



2023 Strategic Council Handbook

December 2022

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November 2022

Dear Councilors,

We are about to start another exciting year and we wanted to begin by welcoming everyone to the 2023 AIA Strategic Council. We are planning for an exciting and engaging year, filled with interesting topics, intriguing work, and outcomes that we hope will help shape the AIA for years to come.

The Strategic Council's purpose is to develop ideas to inform future needs and opportunities for the profession. We work throughout the year on tasks that we develop in our planning session in December, presenting our ideas to the AIA Board of Directors for consideration and alignment. We are a diverse group, representing all 50 states and US territories as well as international components; past, present, and future AIA leadership; at-large representatives; student and Associate AIA members; and component leadership. We are close to 70 members strong, and we value every voice within the group.

We look forward to working with each of you throughout the next year. Please do not hesitate to reach out with questions or comments. The more connections we can make and conversations we can have, the better our outcomes will be.

Welcome to the Strategic Council!

Sincerely,



Anne Hicks Harney, FAIA, LEED Fellow
2023 Council Moderator



Tate Walker, AIA, LEED Fellow, WELL AP
2023 Council Vice Moderator

Role of Councilors

Formed in 2015, the Strategic Council (“the Council”) advances the architecture profession by informing the Board and other AIA bodies about important professional issues and opportunities. Although it is not a governing body of AIA, the Council’s work is vital to AIA’s ability to serve the profession.

The role of a strategic councilor

Much of the Council’s activity throughout the year is considered forward thinking, searching for innovative ideas and solutions to relevant topical subject matter facing the profession. Collaborations entail visionary thought and ideation, deliberations, prototyping of ideas, and consensus building. The Council develops ideas to inform future needs or opportunities for the profession and presents those ideas to the AIA Board of Directors for consideration and alignment.

Council members (“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. To this end, Councilors should attend their state component meetings to ensure connectivity.

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 commitment

Councilors must be able to provide significant volunteer hours during their term.

The Council meets regularly via Zoom (usually 90 minutes) for informal catch-up and information sharing. Face-to-face meetings may also be scheduled. The calendar for these meetings will be shared no later than at the Council gathering each December.

AIA funds Councilors’ attendance at in-person Council gatherings and, if appropriate, at other AIA-sponsored events (may vary annually) as a part of a designated travel stipend. Councilors are also funded to attend the AIA annual meeting (as voting delegates-at-large) held in conjunction with the AIA Conference on Architecture and the AIA Leadership Summit (evaluated annually).

The Council’s structure also includes standing committees (Steering and Best Practices)), to which interested Councilors are assigned on an annual basis.

Outgoing Councilors are expected to mentor and communicate with incoming Councilors to ensure a smooth transition during Governance Week in December.

Opportunities for engagement

Councilors may be asked to participate and examine issues deemed relevant by the Board. This may require smaller groups of Councilors to meet via Zoom (typically once a month, but may be more frequent as needed), as well as at any of the Council's scheduled face-to-face meetings.

Councilors may be asked to serve on sprints (short term studies) or task forces to work on a specific or short-term project such as coordinating an upcoming meeting or dealing with a timely issue.

As a Councilor representing the Council on other AIA committees, it is expected that feedback will flow from the Council to these committees (when/if appropriate), and that reports are made to the Council to improve and increase communication throughout the AIA.

Councilors are encouraged to be familiar with Section 6.5 of the [AIA Bylaws](#), which defines the Council's mission, responsibilities, and composition.

Alignment with AIA values

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 AIA's [Statement of Values](#). Councilors are responsible for familiarizing themselves with these materials and knowing where to reference them.

Councilors should be familiar with the [2021-2025 Strategic Plan](#). The Council, when called upon, will collaborate on development of future Strategic Plans.

Other resources Councilors may find of use are the [public policies and position statements](#) on an array of subjects that are important to AIA members and the profession.

The Council should consider the work of and connect with the [Knowledge Communities](#), which cover a variety of topics that may overlap with Council focus.

Council conduct

The Council expects ethical and businesslike conduct of itself and its members. Councilors are required to execute certain documents, such as the Conflict of Interest Policy, for 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.

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

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, to share available resources about AIA business and opportunities. Bethune Fellows (former Councilors) also serve as valuable resources in this effort.

Engaging with leadership exchange networks

Councilors are expected to attend and engage with the Leadership Exchange Network calls. These are hosted by Board At-large Directors and each state is assigned to a call. Councilors are expected to attend these calls and share reporting responsibilities. This is an opportunity to share widely the work of the Council with the Council of Architectural Component Executives (CACE), former AIA Presidents, state and local component presidents, National Associates Committee (NAC) members, Young Architects Forum (YAF) members, and other constituency groups.

Engaging with AIA staff

Governance staff [Pam Day](#), Hon. AIA and [Muza Conforti](#), as well as the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) are present at all Council meetings. They are available to answer questions, make connections (ensuring work is aligned and not duplicated), and assist Council in its work.

Where connections are found or when questions arise, Governance staff can work internally with other AIA staff to gather information or even invite those staff to join Council calls for collaboration. As partners, it is critical that staff be included in all Council meetings. Staff will make the appropriate arrangements. For clarity, communications related to Council efforts between Councilors and other staff members will be facilitated by Governance staff.

It must be noted that while Council works closely with AIA staff, individual Councilors, per the [AIA Rules of the Board](#), may not exercise individual authority over AIA employees or AIA's EVP/Chief Executive Officer.

Council Organization

Below is the composition of the Council and a brief description of the positions.

Council Composition

- Moderator (elected by Council, one year term)
- Vice Moderator (selected by Moderator, one (1) year term)
- State Representatives (typically serving three (3)-year terms, but as AIA transitions from regions- to a state-based model 2022-2025, this will vary)
- At-large Representatives (staggered three (3)-year terms, elected by Council)
- Associate Representative (selected by Associate members, one (1)-year term)
- Student Representative (selected by the American Institute of Architecture Students, one (1) year term)
- CACE Representative (selected by Council of Architectural Component Executives, one (1) year term)
- AIA First Vice President (one (1) year term)
- Immediate Past President (one (1) year term)
- AIA EVP/Chief Executive Officer (advisory role, non-voting member)

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, if appointed, serve one (1) year terms.

Unless otherwise specified, each representative's term of office begins at the adjournment of the annual meeting of the Council (in December).

If a Councilor is elected to the AIA Board of Directors, that Councilor's service on the Council will conclude when Board service begins. If there is a vacancy in any Council position before the Councilor in that position has completed their term, those who selected that Councilor shall select a successor to serve out the remainder of that term.

Any Councilor may be removed with or without cause by those entitled to select the Councilor to that position.

Should a Councilor accept employment with AIA, the Councilor must immediately resign from the Council.

Each year, a directory is available digitally on the Board Effect platform which lists Councilors, their contact information, and may include personal details and/or a photo.

Council Positions

Moderator

The Council Moderator, elected by the members of the Council, facilitates Council gatherings, and serves as the main connection point between the Council and the Board. The Moderator ensures deliberations at Council events are timely, fair, orderly, thorough, efficient, and directed. The Moderator's term is one year. For more duties carried out by the Council Moderator, see Appendix A.

Vice moderator

The Vice Moderator is selected by the Council Moderator. The Vice Moderator provides insight, support, and continuity to sustain and assist the Council in its activities, thereby enabling the Moderator to have greater focus and flexibility in the organization, planning and direction of the Council as a whole. For more duties carried out by the Council Vice Moderator, see Appendix B.

State representatives

State Representatives are encouraged to attend meetings within their state, to engage with membership, solicit input on relevant issues and understanding current concerns. In addition, these engagements are opportunities for Councilors to report to members on the activities and progress of the Council.

Each state may have additional requirements for its state representatives (for example, some state representatives may serve on their state board and on Council, simultaneously).

AIA provides a travel stipend which should only be used for travel expenses incurred for attendance at the state's annual meeting and/or component meetings within the representative's home state.

At-large representatives

Each year, the Strategic Council may elect At-large Representatives to the Council, who serve three (3)-year terms.

First vice president and immediate past president

The First Vice President and Immediate Past President serve on the Council to enhance communication between the Board of Directors and the Council.

EVP/Chief executive officer

The AIA EVP/Chief Executive Officer serves on the Council. Much like the First Vice President and Immediate Past President, they are available to inform and offer guidance as requested.

Council Gatherings

There will be virtual gatherings of the entire Council. There may be a published agenda; subgroups of the Council may choose to use these gatherings to share their work to date and seek feedback from the Council.

Other calls may be scheduled on pre-determined topics.

2023 Council events:

The Strategic Council is invited to join and engage with other AIA groups. Councilors are expected to attend these events as a vital part of their Council role; participation is funded by the AIA.

Annual Business Meeting (June 7, 2023, San Francisco, CA)

Councilors are voting delegates-at-large at the AIA annual meeting and are required to attend. In addition, per the [Rules of the Board](#), the Strategic Council (as a whole) may sponsor resolutions for consideration by the delegates at the annual meeting. (For more information on resolutions, see the [Rules of the Board](#).)

Conference on Architecture (June 7-10, 2023, San Francisco, CA)

To avoid conflict with Conference activities, there is no scheduled meeting during this event. Councilors should use this gathering as an opportunity to network with fellow Councilors and serve as AIA ambassadors to the membership.

Governance Week (December 6-8, 2023, Washington, DC)

Governance Week may include:

- Incoming Council Orientation
- Joint Board of Directors and Council meeting (selection of AIA award recipients)
- Council Assembly
- Presidential Inaugural

Digital Platforms

AIA.org

A roster of the Strategic Council appears on aia.org/leadership. More information specifically related to work of the Council and opportunities to engage with it are [located here](#).

Board Effect

Each Councilor will be assigned as a user to Board Effect, the digital platform used by both the Council and the Board of Directors. It is where agendas, events, and historical information are posted.

MURAL

Councilors will be granted access to MURAL. MURAL is a collaborative tool the Council employs to communicate and share ideas. The Moderator and Vice Moderator will have administrative rights (can create boards); other Councilors will have member rights (can participate on boards). To foster transparency, all Councilors have access to all MURAL boards so there is an opportunity to stay informed on all information posted to the platform space.

Zoom

Virtual meetings will take place using Zoom. These are coordinated and scheduled by Governance staff and invitations are sent from the GovernanceCalendar@aia.org email address.

Council Committees

Steering Committee

This committee is chaired by the Moderator and assembled to support and provide guidance to the Moderator.

Composition of the Steering Committee is at the discretion of the Moderator but generally includes chairs of the Council standing committees.

These members are responsible for disseminating information to the rest of the Council and also gathering feedback for the Steering Committee from their respective states and committees.

The Steering Committee also ensures the work of the Council aligns with the Strategic Plan, serving as a checkpoint for direction should Council work deviate.

Best Practices Committee

The purpose of the Best Practices Committee is to maintain and develop best practice guidelines for the Council. It is charged with overseeing the elections process and reviewing Strategic Council literature that advises best practices and other responsibilities as assigned.

For roles and responsibilities of the Best Practices Committee chair, see Appendix C.

Members of the Best Practices Committee also work to increase and improve communication within the Council to keep information circulating, to communicate with the Board and other AIA bodies on critical issues and opportunities, and to help inform and connect Council work with the membership at large.

Communications vehicles include the Friday Recap, a weekly update that highlights important and timely information Councilors should be aware of; and briefings for the quarterly Leadership Network exchange calls that include information from Council Zoom calls, other information that can be shared with components, Knowledge Communities, and other committees.

Distribution of all information will be in coordination with AIA staff through Board Effect and/or email.

Council Elections

The Best Practices Committee serves as the Council's Nominating Committee, seeking candidates for open positions and overseeing the elections processes. The Best Practices Committee Chair will appoint a member of the committee to serve as the Elections Chair. Both the Best Practices Committee Chair and Elections Chair work together with Governance staff to schedule elections timeline(s) and conduct the elections.

Timeline

Each year, the Best Practices Committee will ensure that a fair and equitable process for Council elections is developed and distributed to all interested parties. Care is taken to align Council elections with other AIA meetings, such as the fall Board of Directors meeting. The schedule is established by the Best Practices Chair and Elections Subcommittee Chair by the end of the first quarter each year and shared with Council.

At-large director

In accordance with the AIA [Bylaws](#), each year the Council shall elect one At-large Director to the AIA Board of Directors, with the requirement that no fewer than two-thirds of the At-large Directors elected by the Strategic Council and serving on the Board at any one time may be Architect members. Each such At-large Director serves a three (3)-year term.

Although not required by the AIA [Bylaws](#), it is recommended that Councilors fulfill their terms, or be in their last year of the term on Council, prior to running for this position.

Moderator

The position of the Council Moderator is open to those members of the current Strategic Council whose terms end in December of the year the election takes place. One Councilor is elected to this position, and the term is one year.

Upon election, the Moderator may select a Vice Moderator who will work jointly with them through their term. While not prescriptive, the Moderator shall carefully consider the selection of the Vice Moderator as their responsibilities must guide the function and purpose of the entire Council and interface with the Board and AIA staff.

At-large representative

Each year, the AIA Strategic Council may elect At-large Representatives, who serve three (3)-year terms. Successful candidates must receive a majority of the votes cast, so the number of At-large Representatives elected each year may vary.

The At-large representatives bring diverse viewpoints to the Council that might not be otherwise represented. This may include individuals from allied professions, futurists, educators, and other professionals that would not typically become members of the Council through the standard state election process.

Consistent with AIA Guides for Equitable Practice and the 2018 Convention Resolution 18-3: Diversity Pipeline and National Representation (requiring the Council to "actively identify, prepare, recruit and encourage a range of ethnically diverse women to pursue

election/service on the National AIA Board of Directors and AIA Strategic Council”) the Council embraces diversity. To be the most effective Council possible, individuals who bring broad viewpoints, diverse experiences, and talents to the Council, are expressly sought.

To encourage a wide range of nominees, this call for nominations is shared with the AIA Board of Directors, AIA Strategic Council, component presidents, Council of Architectural Component Executives (CACE), Knowledge Community (KC Advisory Groups, Former AIA National Presidents, and identity-based groups (such as National Organization of Minority Architects (NOMA), American Indian Council of Architects and Engineers (AICAE), Asian American Architects and Engineers (AAa/e), Arquitectos, World Deaf Architecture (WDA), and Black Reconstruction Collective). Additional groups or organizations may be contacted to promote the spirit of Resolution 18-3.

Voting

Each Councilor has one vote. Voting is by secret ballot. Nominees for Council elections must receive a majority of the votes cast to be elected. In the rare instance that no nominee receives a majority on the first ballot, a runoff election will be held. If none of the nominees receives a majority of the votes cast, the names of the two nominees receiving the highest number of votes cast shall appear on a runoff ballot.

The Best Practices Chair, or the Elections Subcommittee Chair, shall announce the results.

Orientation

Orientation for incoming members of the Strategic Council will be held each December at Governance Week (generally, the first or second week of December). The goal of orientation is to provide an understanding of how Council works, what resources exist to support Councilors, and expectations for the upcoming year.

Information covered at orientation may include:

- Council roles and responsibilities
- Position descriptions
- Council and Board Committees
- Required governance training as representatives of the AIA
- Governance Calendar (schedule, support, logistics)
- Review of Council Handbook
- The history of Council and its work

In advance of Orientation, Governance staff will work with the incoming Moderator and Vice Moderator to organize a call for the incoming Council cohort(s) that allows them an opportunity to introduce themselves and get to know one another prior to Governance Week. Information covered on this call may include:

- What to expect at Governance Week
- Assignment of a Councilor mentor to new Councilors

Following Governance Week, the Council Moderator and Vice Moderator will coordinate with Governance staff to schedule a follow up conference call with the new Councilors to continue their orientation.

Every member of the council is a member of a cohort – a smaller peer group that meets regularly to advance the work of the Council. Cohorts are coordinated to foster a sense of belonging by connecting Councilors of different geographies, skill sets, and backgrounds from the Council body. The cohort provides continuity between new and experienced Councilors in a way that catalyzes Council's impact.

Appendix A: Roles and Responsibilities of Council Moderator

The Moderator is responsible for guiding the Council in decisions about its function and purpose for the year. The Moderator should not act unilaterally, but instead base decisions on input received from the Council. Where clarification or direction is necessary, the Moderator may solicit input from the Steering Committee, the full Council, or other relevant groups of the Council where necessary.

The Moderator will also:

1. Set the overall agenda for the year
 - Working with the Board, standing committee chairs, other AIA bodies, and the Council, the Moderator facilitates a conversation among the Council to establish a consensus for the overall agenda and focus for the year.
2. Set overall calendar
 - The Moderator works closely with Governance staff to assemble a coordinated calendar built around fixed meetings and events, Board meetings, Council gatherings, standing committee meetings, and other calls.
3. Develop agendas for Council assemblies and Steering Committee calls
 - With staff, on a routine basis during the year, and approximately one (1) to two (2) weeks prior to any given meeting, the Moderator will work with staff to develop the specific agenda for Council Assemblies and, if desired, Steering Committee calls.
 - Typically, an outline of areas of interest are reviewed and a draft agenda is prepared for review, comment, and modification as necessary, until finalized.
 - Agendas should be finalized at least one (1) week prior to the meetings, unless otherwise required by advance notification requirements.
 - Face-to-face assemblies require agendas well in advance to ensure Councilors understand what will be required of them and plan their travel accordingly.
4. Approve chairs of standing committees
5. Facilitate Council activity
 - The Moderator will work with the Vice Moderator to drive Council activity. Much of this planning will likely take place at or around Governance week before their term year begins.
6. Recommendation of Councilors for other opportunities
 - Upon request of the AIA President, the Moderator will recommend Councilors for assignment to committees, task forces, etc.
 - Using knowledge of the Councilors and their commitments, the Moderator may convey the names of Councilors they deem appropriate to serve on committees and task forces outside of the Council.
 - The Moderator may seek others' advice or make an announcement to the entire Council of the opportunity.
 - Councilors with specific interests are encouraged to share those with the Moderator as opportunities may arise over the course of the year.

7. Attend face-to-face meetings of the Board of Directors

- At the discretion of the AIA President, the Moderator and Vice Moderator may be invited to attend face-to-face Board meetings., to report on the Council's activities.

8. Attend the CACE Annual Meeting

- The Moderator may be invited to report on the Council's activities at the annual meeting of component executives.

9. General Council Support

- The Moderator will work with Councilors on any questions or concerns that may arise.

Appendix B: Roles and Responsibilities of the Vice Moderator

The Vice Moderator role is one that is highly collaborative with the Moderator and, in cases where the Moderator has competing obligations, the Vice Moderator will fill in as needed.

Primary responsibilities associated with the Vice Moderator role may include assisting in planning Council activities and working state representatives.

In addition to the above responsibilities, the Vice Moderator shares certain responsibilities with the elected Moderator, including:

- review and refinement of research topics and areas of inquiry for the Council;
- co-facilitating Council gatherings;
- participating in various calls related to Council work; and
- participating in standing committee sessions

At their discretion, the Moderator and Vice Moderator will assign themselves responsibility for attending standing committee calls and other working calls as they are scheduled.

The Vice Moderator will be invited to Board leadership discussions (see above).

Appendix C: Roles and Responsibilities of Best Practices Committee Chair

The responsibilities of the Best Practices (BP) Committee Chair may include:

1. Assembling a BP Committee

- Typically, Councilors will continue their service from year to year. Incoming Councilors should be informed of this committee and asked if they are interested in joining.

2. Creating subcommittees

- Subcommittees for detailed or task work may be appointed, as needed.
- Subcommittees may meet via conference calls scheduled outside of Best Practices Committee calls.

3. Scheduling committee/subcommittee conference calls

- Monthly calls are recommended to last no more than one hour.
- Governance staff will assist in scheduling times and dates that do not conflict with other AIA calls.
- Calls should be scheduled M-F between 8am-4pm (ET).
- Governance staff will be present on all calls to coordinate efforts and document progress.

4. Attending Council events

- The chair and committee members are expected to attend all Council events and conference calls. Absences from these events should be kept to a minimum. If the Moderator or BP Committee chair feels that these duties are not being fulfilled, they shall have the ability to appoint a replacement to the committee.

5. Supervising elections process

- The BP chair is responsible for coordinating the elections process. This includes working with Governance staff to coordinate the schedule of elections.
- The BP chair and Elections chair (a member of the BP Committee selected by the BP Committee chair) are responsible for leading the elections process.
- To ensure the integrity of the process, the BP chair and Elections chair will remain impartial throughout the elections process. They may not nominate or endorse a candidate during elections.
- Nominations Subcommittee
 - At the beginning of the year, the BP Committee is responsible for establishing a Nominations Subcommittee that should have, at a minimum, one member from each cohort. The members do not have to be members of the BP Committee to serve on the Nominations Subcommittee.
 - The purpose of the Nominations Subcommittee is to actively seek out and recruit candidates for the At-Large Representatives to Council. Committee members should engage with Council to determine the characteristics that would help bring varying valuable viewpoints to Council.
 - The Nominations Subcommittee shall ensure there is a sufficient number of qualified candidates submitted for the At-Large Representative position.

6. Assigning Mentors

- The BP Chair and Moderator are responsible for assigning mentors to the incoming class. It is the mentor's responsibility to reach out to the protege prior to Governance Week to help them better understand Council processes, and generally serve as a resource in welcoming the new cohort.

7. Maintaining Strategic Council archives

- Strategic Council knowledge, elections, and best practices.
- Reference information compiled from previous Best Practices chairs.
- Providing edits to the Council Handbook.