



# AIA 2021–2025 Strategic Plan

In pursuing its strategic plan, the American Institute of Architects (AIA) has demonstrated an unwavering commitment to addressing the dual crises of climate change and systemic inequities through its strategic priorities of climate action and equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI).

## Climate Action

On the World Stage: As architects, we are called to lead—not only in shaping the built environment, but in answering the urgent demands of our time. AIA and architect members are a leader in the United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP) global push for a carbon-neutral future.



### 2024 AIA President Kimberly Dowdell, AIA:

*“The reuse and adaptation of the existing buildings in our skylines is a vital opportunity to meet our decarbonization goals.”*

The progress we’ve made is visible, measurable, and accelerating. We are designing a future that is sustainable, just, and filled with hope.



### Framework for Design Excellence

The profession’s north star, using ten principles guiding members to deliver real-world impact. Used by 44% of large firms, 19% of midsize firms, and 9% of small firms.



### AIA 2030 Commitment (2024)

Signatories achieved a historic 56% reduction in predicted energy use intensity — a decisive leap toward our net-zero mission.



### COTE Top Ten for Students

In 2025, 1,317 students participated in the competition — a 414% increase since 2015.



### Measured Momentum

Progress is visible and accelerating across frameworks, materials, and student engagement—evidence that climate leadership in design is scaling.



### AIA Materials Pledge

Over 280 firm signatories are demanding better materials and prioritizing transparency for healthier and more sustainable projects.

# Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, Justice, and Belonging

AIA has made measurable progress in fostering a more inclusive and equitable profession. By creating new leadership opportunities, providing educational resources, funding critical research, and reforming internal programs, AIA is actively dismantling barriers and building a profession that better reflects the society it serves.



## Representation

Membership of underrepresented racial and ethnic groups grew from 12% in 2013 to 18% in 2024. Women now account for 27% of total members. AIA achieved three consecutive women presidents (2023–2025).

## HBCU Partnerships

AIA has strengthened partnerships with all seven NAAB-accredited HBCUs to expand access and opportunity.



## Stop the Clock

AIA encouraged NCARB to eliminate the rolling clock for licensure. NCARB retired the 5-year limit; the campaign inspired over 90 individuals to share their experiences.



## AIA Awards Reforms

The awards program is reducing barriers and piloted unconscious bias training for all jurors to foster fairer recognition.



## Leadership Development

The Next to Lead program focused on racially and ethnically diverse women, has graduated 38, who are moving into key AIA component leadership roles. Now in its third year, there are 18 participants.

## Architecture Week (2025)

Launched in 2024, Architecture Week expanded in 2025 to include 51 chapters reaching more than 20,500 students.



## Research & Toolkits

AIA released the 2nd Edition of the Guides for Equitable Practice and funded "The Elephant in the Well-Designed Room," which provided Bias Interrupter toolkits for firms.



## Raising Awareness

The Future Focused video campaign released nearly 134 social posts celebrating underrepresented architects, with average engagement exceeding 11,600 per release.

Through measurable actions in climate and equity, AIA is advancing a profession that designs a more sustainable, inclusive, and hopeful future.