



2018  
STRATEGIC  
PLAN

■ THE AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF ARCHITECTURE STUDENTS

The 2018 Strategic Plan is a guide for the American Institute of Architecture Students (AIAS) to achieve its vision of *empowering voices, ideas, and actions for the future*. The Strategic Plan is meant to guide the Board of Directors, as it steers the organization. It also offers a reference for the national office, as it implements the initiatives of the organization.

## IMPLEMENTING THE STRATEGIC PLAN

Implementing the Strategic Plan should be a priority of every successive Board of Directors. The board must focus on alignment of its annual priorities to the Strategic Plan.

Each year, the incoming Board of Directors should gather to define priorities for the new year. Using the Strategic Plan as the multi-year directive for the organization, the incoming board should identify specific priorities for their year together. They must translate the multi-year Strategic Plan into specific work the AIAS can engage in over the year.

Once priorities for the year are defined, the incoming board works with the current board and the Executive Director to ensure that the budget proposal for the upcoming year is aligned with their priorities. Once the budget is set and the new year begins, the board can make decisions to implement work in the priorities that were defined.

## DEVELOPMENT OF THE PLAN

The creation of this Strategic Plan has been a year-long process that involved both the Board of Directors and general members of the AIAS.

The 2017-2018 Board of Directors identified needs and developed concepts, while facilitated by Executive Director Nick Serfass. The Governance Committee cultivated this material—and its own input—to define **goals** that give specificity to the AIAS vision and **strategies** that address the goals.



**Keshika De Saram**  
2017-2018 President  
Chair, Governance Committee



**Sarah Curry**  
2017-2018 South Quad Director  
Board Liaison, Governance Committee

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# AIAS VISION

Empowering **voices, ideas, and actions** for the future.

# AIAS MISSION

Advancing **leadership, design, and service** among architecture students.

# AIAS VALUES

## IMPACT

We advocate for and enact positive change.

## COMMUNITY

We foster an inclusive network of peers that learn from, support, and drive one another.

## GROWTH

We inspire students to reach their greatest potential through meaningful learning opportunities.

## PASSION

We pursue large goals and aspirations through each member's enthusiasm.

## PERSPECTIVE

We link the professional's opportunities to architectural education.

## BALANCE

We promote respectful relationships, an environment of diversity, and a thriving studio culture.

# STRATEGIC GOALS

## YOUR PRESENT

1. Build content, culture, and community that reflects the values of the AIAS

## YOUR NEAR FUTURE

2. Support your network of current and past members to advance member enrichment

## YOUR FUTURE

3. Highlight how the study of architecture can raise the value of design beyond the architectural community
4. Educate and empower advocates of design to address and create innovative solutions for emerging global issues

# Build content, culture, and community that reflects the values of the AIAS

The AIAS can represent and reflect its values in three areas of interaction and at three scales: “content” at the scale of the organization; “community” at an inter-personal scale; and “culture” at an intra-personal scale. The AIAS should strategically pursue development in the following avenues:

## WHEN CURATING “ORGANIZATIONAL CONTENT”,

Explore communication platforms for members and chapters (including and beyond slack)

Streamline, focus, and create standards for content

Encourage increasing engagement from general members through inclusivity

## WHEN FOSTERING “INTER-PERSONAL COMMUNITY”,

Cross different ‘silos’ and connect between the divisions/defined elements of the organization

Remember to gain new perspectives by actively seeking diversity

Consider outreach beyond architecture students

Celebrate the community that we have gained by highlighting what we have built

## WHEN INSPIRING “INTRA-PERSONAL CULTURE”,

Promote wellness and mental health

Prepare for the future through leadership

Promote mentorships in different settings

Encourage members to “Be the best they can be” by leading by example

# Support your network of current and past members to advance member enrichment

The AIAS can advance member enrichment by primarily investing in current members and alumni. Of course, the AIAS already strives to serve those groups and has contributed greatly to the personal growth of those two groups; the next step is to make sure that those groups can also take advantage of the growth and expertise of their peers, associated professors, and alumni professionals. Some new ideas about the direction in which the AIAS could continue to go include:

## **NEW STRATEGIES FOR ENRICHING THE EXPERIENCE OF CURRENT AIAS MEMBERS:**

- Create a “digital destination” for groups to connect
- Encourage peer-to-peer / peer-to-professor / peer-to-professional interactions
- Nurture the value of our members in the community

## **NEW STRATEGIES FOR ENRICHING THE EXPERIENCE OF AIAS ALUMNI:**

- Create potential for digital interaction
- Preserving a continuity of knowledge and experiences
- Recognition and incentivizing of engagement between AIAS and collaterals

# Highlight how the study of architecture can raise the value of design beyond the architectural community

The versatility, benefits, and power of the architecture degree have far-reaching impact whether the student decides to pursue licensure by following the traditional path or decides to take their talents and education to another field. Unfortunately, the adaptability of the degree and the greater benefit of good design is not widely known, despite the profession's recent emphasis on reaching out to K-12 prospective students. The AIAS can do its part to address this issue by targeting the following audiences in the following ways:

## TO TARGET PROSPECTIVE K-12 STUDENTS:

Identify and empower champions to drive K-12 engagement (such as professionals, educators, other career paths, etc.)

Find ways for our national content to appeal to K-12 students by emphasizing the wider scope of architecture

Promote how design heightens resiliency to address global challenges

## TO TARGET EVERYDAY PEOPLE IN OUR COMMUNITIES WHO WORK IN OTHER OCCUPATIONS:

Highlight how a degree in architecture creates better citizens by fostering adaptability in character and responsibility to our communities

Encourage our members to enlighten people in other majors on why they need architects in their fields

Encourage design-thinking citizens to create ripple effects throughout the community and embrace entrepreneurship

## TO TARGET STUDENTS HEADED FOR TRADITIONAL ARCHITECTURE PATHS:

Identifying how to supplement what is already done (with emphasis in community-based programs, research)

# Educate and empower advocates of design to address and create innovative solutions for emerging global issues

Designing a better future for the entire world will require advocates of design and innovative problem solvers, something that the AIAS has plenty of. By leading by example and encouraging students to look beyond themselves and their chapters, the AIAS can play a major role in seeking out and challenging global issues. The AIAS can achieve this goal with the help of chapters and sponsors/collaborations:

## **AIAS CHAPTERS SHOULD BE PROMPTED TO:**

Push boundaries to apply design to global issues at individual and chapter level

Advocate/raise awareness of global issues, bringing these issues to broader attention in the organization and beyond

Encourage students to be problem-seekers as well as problem-solvers

## **INITIATIVES DRIVEN BY THE AIAS NATIONAL OFFICE SHOULD INCLUDE:**

Identifying and bringing in voices who are directly in touch with global issues, and who represent diverse, relevant, and accurate perspectives

Integrating global-issue advocacy and initiatives from existing and emerging movements into the fabric of the AIAS

## **THE AIAS SHOULD SEEK COLLABORATORS WHO AND PARTNERSHIPS THAT:**

Elevate students and enable them to formulate solutions together with these partners

Possess new perspectives that students can directly engage with and learn from

Incorporate an interdisciplinary approach to advocacy

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

## 2017-2018 GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

Keshika De Saram, AIAS, Assoc. AIA **Chair**  
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Hala Alfalih, AIAS **Kennesaw State University**  
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