



Building Future Leaders

Select AIA Component Leadership Programs

AIA components across the United States have recently launched a number of leadership curricula to strengthen their local governance and meet the needs of the increasing number of emerging professionals in their ranks. Many of these programs focus strongly on members who have been licensed for ten years or less – or are Associate AIA members. Examples below highlight a range of different programs, some of which were established with the AIA National 2011 Component Assistance Grant Program.

The AIA National 2011 Component Assistance Grant Program directly supported over 80 members looking for better ways to lead within their organizations and collaborate with government officials, nonprofits, and the private sector. These initiatives have received significant positive feedback and will help countless more professionals when their best practices are replicated at other chapters.

The replicable new programs that are now available to other components are:

- Graduate course on leadership for architects
- Participatory panel discussions complemented by advocacy opportunities
- Highly immersive meetings with stakeholders organized with input from each individual class
- Training session with “Living Your Life as a Leader” toolkit

Approximately half of the components supported by the AIA 2011 Component Assistance Grant have focused more strongly on the leadership skills themselves, while the other half focused on leadership across a more specific spectrum of topics. A strong commonality across these programs is the emphasis on understanding the organization and operations of local government and stakeholders in the field. All of the programs underscore building lasting relationships with fellow students and other professionals.

AIA Baltimore

CivicLAB (Leadership.Architecture.Baltimore), Established in 2011 with support from the AIA National

Until 2011, the Chapter developed future civic leaders by involving emerging professionals in its 16 committees. CivicLAB focuses on developing specific skills in a short period of time, as well as creating the synergies that will accelerate the more typical learning process. The Chapter will offer a similar version of the program in 2013 and may consider expanding the size of the class. The next CivicLab may also include AIA Baltimore professional affiliate members and others in related organizations (developers, landscape architects, engineers, contractors, clients, and CDC directors) in order to foster further inter-professional understanding and collaboration.

Participants: AIA Baltimore aimed for 20 participants, but the tremendous interest in the program resulted in a founding class of 22. The class represented 14 firms of all sizes, as well as one member in between positions.

- 16 associates and six architects ages 25-50, including two new members who joined to participate in CivicLAB
- 14 men and eight women, two racial minority participants
- Eight highly active Chapter members

Format: The class convened for a four-part series of two-hour monthly educational and participatory sessions. In the program’s next round, the Chapter will also assign participants reading assignments. During the fifth session, participants reported to each other on topics related to the curriculum. The seminars are led by members of the program’s founding committee, who are highly engaged in their communities. The Chapter encouraged participants to attend the AIA Maryland Legislative Reception with Maryland General

Assembly legislators. The participants also attended AIA Grassroots as a cohort and took part in Hill advocacy sessions. AIA Baltimore offered participants \$100 scholarships to attend the AIA National Convention. Ten participants joined and formed part of its delegation to visit Maryland's Congressional senators and representatives.

Educational Focus: The program addresses civic leadership at various career stages. The panels cover effective civic lobbying, articulating economic benefits, and becoming a leader in sustainability and historic preservation. They also address excellence in urban design and smart growth policy development from the perspective of all stakeholders.

Class Content: A delegate to the Maryland General Assembly presented a first-hand perspective on the legislative process. The AIA National Manager for State and Local Relations helped seminar participants understand the organization and policy processes of various jurisdictions. An AIA Maryland lobbyist and a former state senator presented strategies for effective networking and communication.

Funding: 18 participants were sponsored by their firms at a cost of \$100 per person. Four participants received scholarships from the Chapter.

AIA Kansas

blox Building Leaders Together, modeled on a similar successful initiative at AIA Kansas City Established in 2011 with support from the AIA National

Participants: The program launched with a founding class of ten architects licensed ten years or less.

Format: The entire curriculum was planned with input from its participants. The "Young Leaders" class convened once a month for nine months, meeting with government and industry leaders in different cities. Traveling together helped class participants build strong connections. The class explored a range of topics related to architects' civic involvement in their local communities. The program also allows participants to conduct independent research. Each participant is responsible for documenting the group's activities and learning from one of the sessions.

Educational Focus: Participants explored the topics of public policy, urban and rural development, historic preservation, sustainability, design build in architecture school, the emerging trends for future architecture school graduates, and philanthropy.

Class Content: The class met with the Kansas Senate president and representatives from state agencies such as Kansas State Fire Marshal, Division of Design and Compliance, and the Commerce Department. At the local level, participants met with representatives from the Downtown Development Center, the Metropolitan Planning Department, City Administrator, and Director of Community Development, as well as leading local developers and building operators.

Funding: The program is sponsored by participating firms. It offers scholarships for up to two participants from small firms, those who are sole proprietors, or architects who are not currently employed.

AIA Cincinnati

VISION, Established in 2010 with support of an AIA Trust grant, supported partially by a 2011 grant from AIA National to increase participation from small businesses.

AIA Cincinnati launched this initiative after realizing that less than one percent of its programs were geared toward the rapidly increasing ranks of emerging professionals.

Participants: In 2011-2012, the program's 12 participants represented all firm sizes, and three of them were women. Candidates apply to participate in the program. They are established in their careers and are recognized as leaders with great potential within their practice. Most of the participants are about 32-47 years old. One of the Chapter's goals is to increase diversity in the program. The Chapter held an introductory reception for emerging architects with special attention given to introducing women and minorities to the program. It also approached local large firm CEOs about actively identifying women and minority candidates for the program.

Format: The 10-month VISION program works to provide architects licensed less than 10 years with the leadership skills necessary to advance in the profession and take on leadership roles in their communities. The program includes nine ¾-day facilitated curriculum sessions. Candidates actively participate in forums, seminars, workshops, and professional networking opportunities. They have exposure to local and national leaders and issues, panel discussions moderated by local AIA Fellows and firm CEOs, as well as monthly presentations and forums. The program provides participants and their firms with continuous feedback. Each participant in the program is also asked to identify an outreach project, collectively or individually, in order to serve the community at large. The course curriculum is designed to identify opportunities and encourage meaningful long-term contributions. The curriculum is complemented by keynote public lectures held in conjunction with the AIA Cincinnati Chapter programming. This elevates the quality of chapter programming while connecting nationally and internationally recognized architects with VISION participants and the program's partners.

Focus: The program's sessions cover civic and business leadership, advocacy, education, sustainability, and practice issues. The Chapter is working with several local institutions to engage the public in a broader conversation about the inspirational qualities of architecture.

Funding: VISION is intended to be self-supported and its budget relies significantly on program tuition. Larger firms frequently sponsor their participants. The public sessions are hosted and sponsored by program partners; firm partners sponsor seminars. Allied professional organizations provide grant funding.

AIA Baton Rouge

Training with "Living Your Life as a Leader" Toolkit, Established in 2011 with support from AIA National

AIA Baton Rouge membership has increased by 30 percent in the last four years. Many of the new members are recent graduates and newly licensed architects.

Participants: The founding class included 15 emerging professionals who are licensed architects or associates.

Format and Educational Focus: Using the *Living Your Life as a Leader* toolkit, the Chapter hosted a daylong session to help participants enhance their leadership skills and set goals for growth. The speakers included two civically engaged architect leaders, along with the president and CEO of the Baton Rouge Area Chamber. The Chapter received positive feedback and hopes to expand the program in the future by incorporating longer presentations and bringing more speakers from outside of the architecture field. In replicating this program, other components could address their communities' specific needs by inviting local officials, community leaders, and instructors.

Class Content: Participants take an online test to analyze their personal leadership style and learn how to use their leadership traits. They also learn the essentials of forming and using a successful leadership plan, as well as explore strategies for effective leadership.

Funding: The Chapter allocated reserve funds to supplement the grant from AIA National.

AIA Western Massachusetts

Graduate Pilot Course “Architects as Leaders”, Established in 2011 with support from AIA National

Participants: The class was promoted to students and members of AIA Western Massachusetts. It supported a total of 14 participants: 11 graduate students of the University of Massachusetts – Amherst Architecture and Design program, one graduate engineering student, and two members of AIAWM who are in the early to middle stages of their careers and were able to offer a unique perspective.

Format: The Chapter partnered for the first time with the University of Massachusetts – Amherst to offer this successful course. The semester-long class was taught by a leading citizen architect with the support of civically engaged special guests (including a local mayor) and a WMAIA board member, as well as university faculty.

Educational Focus: The course was intended to provide a framework for future inquiry. Class participants learned about leadership theory, assessed their strengths and weaknesses as leaders, and refined public speaking skills by giving 1-minute weekly speeches and other presentations. Students also engaged in assignments to better understand the organization and function of local government, which included a requirement to attend town meetings.

Funding: The course was very successful and the University of Massachusetts may be able to absorb the cost of the faculty’s salary if the class becomes part of the required course offering in the future. However, the program administrators are looking for additional funding at the present time.

AIA Illinois

AIA Illinois Leadership Institute, Established in 2006

AIA Illinois launched the Institute to inspire new leaders because most association leaders come into position as a result of someone encouraging them to take on additional roles.

Participants: The Institute engages about 40 participants every other year, all of whom are AIA members that display potential for taking a path toward greater leadership. About 60 percent of the attendees are 40 years of age and older, but 40 percent of the participants are under the age of 40. At least one representative from each chapter must be an emerging professional. Local chapters are allocated the number of people whom they can nominate for participation based on their population, which is generally 4-10. Chapters can nominate more participants if they choose, all of whom are placed on a waiting list.

Format: The Institute is a one-day training session.

Educational Focus: The Institute addresses the importance of leadership and provides attendees with an overview of leadership opportunities at the AIA, local communities, and business organizations. The session also enhances participants’ leadership skills and inspires attendees to action by showcasing the stories of leaders in both the later and the earlier stages of their lives (such as the 20’s and 30’s). Participants create a personal plan for increasing leadership in their personal, professional, or civic lives. They are then assigned to discussion groups based on their interests. The Component’s board members help the groups’ participants set actionable goals and share strategies for implementing their leadership plans.

Funding: AIA Illinois holds its Leadership Institute in the suburbs, and not in downtown, Chicago. This choice of location reduces costs and facilitates access for attendees. (It also ensures that participants are more fully engaged in the sessions while being removed from their daily work activities in the downtown area.) AIA Illinois launched the Institute by covering 100 percent of the costs from reserve funds. At the present time, it splits the costs 50-50 with local chapters. The ideal funding model would have participants cover about one third of the cost at \$50-100 per person.

AIA Virginia

Emerging Leaders in Architecture (ELA), Established in 2009

Participants: Participants range in age and experience from students to architects starting their own firms. The program serves up to 16 of the best and most promising young architects from across Virginia, including participants from each architecture school. Each of the five Virginia AIA local component boards may nominate one or more individuals, one of whom is selected to participate. Each Virginia architecture school may also nominate one or more students for admission to the program. One participant is selected from each school for a total of four. Applicants may also apply on their own or be nominated by someone else.

Format: The program consists of seven monthly daylong meetings and out-of-class work that is structured around presentations, discussions, team exploration, analysis, consensus-building, collaboration, and case study activities. Workshops rotate among five sites in Virginia, determined by the location of the firms, schools, and the local AIA component in each area. The curriculum also includes a real-world class project for a client, which allows participants the opportunity to develop their own leadership skills and apply the concepts discussed during class sessions. Participants are asked to devote at least 40 additional hours of time beyond the scheduled class sessions to this project. They are also expected to attend all scheduled sessions and complete all assignments.

Educational Focus: The primary goal of the program is to jump-start the careers of its participants by immersing them in the knowledge and skills that they might not obtain for years otherwise. It also focuses on developing participants' skills to help them serve their communities and the profession. Program faculty are established leaders in the building, finance, non-profit, development, university, legal, consulting, and design professions. Each of the seven daylong sessions focuses on essential strategies and skills such as financial management, presentation and communication skills, negotiating techniques, understanding legal and ethical issues, and public service.

Funding: The program charges tuition of \$850 to cover project costs. Participants are expected to pay 50% of the tuition. However, firms often pay the entire cost on behalf of their nominee. A firm must also be willing to give the participant time for the program, which sometimes conflicts with work hours.

AIA North Carolina

TEAM (Training Emerging Architects Through Mentorship), Established in 2011 with an AIA Trust Grant

Participants: The program serves emerging professional members of AIA North Carolina, who are young architects and associates identified by local AIA leaders.

Format: TEAM is a two-part leadership development program that begins with a half-day workshop and ends with an overnight retreat.

Educational Focus: During the program's first part, participants learn from Fellows and more experienced professionals about leadership roles and skills in the AIA, their community, and their firms. This initial workshop is open to 120-150 participants. After completing the first phase, 20 individuals are selected for a second, more intense overnight retreat. Prior to this retreat, participants take the MyersBriggs Type Indicator and read *The Five Dysfunctions of a Team* by Patrick Lencioni, in order to prepare for discussions and training. The retreat includes a series of interactive exercises and discussions led by an AIANC member.

Funding: The program is offered at no cost to participants.