

AIAS FREEDOM BY DESIGN MANUAL



Across the United States, there are large numbers of people who are trapped in their own homes. They cannot, with any ease, get into their own showers, ascend steps or reach into a cabinet to get a bowl. There are people who cannot escape their homes in case of emergency. Small changes to their homes can significantly change their lives.

AIAS Freedom by Design, the American Institute of Architecture Students community service program, utilizes the talents of architecture students to radically impact the lives of people in their community through modest design and construction solutions. Vital modifications are made to enhance the homes of low-income and disabled individuals by addressing their struggles with everyday tasks such as bathing, ascending stairs and opening doors. Our priority is improving the safety, comfort and dignity of the home's occupants.

AIAS Freedom by Design could not be where it is today without the continued support and guidance of the AIAS Board of Directors, AIAS Staff, and Students across North America.

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LAUREN FIELDS

Director of Programs and Events

CONTACT

1735 New York Ave. NW, Suite 300
Washington, DC 20006

freedom@aias.org
202.808.0164

AIAS Director of Programs and Events, Lauren Fields, speaking at a local design charrette, photo courtesy of AIAS New Jersey Institute of Technology FBD Program



FBD Mission Statement:

AIAS Freedom by Design is a program of the American Institute of Architecture Students (AIAS) that utilizes the talents of architecture students in service to their community by helping individuals with physical, mental and/or financial challenges. All AIAS FBD projects should allow individuals to live; In a safe environment void of physical or implied barriers; with a sense of dignity becoming any individual of the community; and with the same comfort that you and I experience on a day-to-day basis.

FBD Vision Statement:

AIAS FBD empowers students to become owners in a process that radically impacts the lives of people in their communities through design and construction solutions.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

AIAS Freedom by Design

is used on all advertising publications and promotional materials. In addition this format is used for the first reference of the program in any external document (sponsors, press releases, official reports, and emails).

AIAS FBD

is used only after first stating the above phrasing option except in the case of the logo or general graphic layout needs.

AIAS FBD Program

is used when referring to a certain school that has completed all the steps in the application process. The formatting should always be, Chapter Name FBD Program. When referring to the FBD program as a whole, the chapter name can be replaced with AIAS as long as the first mention is trademarked as shown above. Ex. "Currently there is not an active AIAS University of Toronto FBD Program."

AIAS FBD Project

is used when referring to the process of working with a client. Ex. "We have just completed the second stage of our AIAS FBD Project."

AIAS FBD Team

is used when referring to the students directly participating in a FBD Project. Ex. "40 members from the AIAS University of Puerto Rico FBD Team finished the ramp."

FBD Local Leadership

Each AIAS Freedom by Design Program should have an executive board at the chapter level, which consists of the following:

Director

The Director acts as the primary link between the local AIAS chapter FBD program and the AIAS National Office. They are responsible for general oversight of the program, attending the annual AIAS Freedom by Design track at AIAS Grassroots, leading client interviews and overseeing the selection process, and periodically with support from their chapter president, updating the AIAS on the progress of the program.

Project Manager

The Project Manager is responsible for overseeing a specific Freedom by Design project, including establishing the schedule, coordinating the building approval process, and coordinating team members.

Development Manager

The Development Manager, or Fundraiser, is responsible for developing a fund raising strategy and locating donated materials.

Public Relations Manager

The Public Relations Manager, or Historian, is responsible for recording the progress of the team and assembling presentations for the AIAS Office.

A licensed, local architect who helps to guide the team through the design process, including critiquing design solutions and overseeing the creation of construction documents.

Design Mentor

A local builder who helps to guide the team through the build process, including providing the necessary equipment and overseeing the actual construction.

Construction Mentor

The AIAS is Headquartered in Washington, DC, the AIAS was established in 1956 and is an independent, nonprofit, student-run organization. The mission of the AIAS is to promote excellence in architecture education, training and practice; foster an appreciation of architecture and related disciplines; enrich communities in a spirit of collaboration; and organize students to combine their efforts to advance the art and science of architecture. The AIAS is comprised of more than 5,500 members at over 160 chapters around the world.

The AIAS is governed by a Board of Directors comprised of a President and Vice President (both are recent graduates and full-time, paid employees of the organization), four Student Directors, the immediate Past President, the current Executive Director, a liaison from academia and a liaison from the profession. The Board of Directors reports to the membership through the local chapter presidents, called the Council of Presidents. The Council of Presidents meets twice a year: once at AIAS Grassroots, the annual leadership conference, in late July and also at AIAS FORUM, the annual convention, over the New Year's holiday.

AIAS FBD is overseen by the Board of Directors and the AIAS Office provides training, resources and guidance to AIAS chapters as they participate in the FBD program.

Freedom by Design
Program and Project
Awards awarded to
University of North
Carolina - Charlotte at
FORUM 2015 in
San Francisco, CA,
photo courtesy of AIAS
National Office



PAST, PRESENT, FUTURE

"I always feel sorry for doctors and lawyers who work only with people in distress, while architects get to work with people who are happy to be moving into new houses. We have a responsibility to work with people who have problems, too, because we have an opportunity to provide them with something beautiful and comfortable."

- Shigeru Ban

HISTORY OF THE FBD PROGRAM

PRE-AIAS [2000-2004]

Freedom by Design began as a fleeting idea in the mind of Brad Buchanan, FAIA, an architect in Denver. Within four years, it was an organization called Freedom by Design which had completed over \$300,000 in built construction with only \$4,000 in donated seed money. Citizens in Denver were excited about FBD, and architects and students around the country were beginning to hear about it and wanted to contribute. As the program expanded rapidly, Buchanan realized that the current structure was not sustainable, and in an entirely selfless gesture, he began to look for an organization to take this program to a national level. At a board meeting of the American Institute of Architects (AIA) during the fall of 2003, Wayne Mortensen, President of the AIAS and student director on the AIA Board of Directors, heard Brad's call. Seeing a perfect fit with the AIAS, he brought the program to the AIAS Board of Directors, unanimously approving an AIAS FBD Pilot Program, and in the following days the Council of Presidents unanimously endorsed the Board's decision. The AIAS would implement Freedom by Design around the country and commit to serving those low-income individuals with demeaning and life-threatening barriers in their homes.

AIAS PILOT PROGRAM [2004-2006]

In 2004, the pilot program came into fruition. After considerable preparation, six AIAS chapters, representing a diverse group of communities, were selected to participate in the program. After attending an Orientation Session in Denver, CO, these chapters immediately set to work. While many experienced setbacks and growing pains, the final results were conclusive: AIAS and FBD were a perfect fit. With changes as seemingly small as installing handrails in bathrooms to as large as installing accessible ramps outside of the home, people across the country were welcomed into homes that were no longer life-threatening and those who helped them would never be the same.

In 2005, the AIAS expanded the program to eleven chapters. Learning from the past year, the AIAS made several adjustments to the program and began to explore the future of AIAS FBD. FBD has continued to grow and expand across the country. The annual AIAS FBD orientation at AIAS Grassroots has evolved to support the growing numbers of leaders in attendance and their many questions. AIAS FORUM also began to include sessions related to AIAS Freedom by Design.

NATIONAL AIAS FREEDOM BY DESIGN

Upon the success of the pilot program in the first two years, the AIAS Board of Directors approved the expansion of the AIAS Freedom by Design Program to a national initiative of the AIAS. An additional 11 schools joined the already active 15 Freedom by Design programs for the 2006-2007 school year. The application process for participating in the AIAS Freedom by Design program was altered and adjusted to a "deadline" like process that allowed all schools of differing sizes and locations to apply. In addition, the AIAS started to develop more resources, a staff position to look over the 26 AIAS chapters with active FBD teams and an 11 person advisory council to oversee the strategic vision of the program as it continued to succeed.

Since the fall of 2007, FBD has continued to grow and expand across the country. The annual AIAS FBD orientation at AIAS Grassroots has evolved to support the growing numbers of leaders in attendance and their many questions. AIAS FORUM also began to include sessions related to AIAS Freedom by Design. Additionally, the AIAS organized a capital campaign effort, raising nearly \$1,000,000, a percentage of which is dedicated to the growth and advancement of Freedom by Design.

In 2012 the then Freedom by Design Task force was brought on as a Committee of the Board. Under the leadership of Joel Pominville, then Chapter President of Clemson University AIAS, the Freedom by Design Advisory Group (FBDAG) began working with National Staff on FBD programming for Grassroots and FORUM. At FORUM in 2013, the FBDAG instituted the inaugural round of Freedom by Design awards. In 2014, in celebration of the 10th Year Anniversary of the Program, the FBDAG hosted the first Honors and Awards ceremony at FORUM, highlighting the work of chapters from around the nation and awarding ten distinguished FBD Honor Awards.

WHERE FBD IS HEADED

FBD Charrette hosted by the Freedom by Design Advisory Group at FORUM 2015 in San Francisco, CA, photo courtesy of AIAS National Office

The state of AIAS Freedom by Design has never been greater. The best part is that the trajectory is on an exponential curve just now approaching the upward half, balanced at the point of complacency and explosion.

There are student teams across the AIAS family that are operating outside of payment and coursework, in a crevice between academia and the professional world that are completing projects in a way that neither academia or the professional world can complete. These student teams fall into the category of design firm, design build firm, contractor, developer, and humanitarian. This is simply unprecedented and simply amazing. So when looking at what has been done already, we must assume that the second half of the exponential curve will be astounding.

With FBD, we are more or less sticking to the phrase "Go big or go home". If we allow this to resonate through our partnerships, promotion, and program support, FBD will surely reach an all new level. As appropriately stated by Matthew Barnett, former FBDAG Co-Chair and FBD Director at University of Tennessee Knoxville, "The most powerful thing we can create is an idea that everyone believes in!" Freedom by Design is that idea and that reality.



Since 2004, many AIAS chapters from around the United States have participated in Freedom by Design. The chapters include:

Academy of Art University	San Antonio College
Andrews University	Savannah College of Art and Design
Arizona State University	School of the Art Institute of Chicago
Auburn University	Southern Illinois University - Carbondale
Ball State University	Syracuse University
Cal Poly University - Pomona	Temple University
Cal Poly University - San Luis Obispo	Texas A&M University
The Catholic University of America	Truckee Meadows Community College
City College of New York	University of Arizona
Clemson University	University at Buffalo
Drexel University	University of Colorado - Boulder
Florida A&M University	University of Colorado - Denver
Florida Atlantic University	University of Hartford
Georgia Institute of Technology	University of Houston
Illinois Institute of Technology	University of Idaho
Iowa State University	University of Illinois - Chicago
Judson University	University of Kansas
Kansas State University	University of Kentucky
Keene State College	University of Louisiana at Lafayette
Kennesaw State University	University of Maryland
Lawrence Technological University	University of Miami
Louisiana State University	University of Michigan
Louisiana Tech University	University of Minnesota
Massachusetts College of Art and Design	University of Nebraska - Lincoln
Miami University	University of Nevada - Las Vegas
Mississippi State University	University of New Mexico
Montana State University	University of North Carolina - Charlotte
New Jersey Institute of Technology	University of Oklahoma
New York Institute of Technology - Manhattan	University of Tennessee - Knoxville
New York Institute of Technology - Old Westbury	University of Texas - Arlington
North Carolina State University	University of Texas - Austin
North Dakota State University	University of Texas - San Antonio
Northeastern University	University of Virginia
Pennsylvania State University	University of Wisconsin - Milwaukee
Philadelphia University	Virginia Tech University
Portland State University	Washington State University
Roger Williams University	Wentworth Institute of Technology
Ryerson University	Woodbury University

Design charrette to
kick off a new project,
photo courtesy of AIAS
Clemson University
FBD Program



HOW TO GET STARTED

“The best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others”.

- Mahatma Gandhi

After reviewing the Freedom by Design materials, chapter leaders should ask themselves:

1. Do we have the chapter leadership, resources and faculty support to see the process through from start through finish? If not, how can we get it?
2. Are there members who would be interested in serving as AIAS FBD Team Leaders? Are these individuals organized, good time managers, have good communication skills, patient, etc.?
3. How challenging will it be to identify mentors for construction and design? Is our chapter currently working with the local AIA component or have connections with professionals in the industry through our school, faculty, etc. who can help us?
4. How will the chapter raise funds to support the program? Do we have activities already in place we can use to raise funds?
5. Are we located in an area where individuals who may need our services are accessible and volunteers can easily get to them?

SNAPSHOT OF THE FBD PROCESS

The application process for each AIAS Freedom by Design team typically begins at the end of the spring term. Each team begins compiling all application materials, laying groundwork to seek out their official client in the following fall academic term following the AIAS Freedom by Design Orientation. To begin the application process, each team must select their local executive board and begin finding mentors.

The next step in the process each chapter goes through in order to participate in the AIAS FBD program begins at the annual Freedom by Design Orientation track at AIAS Grassroots, attended by the FBD Director, or someone on the leadership team. During the orientation, FBD Directors gain valuable information on taking a project from start to finish, seeing precedent from other schools and form close bonds with other FBD Directors around the nation. FBD Directors return to their campus to share what was learned at the orientation with their teammates and begin seeking possible clients. Directors will then submit all application materials by September 1, as per the requirements on the following pages.

The next step is for the Director and FBD team to meet with local officials from the planning department, the zoning department, the building permitting office, the building inspection office and individuals, appointed by the city to assist those with disabilities. In addition to meeting with these officials, teams also began locating leads for potential clients, particularly with local hospitals, occupational and physical therapists, veterans' offices and city and/or county housing agencies.

When a team has identified potential clients, they meet with these individuals at their houses to discuss their needs. They often meet with family members and caretakers as well. After completing a home assessment and selecting the project, the FBD Director meets with his/her team and mentors to discuss how to move forward. Following that meeting, the AIAS FBD team must submit a project proposal to the AIAS National Office. Upon approval, the team will move into the pre-design phase of the project, often holding a design charrette, working with other members of the school and community as well as the client. Once the design is finalized, the team focuses on gathering human resources, securing a building permit (if necessary), gathering materials and donations and setting a schedule for the build. The final phase in the project is actually completing the build, which takes considerable coordination by the team and other volunteers.

IMPORTANT: Failure to satisfactorily complete all of the required steps will result in a chapter being unable to participate in the program for the upcoming year.

FREEDOM BY DESIGN REQUIREMENTS

[] Attend Grassroots Freedom by Design Orientation in Washington, DC in July

[] Submit Application online by September 1

- [] Letter of Intent**
- [] Team Information**
- [] Essay**
- [] List of Contacts**
- [] Two Letters of Recommendation**

[] Submit Project Proposal online by November 15

[] Attend AIAS FORUM (optional but recommended)

[] Submit Project Binder online at end of any project
***Must submit no later than May 1**

1. Letter of Intent: Chapters interested in participating in the AIAS Freedom by Design program at their chapter need to formally submit a Letter of Intent to the AIAS Office.

2. The AIAS FBD Team Info: The chapter president and the FBD director need to work together to identify members for their AIAS FBD team. This list must include all contact information for entire team and mentors.

3. Essay: The AIAS Freedom by Design team must submit their essay, not to exceed 5 pages in length.

- Describe your program (student involvement, events, leadership structure, relationship with AIAS chapter, etc.)
- Describe your chapter's relationship with your school, community, and local AIA component
- Describe your community

4. List of Contacts: Provide a list of contacts from your local government or local non-profits that assist those with social, economic or physical barriers.

5. Letters of Recommendation: Include two letters of recommendation for the AIAS FBD Director. One should be from the AIAS chapter president, one should be from faculty or your school administration.

APPLICATION
Can be mostly completed
before Grassroots
and due no later than
September 1

PROJECT PROPOSAL
Due before beginning
any project, but no later
than November 15

**Project Proposal - Before you begin any project,
submit a project proposal to the National Office.
The proposal should include:**

- Information about the client
- Location and details of project
- Fundraising plan and proposed budget
- Project timeline
- Client release forms, Volunteer Waiver(s), and Team Waiver (located online at freedom.aias.org)

PROJECT BINDER
Due upon completion of
any project, but no later
than May 1.

**After you complete your project, submit your project
binder to the National Office. We request you submit
your project binder no later than one month after your
project's completion date. The binder should include:**

- Client information
- Final budget
- List of donors
- Project calendar
- Design drawings/plans
- Project journal
- Before/after photos
- Certificate of Completion

You can submit all documentation online at freedom.aias.org



HELPFUL RESOURCES

AIAS FORUM: Directors and chapter leaders will share their success and learn more about issues related to the AIAS FBD program by attending a series of lectures/seminars on creating/managing an AIAS FBD team, locating a client and collecting funds and materials. While part of the application process for interested chapters, all registrants at AIAS FORUM are invited to attend these lectures (representatives from interested chapters will be responsible for transportation to and from the AIAS FORUM host city and the registration fee for AIAS FORUM). The series will continue to include new topics as funds allow for guest speakers and as attendees express interest in new topics. To learn more and see what lectures are planned for this year, check the AIAS FORUM Web site at forum.aias.org

Resources for FBD Programs: In addition to this instruction manual and an accompanying resources available online which are provided to AIAS chapters embarking in the Freedom by Design program, the AIAS has started to provide presentations for programs to give to their local organizations, potential sponsors, potential mentors, etc. These presentations can be tailored to each of these groups and incorporate multiple types of media. You can view other online resources at freedom.aias.org

Publicity: The potential impact of AIAS FBD is phenomenal. While those with disabilities are directly affected by the program, the students and professionals who participate in this process are forever changed as well. Entire communities can rally behind causes which truly make a difference, and AIAS FBD is one of those causes. By promoting this program heavily, the AIAS stands firmly behind its mission statement of promoting excellence in architecture education, training and practice; fostering an appreciation of architecture and related disciplines; enriching communities in a spirit of collaboration; and organizing students to combine their efforts to advance the art and science of architecture. The AIAS has, and will continue to advertise and seek different media outlets on behalf of the many AIAS FBD programs across the country.

Design charrette for
UVSO Project, photo
courtesy of AIAS New
Jersey Institute of
Technology FBD Program



UNDERSTANDING THE FUNDAMENTALS

“Design has become the most powerful tool with which man shapes his tools and environments (and, by extension, society and himself).”

- Victor papanek

GETTING YOUR FEET WET

Thinking about where to start can be the worst way to actually get started. When looking over the whole responsibility of an AIAS FBD Project a sudden realization can happen, "this is a lot of work." The best way to make an AIAS FBD Project seem manageable is to break it down into time segments based on certain major goals.

Understanding the Team: In order to understand what type and size of AIAS FBD project is right for a team, a knowledge of team dynamics and experience should be a top priority. While many different schools of thought can lead to multiple questionnaires and lengthy conversations, a half sheet of paper with six questions can create a great overall picture of an AIAS FBD Team's dynamics.

FUNDRAISING AND DONATIONS

Own Your Design Abilities

Having a clear, well-designed package is very important in any fundraising effort. Whether in AIAS Freedom by Design or your own personal career, the way that you present yourself in person and on paper will inform the response you get from any given audience.

Some ideas for things to provide are:

- Letter of Intent (taken from application)
- Promotional materials you have used on campus
- List of needed funds or materials
- Past project binders (if applicable)

Community members, clients, donors, businesses etc. will respond more quickly and positively when presented with a clear and thorough package describing who you are and what you are seeking. If you are just beginning a Freedom by Design program at your school, take advantage of resources, images, videos and other material on the AIAS National website.

When putting this package together, consider the following:

- Ask for very specific materials or funding
- Know your audience when speaking
- Leverage community impact
- Support local businesses through promotion
- Always follow up with a thank you

Knowing What to Say

Throughout the professional world, people ask, "What do you do?" Depending on the quickness and appropriateness of the answer to that simple question, people will develop their opinion of the AIAS FBD program. Having a prepared answer or "elevator speech" is a great way to open a conversation and go into a meeting with confidence. The term "elevator speech" is used to describe a quick, simple and prepared statement about oneself, an organization or possible opportunity. The idea is that in the time it takes an elevator to go a few floors, a person should understand and be interested in the topic presented.

Preparing an elevator pitch for the AIAS FBD program is quite simple. Much like the childhood grammar game MadLibs, plugging specific ideas and thoughts into a pre-developed sentence can create a simple and concise elevator speech.

What is the name of your School or University?
What city are you located in?

Write down the top three things that interest you about AIAS FBD:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Collecting the First Donations

One of the biggest hurdles to starting an AIAS FBD project is raising money. This however does not need to be as difficult as it may seem. Raising a few dollars now will lead to larger and larger donations later. In addition, once an AIAS FBD team feels comfortable asking for small donations, confidence in asking for larger funds is produced.

DEVELOPING YOUR PROJECT

Make sure you have a thorough understanding of the client's needs, resources available to you and your team's ability. You do not want to promise a client a project and not be able to follow-through.

Defining a Client

The client(s) selected by an AIAS FBD team will perhaps have the greatest impact on the overall success of a project. It will have a lasting effect on the volunteers, sponsors and of course the client. Great care must be taken in selecting projects.

Finding Your Clients

Clients can be found everywhere. They can be families suggested by local hospitals, local churches, other nonprofits groups or city/county housing agencies. It is helpful, particularly as an AIAS FBD team is getting started, to develop relationships with a city or county health agency that can provide "care managers" who are already working with some potential project homes. They can provide initial income survey information, as well as interpreters, if necessary. Connections that perhaps were made earlier with physical therapists and the mayor's commission (or similar agency) will also be of use here. While meeting with possible clients, it is imperative that no promises concerning possible projects are made. The worst thing that could be done is promise a project and not deliver.

Assessing Your Clients

Although AIAS FBD does not have any strict guidelines about who receives the benefits of a AIAS FBD program's efforts, there are some general guidelines that should be taken into consideration. Generally, AIAS FBD has been directed towards families that fall around the 50% of median income levels. The overriding philosophy is to help these people as they have little support elsewhere. It is the hope of the AIAS FBD program that FBD projects will greatly help stabilize the environment and support the success of the client.

In some cases the client may be able to fund or partially fund the project, but the AIAS FBD team decides to still work with the client. In those cases, AIAS FBD teams have been known to ask for a donation from the client towards their next AIAS FBD project. This allows everyone involved in the AIAS FBD program to gain experience and ensure funding for future clients.

PRODUCING RESULTS

How to Identify Potential Projects

It is vital to begin thinking about resources early in the year. The two most valuable resources will be equipment and volunteers. Any equipment needs for your project should be discussed with the Construction Mentor. It is also important to make a list of the tools already available from volunteers and the school/university shop (hammers, screwdrivers, table saw, etc). Second, you will need to prioritize your volunteers based on their possible time and skill commitment. It is imperative that the AIAS FBD team understands their volunteers' commitment level early to help with scheduling.

- Assess the project in work components and determine how many man-hours the job will take
- Assess the individuals who have said they will help
- Total the time available to be used and make sure it is ample to get the job done
- Ask yourself the following questions: Is this a project I can complete within one academic year? Does it meet the needs and lifestyle of my client? Is the design functional?

Any potential client must first fill out the client release form located at freedom.aias.org

On the following page is a list of "levels" which can be used to categorize potential projects. These levels specifically describe projects in terms of time (workdays), energy (man hours), money (budget) and accountability(maximum duration of project). Novice teams should look for a Level 1 project.

PROJECT LEVELS

IMPORTANT: Although we have categorized projects into three scales, we imagine that you all will drive the future of more diverse, larger and innovative projects!

Level 1 Project

- A project that can be completed in a single workday with a team of 4-6 workers
- No building permit required
- Less than \$500 in materials required
- Can be completed within 60 days of project acceptance
- One three hour directed task or work period requiring no prior knowledge or training

Example: Replacing door knobs, forming and pouring an 8-foot ramp to replace a single exterior step.

Level 2 Project

- A project that can be completed in four workdays with a team of 4-6 workers
- Building permit may be required
- Less than \$2,000 in materials required
- Can be completed within 90 days of project acceptance
- Willing to work on a series of directed tasks or work periods requiring no prior knowledge or training.

Example: Building an exterior wood ramp where the first two days are spent forming and pouring the foundations (formwork may require an inspection), and the last two days are spent framing the ramp.

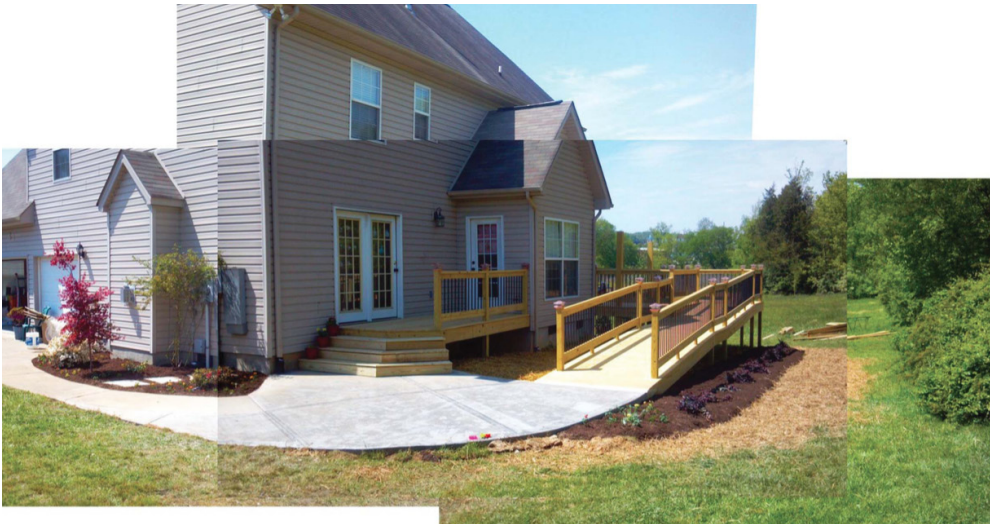
Level 3 Project

- A project that can be completed in 10 workdays with a team of 4-6 workers
- Building permit will be required
- Less than \$10,000 will be required
- Can be completed within 120 days of project acceptance
- Willing to be accountable for a specific task within a phase of a project and has expertise within that task (e.g. tile setter, carpenter, draftsman or architect, electrician)

Example: Demolition and replacement of accessible kitchen cabinets and appliances, installation of an accessible roll-in shower, complex ramps, playgrounds, etc.



Hospitality House
Benches, photo provided
by the AIAS University of
Virginia FBD program

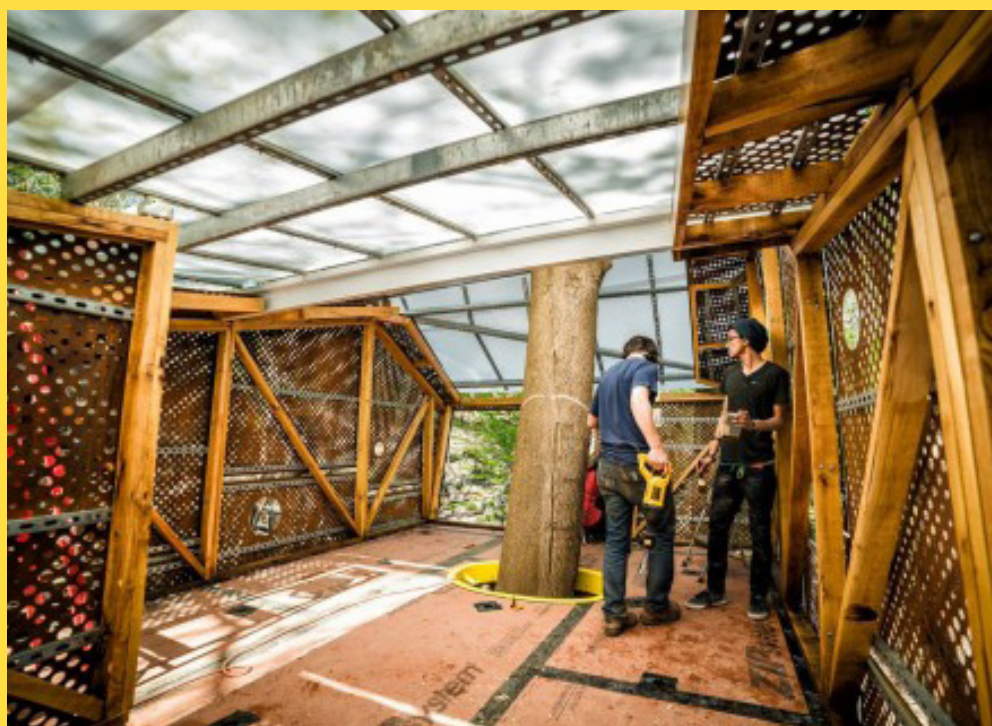


Wheelchair Ramp and
Concrete Pathway,
photo provided by AIAS
University of Tennessee
FBD Program



Accessible Kitchen
Renovation, photo
provided by AIAS
University of Minnesota
FBD Program

Volunteers working on
Play Perch children's
playhouse, photo
courtesy of AIAS
Syracuse University
FBD Program



FINDING HELP ALONG THE WAY

**"We make a living by what we get, we make a life
by what we give."**

- Winston Churchill

The AIAS National Staff and Board of Directors are very determined to make sure every AIAS Freedom by Design team experiences success. No matter the question, concern or comment these people are interested in hearing from AIAS FBD teams.

You can find contact information on aias.org/about/crew and can always contact us at freedom@aias.org

LOOKING TO YOUR MENTORS FOR GUIDANCE

Mentors are to be wise and trusted counselors for their mentees. A mentor's knowledge, experience, encouragement and skills offer guidance, advice and small amounts of hands-on training. However, while a mentor can steer a mentee in the right direction to reach their potential, a mentor should not attempt to force change against the will of the younger leader or activist.

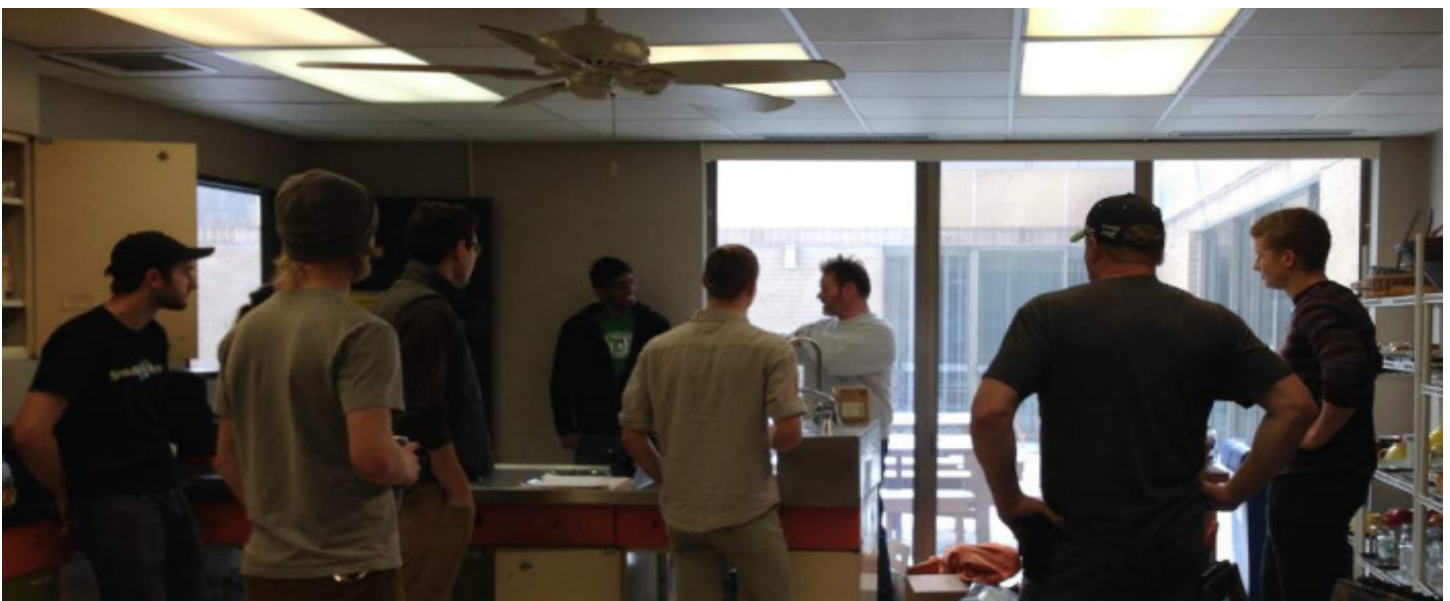
The Mentor Should Expect:

- Provide guidance
- Create a positive counseling relationship and climate for open communication
- Help the team members identify problems and solutions.
- Lead the AIAS FBD team through problem solving processes
- Offer constructive criticism
- Share your own thought processes and availability with the team
- Solicit feedback from the team

Together the Mentor & the AIAS FBD team should:

- Identify roles the mentor can play to help the team achieve their goals
- Communicate on a regular basis
- Refer back to previous conversations to make sure that things have been done
- Set the agenda for each meeting

Volunteers and mentors
at a site visit, photo
provided by the
University of Minnesota
FBD Program



Design Mentor Responsibilities:

While working with the AIAS FBD Captain and AIAS FBD project volunteers, the Architecture Mentor has four main responsibilities.

Design Mentor four main responsibilities:

1. Meet regularly with the team to review design progress and to verify appropriateness of proposed design
2. Suggest additional training materials and secondary design concepts
3. Provide guidance to enhance the team's professional growth
4. Confer, if needed, with the team and client

Translating each of these responsibilities into actual activities with the AIAS FBD team will vary depending upon where the mentor resides and how busy their professional life is. Similarly, mentors must be conversant with the client, local accessibility codes and the principals of universal design which determine the project's purpose, objectives, organization, and procedures.

Regular Meetings

With respect to scheduling regular meetings, ideally the Design Mentor will be available for in person meetings at least twice per month. While this may not always be feasible, the more often there is interaction, the greater likelihood exists for the mentoring relationship to mature and, in turn, positively influence the professional growth of the program's members. Regular dialogue promotes open and continuous exchange of ideas and information. In instances when direct in-person meetings cannot be scheduled, alternative means of communicating should be pursued such as e-mail and/or telephone calls.

Design mentors must be licensed architects in the state your chapter resides in. Design mentors can be found through your school, reaching out to your local AIA component, former or current employers of team members, etc.

Construction mentors must be licensed contractors in their respective jurisdiction. Construction mentors can be found several ways. If your school has a Construction Science department, ask for any contacts. You can also go through your city's planning and development office. Calling construction management firms is also a good way to start.

Construction Mentor Responsibilities:

While working with the AIAS FBD Project Manager and FBD project volunteers, the Construction Mentor has four main responsibilities.

Construction Mentor four main responsibilities:

1. Meet regularly with the team to review the project schedule and to verify appropriateness of proposed design
2. Offer training for materials, building processes and necessary tools
3. Provide guidance to enhance the team's professional growth
4. Confer, if needed, with the team and client

Translating each of these responsibilities into actual activities with the AIAS FBD team will vary depending upon where the mentor resides and how busy their professional life is. Similarly, mentors must be conversant with the client, local building codes and the proposed project's design, objectives, schedule, budget, and procedures.

Regular Meetings

With respect to scheduling regular meetings, ideally the Construction Mentor would be available for meetings at least three times prior to the build day(s). While this may or may not always be feasible, the more often there is interaction, the greater likelihood exists for the mentoring relationship to mature and, in turn, positively influence the professional growth of the program's members. Regular dialogue promotes open and continuous exchange of ideas and information. In instances when in person meetings cannot be scheduled, alternative means of communicating should be pursued such as e-mail and/or telephone calls. During the project build day(s) the Construction Mentor should be available to guide in the building process. While this does not mean they must be there for the entirety of the build, a strong presence is suggested. At minimum the Construction Mentor should be able to visit the job site at the end of each day of building to ensure nothing was completed incorrectly or harmfully.

Top 10 Tips for Mentors and AIAS FBD Teams:

1. Take time to consider whether everyone is comfortable working with each other. In other words, assess overall compatibility and ability to communicate. If there is a level of comfort, then the relationship(s) should move forward. Alternatively, there might be a need to identify another professional to serve as the mentor.
2. Keep appointments and anticipate changes. Professionals in all walks of life depend upon effective scheduling and the reliability of people with whom they are scheduling meetings and engagements. This is the same for the mentors and the AIAS FBD team. However, even if all parties are responsible about setting and keeping appointments, there should be a backup plan in place to handle circumstances where appointments must be changed. The important thing is to remember to follow through quickly and promptly to reschedule any meeting that has to be rescheduled. Meeting together can take place both outside of and/or within the office environment.
3. Help each other set priorities and develop a focused game plan for reaching the required benchmarks of the project in a timely fashion (typically no more than 120 days from acceptance of the project).
4. Provide specific and constructive feedback about the progress that is being achieved. There will, of course, be circumstances when the progress is less than anticipated. However, by being honest and communicating with each other the project will continue to move forward. Remember that meetings do not have to be in person. They can take place by telephone and e-mail.
5. Share and learn from any “tried-and-true” methods that have been adopted through your careers to address issues associated with different aspects of the project.
6. Set goals for the entire AIAS FBD team to address problem areas. When circumstances arise that seem particularly challenging, identify particular goals that would provide a template for effectively addressing the challenges.
7. Give advice honestly and straightforwardly. Everyone is working to improve their professional lives as well as the lives of the client. Confidentiality is essential in all matters.

Top 10 Tips for Mentors and AIAS FBD Teams (Cont.):

8. Keep lines of communication open with everyone on the team. Whenever possible, it is recommended that meetings take place at least twice per month in person (for Architecture Mentor), or three times before the start of the project (for Construction Mentor). Although it is the suggested minimum level of contact to be achieved, there are many reasons why this may not always be possible. To facilitate better communication, everyone on the AIAS FBD Team should be prepared to respond to e-mail or telephone inquiries within 48 hours or sooner whenever possible.

9. Communicate with the client as needed and necessary. On occasion, there will be situations that will perhaps warrant a meeting between the AIAS FBD Director, the Mentors and the client to determine how circumstances can be handled in the best interests of all involved.

10. While a single person may be qualified to serve in both mentor roles, the AIAS FBD Director will want to foster multiple relationships in order to broaden the network of professionals available to aid in the project.

INVOLVING THE COMMUNITY

The AIAS does require that all AIAS FBD Leaders be active AIAS members (for insurance and legal reasons). However, most AIAS FBD teams need additional volunteers to complete projects. These volunteers can be students, local professionals, parents of other student leaders, friends of the clients, or even the client's neighbors. The more involved the local community can be in the project, the more people will know about AIAS FBD Program and in turn help on future builds. Here are some helpful hints and recommendations to think about when looking for your group of volunteers.

Patrons: A person who is interested enough to visit a museum or use a nonprofit's services is more likely to be interested enough to volunteer than a person from the general public. AIAS FBD teams should make sure that volunteer opportunities and applications are clearly posted where patrons can find them, and that front-line staff know enough to field basic questions about volunteering for AIAS FBD. It also does not hurt to personally ask a regular customer if he or she would be willing to help out.

Seniors: Retirees are often looking for ways to make meaningful contributions to their communities, to maintain their skills (or learn new skills!) and to interact with others. Because they often have more daytime availability than other people, they can make perfect volunteers. Contact local active living communities and senior centers about the possibility of recruiting volunteers there.

Online: One way to find volunteers is to make it easy for volunteers to find you. Many people interested in volunteering head online to find out what opportunities exist near them. Besides the AIAS FBD website, AIAS FBD teams can also use third-party websites to advertise any volunteer positions. Craigslist, Idealist, and Volunteermatch are all good places to post volunteer needs. In addition, many local communities have online volunteer databases. AIAS FBD teams can also post volunteer opportunities on listservs or online groups that relate to their mission.

Community Bulletin Boards: Libraries, coffee shops, places of worship, and local daily and weekly newspapers, and other places often advertise volunteer opportunities. People looking for something to do usually know about these resources, so an AIAS FBD team should take advantage of any place that posts volunteer positions.

ALL ABOUT VOLUNTEERING

Volunteers: One of the best sources of future volunteers is current volunteers. It is likely that if someone is passionate enough to volunteer their time, they are likely to have at least some friends who share those same passions and interests. Also, a person who is already working for AIAS FBD should not only have a good understanding of the programs needs, but also what types of personalities would do well. In other words, a current volunteer can be the perfect volunteer recruiter... but only if they like the AIAS FBD team enough and feel appreciated enough to recommend the job to others. Keep volunteers happy, and be sure to let them know about any available volunteer positions.

Student Volunteers: Eager and energetic, students can make wonderful volunteers. Find out how to find volunteers at local high schools and colleges.

Why Students Volunteer

- It allows them to build up their resume
- It lets them explore a particular career field, gain experience, and hone skills
- It allows them to feel like they are contributing to their community, or taking responsibility for something
- It sounds fun, challenging and/or important
- Some high schools and colleges (and many honor societies) require community service

What Students Want out of Volunteering

- Responsibility within a supportive structure. They want to explore and see what they're capable of, but need a clear understanding of what is expected of them. They also need to know that there is someone to turn to when they have questions or doubts
- Credit for their hours volunteered. Be willing to sign time logs, etc.
- Letters of recommendation for a job well done. You can offer a letter after the student has finished volunteering, or just let them know you'd be happy to write a letter if they need one

How to Recruit Volunteers

- Find out if the school or college has a volunteer office.
- Contact the principal or dean and ask for them to make an announcement, or ask for leads to specific people who can help
- See if AIAS FBD can take part in the school's volunteer fair or information session
- Contact honor societies
- Talk to specific types of teachers (like science, art, or English) or extracurricular clubs

Timing Student Recruitment

One thing to keep in mind when contemplating recruiting students is that teachers and administrative staff can be very busy during certain times of the year, and hard to reach at other times. AIAS FBD teams should strive to give as much advanced notice as possible about specific volunteer needs, along with reminders regarding any upcoming deadlines.

Fostering Continued Commitment

At this time in their life, many people have trouble honoring commitments. Perhaps they underestimate how much they have on their plate, or overestimate how interesting a particular volunteer assignment will be. Perhaps they were simply coerced by parents or the school administration to volunteer, and their heart is not really into it. Help students succeed in their volunteer assignment by having clear attendance expectations. Schedule on-going volunteer opportunities at the same time every week, or make reminder phone calls for irregular volunteer opportunities.

Be a Great Place to Volunteer

Be Prepared
Make Volunteers feel welcome
Introduce volunteers to AIAS FBD team members
Set expectations
Train sufficiently
Give them purpose
Be Honest
Create Ground Rules
Set Time Parameters for Service
Show Appreciation

All volunteers must first fill out the volunteer release form located at freedom.aias.org. This includes the design and construction mentors.

WHY SHOULD I VOLUNTEER?

FBD cannot take the place of government programs, nor can it single-handedly cure the ills and disparities of society. But each of us can make a difference in a small way, in our own community, and can find ways to help that will make our efforts worth the time and trouble we invest in them.

Much like being prepared to tell people about AIAS FBD, you need to be prepared to let people know why they should volunteer. Here are a few tips and some supporting information that should help convince anyone to join your group.

Some of the best reasons to give are the ones you may not have considered — the ones that make it worth your while to go that extra step. People who have spent time volunteering for a cause report that they get back in satisfaction and joy more than they ever expend in inconvenience or effort — what you get back is immeasurable. You'll also receive these benefits:

- Volunteering makes you feel needed.
- Volunteering can lead to learning new skills.
- Volunteering can help you deal with some of your personal problems.
- Volunteering helps you meet new people and breaks down barriers of misunderstanding, mistrust and fear.
- Volunteering can create new contacts which may help your business or career.

It's What You Can Do for the World!

You might be thinking, "The little bit that I can do will never help much!" or "What in the world can I do?" If you've ever spent ten minutes reading a book to a lonely child, you know that even that small amount of compassion and attention can make a world of difference. No one person can solve the world's problems, but what little you do can make your little corner of the world — or one far away from yours a happier, healthier, safer place to live for those who need your help. Each of us can right a wrong, fill a plate, visit a shut-in or clean up a park — and that does make a difference for us all!

Participate in the Tradition of Volunteering

- Approximately 109 million American adults volunteer annually — that's 56% of all adults.
- Volunteers contribute an average of 3.5 hours per week - totaling 20 billion hours with an estimated dollar value of \$225 billion.
- 59% of teenagers volunteer an average of 3.5 hours per week - that's 13.3 million volunteers totaling 2.4 billion hours at a total value of \$7.7 billion.



Garden of Hope
volunteers, photo provided
by Roger Williams
University FBD Program



Volunteers working
on courtyard project,
photo courtesy of AIAS
New Jersey Institute of
Technology FBD Program



Volunteers working
on bridge project,
photo courtesy of AIAS
University of Virginia
FBD Program

Documentation of Sustainable Ramp, images courtesy of AIAS University of Tennessee FBD Program

Most Sustainable Project
Sleem Residence
University of Tennessee

Recycle + Reuse

Use of recycled and re-used materials was one of our primary focuses and accounted for approximately 60% of our supplies. Transforming old railroad ties into dynamic planter boxes is one example of this focus.







Locally Sourced

All materials for this project were sourced locally within 50 miles of the construction site. As a result, we were able to drastically reduce the amount of energy, time, and impact needed to acquire these materials for our Freedom by Design team.







Careful Consideration of Brick and Concrete

All deconstructed concrete and brick structures were used as in-fill for the grading of the project. We also reduced the use of concrete by using local stone walking paths, and crafting the grade dirt to slope against the concrete ramp. By conservatively reducing the amount of concrete we were able to significantly lower the high energy cost associated with it.







Planter Filtration

The planters were constructed on a porous surface, gravel, allowing for water to pass through and transfer back into the aquifer. Erosion was a serious on-site issue and this system allowed us to contain and more evenly distribute water runoff.







DOCUMENTING YOUR SUCCESS

"The mind, while blessed with permanent memory, is cursed with lousy recall. Written goals provide clarity. By documenting your dreams, you must think about the process of achieving them."

- Gary Ryan Blair (motivational speaker and author)

LOOKING BACK AT WHERE YOU HAVE COME

By the end of the year, an AIAS FBD team will have learned a lot of information, met a lot of people and completed a very large amount of work. Even if the FBD team did not complete a project, the chapter should look back and review any questions or concerns that were brought up through the previous year. Writing up a small collection of “case studies” from the chapter’s experiences can drastically help future chapter leaders and future FBD Leaders within the AIAS. Plan an end of the year event where everyone can discuss and talk about their experiences and memories from the year.

While these “case studies” do not have to be lengthy or very detailed summaries, they can give a snap-shot of the over progress the entire team has made. Also this would be an interesting time for each individual to take the survey again that they took at the beginning of the year. During the project it may not seem like they are learning anything, but the experiences of FBD can drastically change the knowledge set of those involved.

Wheelchair Ramp.
Photo courtesy of AIAS
Clemson University
FBD Program



WRAPPING UP THE LOOSE ENDS

Project Binder

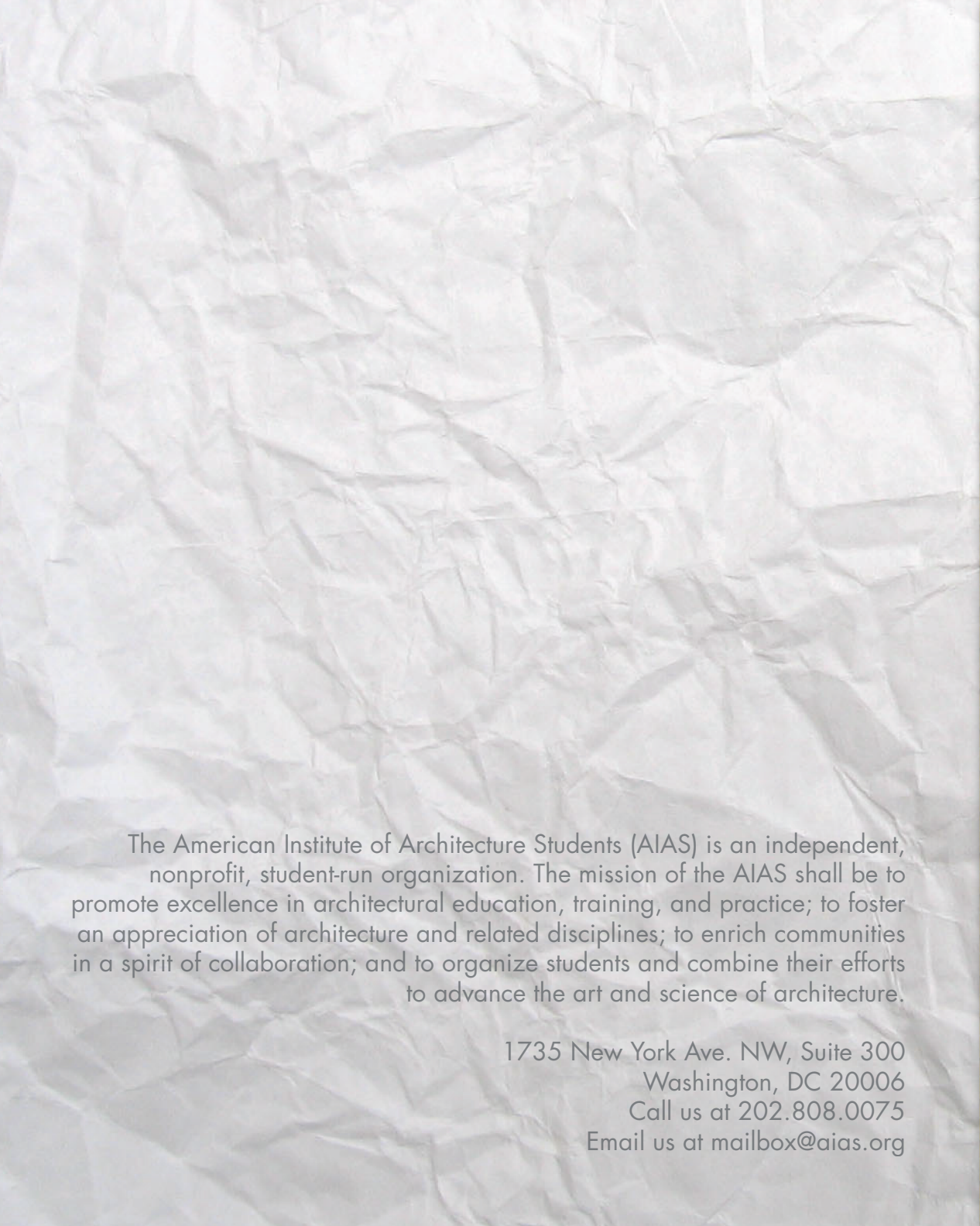

Each chapter is REQUIRED to document the process of planning, preparing, implementing and completing projects. This is extremely valuable, as this information can be used for Outreach and PR Campaigns as well as documentation when seeking funding. Oftentimes, the AIAS office needs this type of information to validate the program, use in publications and demonstrate that impact is being made.

Here are a few suggestions for documentation:

1. Take pictures of:
 - the team in action
 - the site
 - a group photo of the team
 - before and after pictures of the site
 - the client on site before and after
 - planning meetings, charrettes and any other meetings and preparation activities
2. Take Video of:
 - the client interview
 - before and after use of the area being designed
 - any and all build days
3. Collect all
 - designs from charrettes and meetings with mentors and client
 - notes from all meetings
 - a list of all donors and sponsors
 - all legal contracts and waivers
4. Write a small report on the overall process (the highs, lows and any obstacles that the team had to overcome to move forward)
 - *Remember to have a Release Form completed by everyone.

A project binder should be submitted to the AIAS office after the completion of every project, but no later than May 1. Additional copies should be retained for the chapter's records.

IMPORTANT: All AIAS chapters that wish to continue their participation in the FBD program in the following year must complete the application process. It is not a requirement that a chapter participates every year or completes a project each year.



The American Institute of Architecture Students (AIAS) is an independent, nonprofit, student-run organization. The mission of the AIAS shall be to promote excellence in architectural education, training, and practice; to foster an appreciation of architecture and related disciplines; to enrich communities in a spirit of collaboration; and to organize students and combine their efforts to advance the art and science of architecture.

1735 New York Ave. NW, Suite 300
Washington, DC 20006
Call us at 202.808.0075
Email us at mailbox@aias.org