

Firm Participation Guide

The case study process involves a commitment of time and energy. It requires strategies in the professional office that will encourage intense observation and analysis by the students or other case preparers. Case studies are not prepared as marketing documents. They are analyses of office practice and the construction process or may examine a particular topic of interest to the firm and the school. The research, documentation, and analysis of your projects are educational for interns and associates, principals and clients. The case study process also provides an opportunity to improve procedures and/or to incorporate new practices and ideas into the firm and in association with others.

The following notes are offered as guidance to the practitioner who will assist students or other office staff members in the preparation of the case study. The case study requires openness regarding business practices and client relationships.

- Identify a firm contact/coordinator for the case study. This individual must have the authority to release information and documents relating to the project in a timely manner.
- The primary firm contact should have been thoroughly involved in all aspects of the case as it evolved to a finished project.
- The firm should consider the case study process as an opportunity for professional development for interns and staff (AIA Continuing Education credits can be earned).
- Coordinate contact on behalf of the case study team with all relevant project team members and knowledgeable client/user representatives.
- Assemble all relevant documents and information relating to the case from firm selection to project completion.
- Be open in responding to questions.
- Schedule time for case study team office visits, question and answer sessions, and the reading of 25, 50, and 75 percent submittals.
- The firm contact should be in regular contact with those undertaking the case study.
- Make clear the firm requirements (i.e., timing, wording, review requirements, completeness) for 100 percent sign-off.
- Enlist other members of the firm in proofreading the case study as it evolves.
- Use Strunk and White's *The Elements of Style* as the guide for writing and editing.
- Use ample illustrations to complement the writing.
- If the firm is developing a case study without any academic collaboration, a case study team should be identified with complementary skills, including team editor, team graphic designer/photographer, and team researchers

Option to submit a case for peer review:

The AIA coordinates a peer review process of completed case studies for publication on the AIA Web site. A case study should reflect the professional quality of the firm's work with the insight and analysis provided by the student investigation of the project with faculty guidance. Firm involvement in the development of the case is recommended. Students and/or faculty may wish to further develop a case through independent study prior to submitting a case to the AIA for peer review. Emphasis should be placed on the analysis of the major points of the case.

