship of member resources, create a sustainable and vibrant membership organization

# GOALS AND IMPLEMENTATION

## **I. Invest in future generations and develop visionary leaders for service**

- 1.1. Prepare our members to confidently and effectively advocate for policies and outcomes at the local and state government levels that align with AIA Virginia's Public Policy and Position Statements and the Institute's Advocacy Capacity Building Group's 2019 report.
  - 1.1.1. Launch a Virginia event that provides advocacy training and connects members with state legislators.
  - 1.1.2. Integrate content on advocacy and the legislative process into the curriculum of the Emerging Leaders in Architecture (ELA) program.
  - 1.1.3. Partner with faculty at the Virginia schools of architecture to integrate content on advocacy and the legislative process into the curriculum of Professional Practice.
- 1.2. Introduce the profession of architecture to K-12 students in Virginia.
  - 1.2.1. With curriculum experts, develop resources correlated to the Virginia Standards of Learning (SOL) and make them available to Virginia educators.
  - 1.2.2. Equip members with a resource guide and toolkit to empower them to engage in K-12 outreach.
  - 1.2.3. Support the ACE Mentor Program by aiding local components and recruiting mentors.
- 1.3. Financially invest in Virginia's Emerging Professional and Young Architect leaders.
  - 1.3.1. In partnership with AIA West Virginia, annually allocate money to assist the Regional Associate Director and Young Architects Regional Director in executing their duties.
  - 1.3.2. Annually allocate money to support visits by the Virginia Architect Licensing Advisor to Virginia schools of architecture and local components.

- 1.3.3. Convene a Virginia Emerging Professionals Summit to determine how AIA Virginia can best serve and support this demographic.
- 1.4. Reinvigorate or activate a philanthropic 501c3 arm of AIA Virginia.
  - 1.4.1. Create a task force to explore a full range of possibilities available through a 501c3 philanthropic arm whose mission aligns with AIA Virginia's.
  - 1.4.2. Facilitate the path to licensure through regularly distributed scholarships to prepare for the Architect Registration Exam (ARE).
- 1.5. Accelerate the professional trajectory of mid-career architects.
  - 1.5.1. Perform a needs assessment of mid-career architects to determine obstacles and barriers to professional advancement.
  - 1.5.2. Research existing resources and programs available within the AIA and other professional associations aimed at supporting this career stage.
  - 1.5.3. Create a task force to develop the conceptual framework, suggested content, and budget for an AIA Virginia leadership and career advancement program for mid-career professionals.

## **2. Advance initiatives that promote resilient, sustainable, and equitable design excellence**

- 2.1. Actively promote and facilitate member participation in the AIA's 2030 Commitment and Design Data Exchange (DDx).
  - 2.1.1. Communicate the benefits and value of participation in the AIA 2030 Commitment and the 2030 Design Data Exchange (DDx).
  - 2.1.2. Gather and disseminate best practices from members who are currently participating in the 2030 Commitment.
  - 2.1.3. Identify ways to support the AIA+2030 Online Series Certificate Program.
  - 2.1.4. Identify ways to recognize and celebrate projects and firms that exemplify the goals and mission of the AIA's statement on climate action.
  - 2.1.5. Host a one-day event to increase Virginia firms' participation in the 2030 Commitment.

- 2.1.6. In practice, AIA Virginia headquarters shall be an example of responsible environmental stewardship by adopting sustainable operational practices and committing to purchasing sustainable products.
- 2.2. Elevate the importance of design excellence in the public conversation on resiliency, sustainability, and equity.
  - 2.2.1. Proactively serve as a resource for legislators by providing data on the impact buildings have on the environment, hosting building tours, and sharing case studies of Virginia buildings that exemplify noteworthy resiliency, sustainability, and equitable practices.
  - 2.2.2. Develop programming for Resiliency Week (designated by the Virginia General Assembly as the first week in September).
  - 2.2.3. Engage with Resilient Virginia to improve AIA Virginia's visibility in its annual Resilient Virginia conference.
  - 2.2.4. Inform our members and educate legislators on the importance of the Virginia Historic Tax Credit, Low Income Housing Tax Credit, and Opportunity Zones and the benefits it has had on the Virginia economy.
  - 2.2.5. Inform our members and educate legislators on embodied carbon and the importance of building reuse in revitalizing our communities.

### **3. Advance initiatives that support equity, diversity, and inclusion**

- 3.1. Serve as a catalyst for the creation of a state National Organization of Minority Architects (NOMA) component.
  - 3.1.1. Facilitate the creation of an exploratory committee that convenes minority architects from around the state to research and undertake the requirements for starting a NOMA chapter.
  - 3.1.2. Create a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between AIA Virginia and the NOMA Virginia component that would identify resources that could be shared such as mailing address or complimentary use of meeting space.
  - 3.1.3. Invest financial resources as appropriate to assist NOMA Virginia's start-up and outreach efforts.
- 3.2. Be intentional about increasing women and minority participation in AIA Virginia and showcase their contributions and achievements to the built environment.

- 3.2.1. Create a standing Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion committee that consistently strives for organizational progress and improvement.
- 3.2.2. Continue to engage diverse speakers in educational programming.
- 3.2.3. Invest in creating a library of images that reflect the society we serve to use in the organization's communications and visual arts.
- 3.2.4. Consistently highlight a variety of diverse members and their work in the organization's electronic publications.
- 3.2.5. Review the submission process and requirements for AIA Virginia Honors and Design Awards and remove unnecessary barriers for entry.
- 3.3. Provide service equity to all members regardless of geographic location within the state.
  - 3.3.1. Explore partner agreements that incentivize component efforts to increase attendance and revenue at signature events.
  - 3.3.2. Explore ways to responsibly deliver programming in areas that are at risk of poor service equity (ex: the Peninsula, Lynchburg, areas of Northern Virginia outside of Alexandria and Arlington).
  - 3.3.3. Strive to recruit members to serve on AIA Virginia committees and task forces from areas that are at risk of poor service equity.
  - 3.3.4. Invest in alternate delivery methods for signature event content.

#### **4. Expand our influence by investing in strategic partnerships**

- 4.1. Foster positive working relationships with professions and associations that directly impact or influence the built environment.
  - 4.1.1. Strengthen our relationship and involvement with the Virginia Association of Governmental Purchasing to mitigate undesirable public procurement practices and disruptive legislation in the General Assembly.
  - 4.1.2. Convene representatives from allied professions before and after each General Assembly session to discuss legislative affairs and form political coalitions where appropriate.

4.2. Diversify educational offerings through partnerships with other state components, allied professions, or organizations whose mission and goals are in alignment with AIA Virginia's Public Policy and Position Statements.

4.2.1. Co-Host a joint conference that brings together the Virginia components of the American Institute of Architects, American Council of Engineering Companies, and the Associated General Contractors to engage in the exchange of best practices in the design and construction industry.

4.2.2. In partnership with AIA DC and AIA Maryland, explore the feasibility of co-hosting a joint conference on architecture.

4.2.3. Seek opportunities to partner with entities who have a focused niche in sustainability and resiliency.

4.3. Continue to foster our relationship with the Commonwealth of Virginia and local governments to position AIA Virginia members as the primary resource on the built environment.

4.3.1. Annually increase the number of individuals who have completed AIA's Safety Assessment Program (SAP) training.

4.3.2. Annually meet with the Virginia Secretary of the Commonwealth to discuss gubernatorial appointments that place architects on decision-making bodies that impact the quality of life in our communities through design.

4.3.3. Engage with the Virginia Association of Counties (VACO), Virginia Municipal League (VML), and other governmental associations to demonstrate the importance of the role of architects and design in communities.

4.3.4. Facilitate the connection between community leaders and architects to position our members as a knowledgeable resource through Community Dinners.

## **5. Promote the value of membership**

5.1. Articulate the value of membership and the accomplishments of AIA Virginia to members and non-members to grow membership 3% over the next three years and increase support from Allied Members.

5.1.1. Create and deploy video testimony of state and local component leadership through various channels.

- 5.1.2. In partnership with local components, develop a plan to visit firms with members and prospective members annually.
- 5.1.3. In collaboration with local components, host an annual reception in each component to articulate the benefits of membership and organizational accomplishments to members and prospective members.
- 5.1.4. Disseminate an annual Year-In-Review document that highlights AIA Virginia's accomplishments to members and non-members.
- 5.1.5. Conduct annual surveys to solicit feedback on organizational relevance and performance.
- 5.1.6. Set an annual goal for the Board of Directors to recruit 100 Allied Members.
- 5.2. Develop relationships with stakeholders at Virginia schools of architecture that position AIA Virginia as a dependable and valuable resource.
  - 5.2.1. Convene a University Roundtable at AIA Virginia's annual Meeting of the Roundtables to exchange best practices and nurture relationships.
  - 5.2.2. Develop and implement a program that regularly integrates AIA Virginia members into studio and Professional Practice sessions.
  - 5.2.3. At least twice per year, host Board of Directors meetings at the Virginia schools of architecture that integrates the administrators, faculty, and students.
- 5.3. Elevate public visibility and awareness.
  - 5.3.1. Strategically invest in public and media relations to share stories about Virginia architects and architecture.

## **6. Be a model of a strong and growing non-profit organization**

- 6.1. Increase political visibility and influence in policy development through a Political Action Committee that is supported by all members.
  - 6.1.1. Through targeted outreach and effective storytelling, increase the amount of PAC investments by individuals, firms, and allied members annually.
  - 6.1.2. Cultivate a culture of support for the PAC that results in 100% participation by state and local component Board of Directors annually.

- 6.1.3. Strengthen advocacy efforts at the grassroots level by supporting local component attendance to the Institute's State and Local Government Networking conference.
- 6.2. Strengthen the organization's financial position so that it can sustain various economic cycles.
  - 6.2.1. Accumulate at least six months of operating expenses in the Financial Contingency Fund.
  - 6.2.2. Mitigate financial risk and diversify income streams such that at least 50% of revenue is generated from non-dues activities and no single event generates more than 20% of the annual revenue budget.
- 6.3. Identify and actively recruit diverse AIA Virginia leaders.
  - 6.3.1. Use AIA Virginia Past Presidents to identify members who have demonstrated an ability to lead others.
  - 6.3.2. Host an annual meeting between the ELA Executive Committee and AIA Virginia's component leaders to identify ELA alumni that can serve in leadership roles at the state component.
  - 6.3.3. Encourage the Nominating Committee to develop a catalogue of potential AIA Virginia Presidential candidates and invest in preparing these prospects several years in advance.
- 6.4. Equip AIA Virginia leaders to lead.
  - 6.4.1. Invest in the President and President-Elect's attendance at AIA National's Grassroots Legislative and Leadership conference.
  - 6.4.2. Financially support the Vice President of Advocacy's participation in the Institute's State and Local Government Network (SLGN) conference at least one year of their term.
  - 6.4.3. Invest in other Board positions as appropriate to contribute to the individual's leadership growth.
  - 6.4.4. Identify opportunities for the President and/or President-Elect to connect and engage with key volunteer leaders of other associations.

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

## **2019 Board of Directors**

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