

AIA Pittsburgh Committees 2021

Advocacy Committee

Co-chairs: Quintin Kittle and John Ryan

Cities are increasingly the level of government and community where scalable change and policy innovation happen. In response, this committee will identify, explore and advocate for issues that impact the built environment in western PA. The group is both a local version for the type of advocacy that happens in Harrisburg, and a more homegrown effort, with potential outreach and discussions with local legislators, City Council members, the Mayor's Office, community development groups, institutions, and media outlets, among others.

AIA Pittsburgh's Advocacy Committee is focused on three areas of interest:

- Representing members in professional matters within our local community
- Interfacing with AIA National's and AIA Pennsylvania's advocacy agenda
- Understanding how architects can contribute to quality of life issues in our city

We advocate to promote architects, architecture and a sustainable, healthy and safe built environment in western PA through legislative action at the National, State and local levels.

Goals for 2021

- **Amplify the voice of the architect.** Establish consistent communication, build trust and establish continuing relationships with regional and city government and regulatory agencies, in order to advocate on behalf of the architect community.
- **Create pathways.** Create pathways for greater involvement by AIA members to engage in strategic issues that can foster a better built environment.

AIA-MBA Joint Committee

Co-chairs: David Wells (AIA) and Shawn Bell (MBA)

Mission:

To promote communication between architects, contractors, and owners in an effort for each to gain a better understanding of the construction process and to discuss and resolve problems that may be facing the industry. Also, this committee provides a forum for contractors, architects, and owners to establish guidelines for improving the construction process.

This joint committee provides a unique forum for Architects, General Contractors, and Owners to meet and discuss existing conditions of the construction industry. As a result of this forum, a set of guidelines was created to reflect the best practices for procedures involving drawings and specifications, bidding, contract documents, and administrative procedures during construction.

Goals for 2021

- Collaborate with the construction industry and support cooperation and learning among OAEC groups.
- Identify shared issues and develop solutions through a collaborative process.

Blueprint for Better (B4B):

Chair: Amanda Markovic

Well-designed buildings and spaces project their value far beyond a building's walls and into the lives of communities and individuals. Architecture has been and will continue to be a foundational element in what kind of city we are and for whom. B4B builds on recent and developing research in neuroscience, sociology and psychology about how space impacts human wellbeing and how people perceive space.

The Pittsburgh Chapter of the American Institute of Architects wants to start a city-wide discussion about how buildings and spaces directly affect our communities and the people in them. Can we shape our surroundings to embody livability, sustainability, and equity? We think so.

Blueprint for Better: Goals

1. Initiate a city-wide conversation about how buildings and spaces play a major role in achieving – or not – a healthy, livable and inclusive city and region.
2. Listen and learn from others about the obstacles to realizing such a vision and engage architects to help seek solutions.
3. Inform and empower the public, community leaders, design and building professionals, developers and public agencies to be able to envision and advocate for a better-built environment.

Committee on the Environment (COTE):

Co-chairs: George Rieke and Chris Pegher

COTE works to advance, disseminate, and advocate—to the profession, the building industry, the academy, and the public—design practices that integrate built and natural systems and enhance both the design quality and environmental performance of the built environment. COTE serves as the community and voice on behalf of AIA architects regarding sustainable and resilient design. AIA Pittsburgh’s COTE brings the Sustainability Seminar series program to our region in 2020, and is exploring what it would take to develop a circular economy for building materials in Pittsburgh.

Goals for 2021

- Increase the number of Design Pittsburgh submissions using the Framework for Design Excellence (FDE).
- Research the value and challenges of tall/mass timber construction in Pennsylvania.
- Help legitimize building material reuse as a vital component to Pittsburgh’s economy and sustainability goals.

Design Pittsburgh Committee Goals:

Co-chairs: Bea Spolidoro (1st VP) and Kira Kellner

This committee plans and executes AIA Pittsburgh's signature program, Design Pittsburgh. Held annually, Design Pittsburgh is a celebration of architecture and design and honors those who create it. The program features the Design Awards competition, exhibition and celebration, in addition to a variety of other programs and initiatives. Through its efforts, the committee seeks to engage the public in and publicly promote the importance of good design in our communities.

Goals for 2021

- Promote and celebrate the work of our members
- Fundraising/ Keep sponsors engaged
- Continue to promote collaboration and expertise in submissions
- Media and public outreach
- Peoples' Choice Award promotion

Design+Research Group

Chair: Joshua Lee

Purpose: To infuse research into the practice of architecture in Pittsburgh and beyond and openly share new knowledge with our community.

Goals for 2021:

- Connect AIA PGH members to national and international research groups and resources (AIA/ACSA, EDRA, ACADIA)
- Promote local design research.
- Inform members of upcoming monthly presentations, conferences, joint-research funding opportunities, thesis and dissertation presentations
- Create AIA PGH website page with links to local, national, and international resources and funding opportunities; member directory with research abstracts of recent research; thesis and dissertation presentations.
- Research spotlights periodically in weekly newsletter, COLUMNS and social media.

Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Community

Co-chairs: Chuck Coltharp and Melissa Simonetti

EDI is one of AIA Pittsburgh's core values. The cases to be made for equitable practice—moral, business, ethical, professional, and societal—all rely on bolstering practices that are inclusive of differences and equitable in approach, process, and effect. The EDI Committee, formed in 2019, will explore and foster diversity, equality and inclusion in the architecture profession in our region. Our work will be guided by the [AIA's Guides for Equitable Practice](#).

Goals for 2021

- Increase awareness of EDI issues within the AIA Pittsburgh community in order to increase equity in the profession.
- Map demographics of PA/ PGH area architects to establish a local baseline.
- Engage in an internal review of AIA Pittsburgh programs, committees, and events through an EDI lens to see if they can be improved.
- Actively reach out to 2-4 area firms to start the EDI conversation; engage NILP graduates.
- Develop and provide AIA firms with best practices, resources and / or tools to further equity in the profession.
- Educate committee members on Intercultural Training outcomes and carry that knowledge beyond the committee.
- Support minority architects by listening / understanding their experiences, and connecting them in meaningful ways to the architecture community.
- Hold at least 2 meaningful joint meetings or activities with NOMA.

Education Committee

Co-chairs: John Ryan (2nd VP) and Kira Kellner

Members direct the planning and/or development of AIA Pittsburgh's continuing education programming, including but not limited to: Build Pittsburgh (AIA Pittsburgh's annual continuing education conference), Lunch & Learns, Procrastinator's Day, and ad hoc trainings. What are the issues affecting the profession and firms in our region? What should we be preparing for? Who should we be learning from?

Goals for 2021

- Deliver relevant and quality education
- Raise vital funds
- Engage sponsors

Healthcare Committee:

Co-chairs: Tom Chidlow and Stephen Winikoff

The mission of the Healthcare Committee (local chapter of AAH) is to promote the business and efficacy of healthcare design by discussing, organizing and disseminating best practices in healthcare design, collaborating with allied organizations and advocating for emerging professionals interested in healthcare design.

Some of our objectives:

- Improve health design education
- Connect to health design resources
- Further sustainability in healthcare
- Building tours
- Academic collaboration

Goals for 2021:

- Establish and finalize subcommittee membership, structure, goals and activities for 2021. (The mission of the Committee is realized through the activities of the subcommittees.)

Subcommittees:

- Knowledge
 - This subcommittee will develop content, presentations and discussion topics on healthcare architecture for our monthly meetings. Additionally, this subcommittee will keep the main committee updated on relevant conferences, events, and presentation or moderating opportunities.
- Emerging Professionals
 - This subcommittee will work to promote the development of emerging professionals by providing resources, education and career development opportunities, and mentorship.
- Collaboration
 - This subcommittee will coordinate networking opportunities and collaboration with other AIA Knowledge Groups (for example AIA AAH National and AIA Pittsburgh's Blueprint for Better) and allied organizations.

Outreach Committee:

Co-chairs: Bea Spolidoro and Larry Fabbroni

The Outreach Committee engages new and existing members of the AIA community through a variety of events. Some of the questions the group explores include: who are our members and what do they value? How are demographics in the profession changing? What trends and developments are shaping the profession into the future? The group seeks to create a large, strong, and diverse membership of architects and related professionals. Duties of this committee include the following:

- Identify member needs and advise staff on how to best offer value to members and potential members.
- Engage new and existing members in events and activities/ committees; raise awareness of trends and developments affecting the profession; identify partnership activities with like-minded groups.
- Grow the membership: Assist in the development / implementation of membership campaigns and activities.

Goals for 2021

- Help members and potential members take full advantage of the value of their membership.
- Inter-generational gathering - mentorship focus
- Roundtable for firm leaders - leadership issues and needs
- En Masse Design Mixer - fellowship focus
- Create a pathway for continued growth opportunities for YAF/ EPs

Young Architects Forum (YAF):

Co-chairs: 1st VP and Cassandra Osterman

YAFs purpose is to support and encourage young professionals in the field of architecture to: obtain their license, become more involved with career development opportunities, and engage allied professionals through collaboration. Members of [this committee](#) continuously seek out new and fresh ideas and the energy and resources to implement them, and have fun doing it.

Goals for 2021

- Allow young professionals to feel they are part of a community and regional network
- ARE Prep sessions
- Credentials Session
- AIAS crit / portfolio nights
- Exchange (YAX)
- Building tours
- Fellowship events (eg happy hours, excursions)