

# Corresponding Activation Kit Overview

## Overview

The *Guides for Equitable Practice* were developed as part of a multi-year initiative by The American Institute of Architects (AIA), in partnership with the University of Washington, the University of Minnesota, and AIA's Equity and the Future of Architecture Committee (EQFA). Comprising nine in-depth chapters, an introduction (Chapter O), a comprehensive glossary, and a set of executive summaries, the Guides provide a foundational resource for advancing equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) in the architecture profession. Since their initial publication, two additional supplements have been added: *Justice in the Built Environment* and *Equity in Architectural Education*.

The Guides continue to be relevant, “evergreen,” even when the social and political context change, because progress takes a long time. Although architectural education has become much more diverse, the path to licensure and leadership has many drop-offs, without action for equity, we can't count on those trained for the profession will stay in it.

Therefore, in response to feedback from users seeking more tools for implementation, this activation set was created to help bring the Guides to life. Designed for flexible delivery, it offers structure, tools, and facilitation guidance to embed EDI conversations and actions into internal team meetings, leadership development programs, onboarding processes, or as stand-alone learning sessions—one chapter at a time or as a complete series.

### **The Guides for Equitable Practice Activation Kit includes:**

- This overview with preparation notes
- Nine individual slide decks and facilitation guides designed to be used sequentially or as standalone sessions that correspond with each Guide for Equitable Practice chapters below. Learning objectives have been developed and reviewed to be able to qualify for AIA LU elective credits.
  - Intercultural Competence
  - Workplace Culture\*
  - Compensation
  - Recruitment and Retention
  - Negotiation
  - Mentorship and Sponsorship
  - Advancing Careers\*
  - Engaging Community\*
  - Measuring Progress
- One introduction add-on to provide context and background to any presentation

\*Modification of chapter content and learning objectives to include an in depth look at compliance, firm health, and impact on the client could be made to pursue LU:HSW credit status.

## **PREPARATION**

- Know your audience: Understand who will be in the room—roles, levels of experience, and the likely mix of identities.
- Review the guide: Familiarize yourself with the full chapter as well as each slide and discussion section to anticipate flow and timing and to build your own intercultural competence.
- Consider the state of the profession today: While the guides were designed to be evergreen, it's helpful to ground them in the present and reflect on areas of progress and stagnation. These three annual reports offer timely opportunities to highlight the current status of the educational pathway, licensure, and AIA membership.
  - NCARB by the Numbers- <https://www.ncarb.org/nbtn2025>
  - NAAB Annual Report on Architectural Accreditation- <https://www.naab.org/accreditation/publications>
  - AIA Membership Demographics Report- <https://www.aia.org/resource-center/membership-demographics-report>
- Adjust the session length according to your goals for discussion. While each chapter is designed for a 45- to 90-minute session, actual timing may depend on whether the introduction is used, the size and familiarity of the audience, any assigned pre-reading, and how much time is devoted to discussion.
- Print or have the Glossary handy. While there may be debate on any of the terms or definitions, it is helpful to use the glossary for commonly shared definitions during your discussion.
- Plan for vulnerability: Be ready to model self-awareness and share stories or experiences related to the topic.
- Set ground rules: Prepare to establish norms and expectations around confidentiality, communication, and respect for differing viewpoints. A sample might look like this:
  - Listen to understand, not to correct
  - Respect difference experiences and viewpoints
  - Focus on ideas, not people
  - Be open-minded
  - Use “I” statements
  - Ensure everyone has a chance to contribute without interruption
- Each presentation follows a similar sequence with slides that provide:
  - Introduction and definitions, why it matters, what good looks like, individual and firm actions to build competence, a scenario discussion, and goal setting or commitments.

### MATERIALS TO PREPARE:

- Recommend that the participants read the corresponding [Executive Summary](#) prior to the session.
  - Update and customize the presentation slides to fit audience and time constraints. While the term architect is used throughout the *Guides for Equitable Practice* the term was intended to encompass all architectural professionals.
  - Plan for an interactive experience and be sure everyone has access to write down thoughts and goals, whether on notecards, journals or laptops.
  - Have Discussion Decks or printed “Consider” scenarios to hand out to each attendee or small group.
    - Each chapter includes a scenario that illustrates the theme. However, if another scenario would better resonate with your audience, feel free to substitute it.
  - Add in specific resources, tools, or programs that are relevant to your audience.
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### DURING THE SESSION:

- Adapt as needed: Be ready to adjust timing or focus depending on participant size and levels of expected engagement.
    - For large groups you may select specific people to share or break up into groups for discussion and report out.
    - For small groups you may be able to have everyone share or think, pair, share with one other person.
  - Honor emotions: If someone becomes emotional, allow space, acknowledge their experience, and thank them for sharing.
  - Be prepared to offer local resources for further discussion or consultation with a human resource specialist.
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### AFTER THE SESSION:

- Follow up: Measure progress and distribute a short post-session survey, asking about their experience, opportunities for improvement and whether learning objectives were met. Samples questions could include:
  - How confident do you feel in applying the concepts from this chapter in your workplace or practice? (Not at All Confident to Extremely Confident)
  - Which part of the presentation was most valuable or impactful for you? (Provide options like: Definitions, What Good Looks Like, Individual Actions, Firm Strategies, Scenario Reflections, etc.)
  - How likely are you to recommend this workshop to a colleague or peer?
  - What additional support, tools, or resources would help you take action on equity-related goals in your role?
- Point participants to further learning tools like the full set of Guides, executive summaries, glossary, supplements, or the resource pages for further exploration.
- Suggest next steps or follow-up sessions to sustain growth and dialogue.