



New AIA Membership Categories Volunteer and Component Leader Briefing

The Member and Volunteer Engagement Priority Project is a series of initiatives that will position the organization to engage better, serve, and communicate with a broader set of AIA members. As a result of the work, AIA will be able to modernize our membership structure and operationalize new engagement, experience, and involvement strategies. This work will give AIA and its components a more robust understanding of our members at a deeper level, better activate current members, and recruit and serve more diverse members.

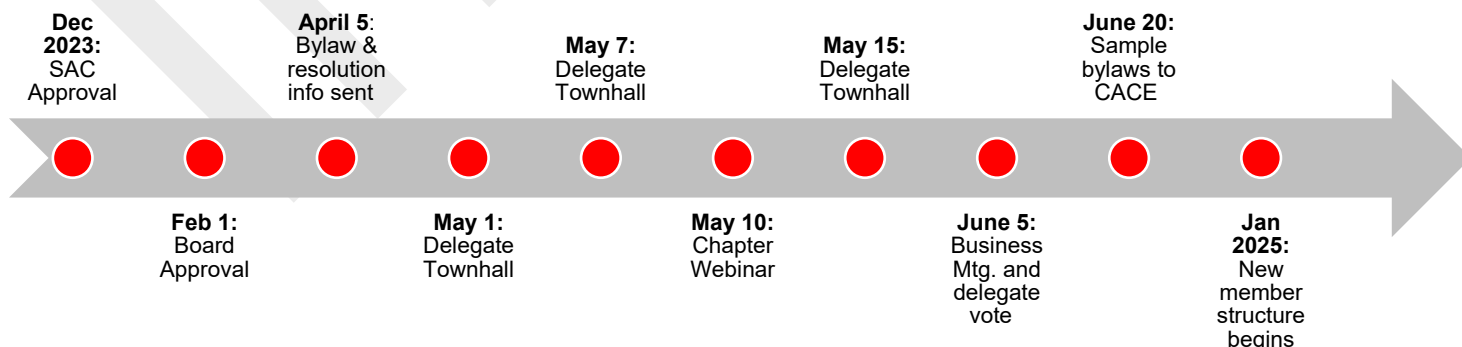
A priority initiative of this project is to modernize AIA's membership categories. By updating our membership categories, we will expand the AIA Community and position the organization as the convener for the built environment, support current members at their career stage, and increase membership dues revenue. This work is consistent with AIA's bold strategic plan, which explicitly states that we envision creating a big tent organization and collaborating with those who realize the power of design to solve problems. The proposed new membership structure delivers on that goal and further positions AIA to engage design, construction, and community stakeholders.

Membership Categories define the way people can join AIA. The key category segments below represent both "categories" and "statuses," which in some cases may be combined (e.g., an Architect Fellow who retires and becomes Architect Fellow Emeritus). These descriptions represent the most simplified level of category differentiation.

Membership Category Descriptions

Architect	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Individuals possessing a valid U.S. Architecture license.
Internationally Licensed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Individuals possessing a valid non-U.S. Architecture license.
Associate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Associate AIA: Individuals with a U.S. degree in Architecture or are practicing architectural design under the direct guidance of a licensed architect. Senior Associate AIA: Individuals with 10+ years of Associate membership who opt-in to show commitment to the Architecture profession without being licensed. International Associate AIA: Individuals with a non-U.S. degree in Architecture.
Academic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Individuals teaching architecture in a post-secondary school who are not practicing architecture in a non-academic setting.
Allied	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Individuals with a license in a key adjacent field or employed in professions licensed or otherwise that support the business of architecture.
Student	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Individuals studying architecture in a post-secondary school.
Fellow	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Individuals with 10+ years of appropriate membership and approved by the Jury of Fellows.
Honorary Fellow	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Individuals residing outside the U.S. with a non-U.S. Architecture license and approved by the Jury of Fellows.
Emeritus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Individuals retiring from architecture, 70+ years old, with 15+ consecutive or 25+ total years of membership.
Honorary Member	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Individuals of esteemed character providing distinguished service to the architecture profession and approved by the Jury of Honorary Members.

Timeline for Membership Categories



Delegates will vote on changes to the bylaws and resolutions at the AIA Annual Business Meeting on June 5, 2024.

Questions? Contact: Mike Skiados, MBA, CAE, at mikeskiados@aia.org or Kevin D. Watkins, CAE, at kevinwatkins@aia.org



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Frequently Asked Questions

What changes are happening for the Architect category?

No changes are being made to the Architect membership category, and all current requirements will remain the same as part of the membership restructuring. The AIA designation is recognized by clients, civic leaders, the public, and the AEC industry as an abiding commitment to professional excellence. Please note that no new member categories will be allowed to use the AIA designation.

How will this impact governance throughout AIA?

There are no changes to the governance structure for any existing membership category. With the expanded membership categories, Internationally Licensed Architectural Professionals will gain voting rights for many matters impacting AIA governance. For Allied, Academic, and Student- there are limited voting rights associated with each category. Many state and local AIA components may already have Allied, Academic, and Student membership categories with rights and responsibilities already defined in their Bylaws. Those categories' rights and responsibilities at the component level may differ from the chart below and are not required to change. For your convenience, we have included an AIA HQ Chart of Category Privileges below:

Category	Architect	Internationally Licensed Architectural Professional	Associate	Allied	Academic	Student
Vote on section, chapter, and state boards	Yes	Yes	Limited	No	Limited	No
Speak in component meetings on business matters and in elections	Yes	Yes	Yes	Limited	Yes	No
Vote in component meetings on business matters and in elections	Yes	Yes	Limited	No	Limited	No
Appointed as members of committees	Yes	Yes	Yes	Limited	Limited	Limited
Serve as a chapter delegate	Yes	Yes	Limited	No	No	No
Serve as a national officer, national director, or component officer or chair	Yes	Limited	Limited	No	No	No
Pin and Symbol	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No
Designation	AIA/FAIA (or Member Emeritus)	Intl. Lic. AIA or Honorary FAIA (or Member Emeritus)	Assoc. AIA_Senior Assoc. AIA, Intl. Assoc. AIA (or Member Emeritus)	None	None	None
Statuses	Emeritus, Fellow	Emeritus	Senior, Int'l, Emeritus			
C.E. (HSW or L.U.)	18	6	6	N/A	N/A	N/A



The blue boxes above indicate areas of change; all non-shaded areas are unaffected.



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What specific benefits to the AIA come from "broadening the tent"?

The AIA Strategic Plan directs us to "Create a bigger tent" to "Collaborate with those who realize the power of design to solve problems." By updating our membership categories, we will expand the AIA Community and position the organization as the convener for the built environment, support current members at their career stage, and increase membership dues revenue. This expansion will focus on domestically and internationally licensed architects because the environmental threat we're facing is global, and we need to connect effective design to a global scale. The proposed new membership structure delivers on that goal and further positions AIA to engage design, construction, and community stakeholders.

What current numbers are in the existing categories, mapped onto the proposed new categories?

Category	2024 Year-end membership projections	Total Audience
Architect	68,194	119,906
Associates	19,488	35,361
Allied	1,465	86,110
International Associate	1,721	2,700,000
Academic	400 (estimated)	6,420
Student	0	30,000

What membership increase does AIA anticipate achieving with the proposed new categories?

The new categories are just the first step. We will use the categories as a platform to communicate more targeted messages to prospective and new members, educate them on, and deliver relevant value. We will target 10% growth across all membership categories over the next three years, focusing on Architect and International, where we have the most significant opportunity.

What is the marginal cost of servicing a new member in each category, and thus, what does the Institute earn with each new member?

We estimate what the Institute will earn using a Lifetime Value of a Member (LVAM) calculation, which multiplies the revenue of a member annually by the average years of membership. Members contribute an average of \$511 of revenue annually to AIA National. Based on the average lifetime membership of 19 years for architects, the lifetime value is \$9,709. Based on the average lifetime membership of 5 years for associates, the lifetime value is \$2,555. We believe the other categories have LVAMs similar to associates' and expect our international category to have a longer average lifetime based on the increased value we intend to deliver.

Is this primarily an internal initiative, the product of consultation with AIA components and membership, or a combination of both?

This initiative included a cross-section of AIA's member stakeholders, including the Board of Directors, committees, member groups, and representatives from the component network. The engagement process will continue through the annual business meeting to understand the new structure and articulate how this supports architects in their critical work.

Why are only six (6) continuing education credits required for Internationally Licensed Architectural Professionals, less than the eighteen (18) hours currently required today?

To maintain their applicable license in the counties where they operate, Internationally Licensed Architectural Professionals must participate in defined amounts of continuing education (CE) each year or recurring period. Respecting the variability of these requirements globally, AIA will require 6-hours of CE for members in this category.

Will current Associate AIA members be required to have six (6) hours of CE for the 2025 renewal period?

Members who renew their Associate membership in 2025 will renew for an Associate category that requires continuing education. This is consistent with the forward-thinking standard that all members with a designation must have continuing education requirements to show dedication to the profession. These continuing education credits will not be required at the point of renewal and will only need to be completed in time for the 2026 continuing education audit cycle.



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What is the value proposition for switching to a Senior Associate?

As the profession continues to evolve, many architecture school graduates choose not to seek licensure and are still dedicated design professionals. As part of exploring the new membership structure, current Associate members reported a desire to signify their breadth of expertise and tenure as design professionals. The status and designation of "Senior" is earned through 10+ years of Associate membership.

What are the parameters for the Academic category?

This category will be for individuals teaching architecture in a post-secondary school who are not practicing architecture in a non-academic setting. This category is not intended for licensed individuals working outside an academic setting most of the time. Adjunct Professors working full-time as Architects must remain in the appropriate membership category to use the AIA, FAIA, and Assoc. AIA designations.

Does a student need to be enrolled in an NAAB-approved architecture program to join the student membership category? What about related fields of study? Or non-NAAB and community colleges?

AIA is taking an expansive view of the architectural community, and we want to be as inclusive as possible for this pipeline of future architects and design professionals. As such, this category will be open to anyone in a post-secondary school interested in architecture.

Are changes being made to the allied membership category?

No. The Allied Member Category currently exists at the national level, **and no changes are being made to the rights and privileges of these members.** The AIA HQ membership will only be for those individuals with a license in a key adjacent field or employed in professions licensed or otherwise that support the business of architecture.

Have dues rates for these new categories been set for 2025?

The Board of Directors will establish all dues rates in May 2024. The staff recommendations for new categories are outlined below. Please note that revenue will be shared equally across all tiers of AIA for the academic category.

Category	2024 Dues	2025 Dues
International Licensed Architectural Professional	\$230	\$230 plus Core CPI *
Academic	N/A	\$199 across three tiers **
Student	N/A	\$0 across three tiers **

*Pending Board Approval of CPI Increase

**Pending Finance Committee Review and Board Approval

How will the new designations appear?

Below are example signature block lines for the new or updated membership category designations. All other currently existing category designations will remain unchanged, including Fellow, Emeritus, and Honorary statuses. **There are no changes to the AIA designation for Architects.**

Category Updates	Proposed Designations
International Licensed Architectural Professional	John Smith, Intl. Lic. AIA
Senior Associate	John Smith, Sr. Assoc. AIA
International Associate	John Smith, Intl. Assoc. AIA (same as current category)

No designations are applicable for Academic, Student, and National Allied categories.