

AIA NEW ORLEANS STRATEGIC PLAN 2022



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**American Institute of Architects, New Orleans
(AIANO)
Strategic Plan: 2022**

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American Institute of Architects New Orleans (AIANO) Strategic Plan: 2022

1. Introduction

The American Institute of Architects (AIA) was formed in 1857, and the New Orleans chapter was founded in 1909 as its thirteenth chapter overall and only the second chapter in the South. AIA New Orleans (AIANO) has a storied history with many significant accomplishments related to promoting the field, providing professional development opportunities for local architects, supporting economic development by attracting businesses to the city, promoting historic preservation, and influencing local policies and practices related to land use and development.

As of 2022, AIA New Orleans (AIANO) has grown to include over 500 members representing 216 firms, organizations, or government entities, as well as 12 engineering, construction, home product, or law firms that have joined as Professional Affiliate Members. AIA New Orleans continues to offer high quality professional development for members, peer engagement opportunities that build a strong network and professional community of architects, and public awareness and advocacy activities related to quality design in the built environment. (See the website, www.aianeworleans.org, for more information about AIA's history and current activities.)

AIANO conducted a strategic planning process in 2015. That plan focused on strategically targeted and value-added member services, expanded engagement both with the membership and with the broader community, diversifying revenue to support program expansion, and increased organizational capacity. As New Orleans and the nation began reducing COVID-related restrictions, it was time for another planning process to chart AIANO's strategic direction in a significantly changed environment.

This planning process including convening a Strategic Planning Task Force of AIANO Board members and selected partner representatives, an extended meeting of the full Board, and data gathering to inform the deliberation of the Task Force (i.e., selected stakeholder interviews, an AIANO member online survey, and detailed information on AIA components from similarly-sized cities across the country), all leading to the preparation of this document. The process was facilitated by independent consultant Alan Brickman of Brickman Nonprofit Solutions, who also facilitated the 2015 process.

This strategic plan captures all the decisions and directions developed through the planning process. It is intended as a roadmap for going forward over the coming multi-year period, a call to action for all AIANO members, and as a resource and reference as AIA New Orleans continues to plan and implement activities that make meaningful contributions to both its members and the New Orleans community.

2. Mission, Pillars, and Vision

2.a. Mission

An updated mission statement for AIANO is as follows:

The American Institute of Architects, New Orleans (AIANO) seeks to promote excellence in the practice of architecture, with a particular focus on sustainability and equity, and to ensure that all in the community value architecture as essential to the quality of life in New Orleans.

Note on the mission statement: A major theme of the strategic plan is AIANO's renewed focus on issues of sustainability and equity, and that commitment is at the level of mission. Equity and sustainability will be the lenses or filters through which all AIANO activities will be assessed and modified as necessary. (The strategic plan includes a section on "Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion" (EDI) that includes detailed plans in that area.)

2.b. AIA's Three Pillars

AIA New Orleans seeks to achieve its mission through the following three pillars of activity:

Service	Advocacy	Partnership
AIANO strives to be a comprehensive professional resource that empowers architects to build and bolster successful careers and businesses. Services and resources include: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Training and continuing education;• Manuals, materials, and models reflecting current best practice;• Peer networking and mentoring.	As the voice of New Orleans architects, AIANO: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Enhances public understanding and appreciation of the value of architecture and the role of architects;• Advocates for policies that incorporate the most current design best practices in shaping and preserving New Orleans' built environment.	AIANO is strongly committed to developing a collaborative and solution-oriented community of design and build professionals to further our goals regarding New Orleans' built environment. We cultivate collaborative relationships with: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Government agencies;• Community-based organizations;• Academic institutions;• Philanthropic institutions;• Professionals in allied fields.

2.c. Vision of New Orleans' Built Environment

AIANO envisions the future of New Orleans' built environment that is:

Varied and Dynamic: New Orleans has a distinct, complex, and impressive history that is reflected in its architecture. At the same time, New Orleans is a vibrant modern city with award-winning contemporary buildings and cityscapes. The preservation of historic architecture as well as the celebration of contemporary architecture creates a dynamic that is at the heart of New Orleans' reputation as one of America's great cities.

Sustainable: New Orleans is uniquely susceptible to a host of environmental challenges, including increasingly frequent severe weather events, coastal land loss, and the other impacts of climate change. Both historic and contemporary buildings and landscapes must be designed to be resilient and sustainable in response to these existential threats to our city.

Inclusive and Equitable: New Orleans is a city of great diversity in its people, its neighborhoods, and its cultures. The benefits of a well-designed built environment must be shared equitably across the city so that all can recognize and value architecture as a key element of the quality of life.

3. Member Services, Engagement, and Recruitment

3.a. Overview

AIANO strives to be a **comprehensive and accessible clearinghouse** that leverages its staff, member committees, materials, and technology to provide training and continuing education, best practice models, and other resources for architects at all stages of their careers on topics including:

- a) Architecture and design;
- b) Design and build collaboration;
- c) Careers in architecture, including career awareness, job requirements, and employee awareness about retirement planning, insurance, parental leave, etc.;
- d) Management and operations of architecture firms, including procurement and contracting, the permitting process, staff hiring and human resource management, financial planning, etc.;
- e) Tools to manage a changing environment;
- f) Trends in the design field related to sustainability and equity.

(Note: Where possible, AIA will provide directly or facilitate access to discounted joint purchasing, insurance, and/or other needs of architects and architecture firms.)

In addition, AIANO will build an **active and collaborative community of design and build professionals** through a robust annual calendar of collaborative programming, as well as networking and social events that will engage both architects and others in the AEC (i.e., architecture, engineering, and construction) community/industry.

Finally, AIANO will **actively recruit new members** from constituencies including architects, architecture students, and professionals in allied fields (as affiliate members). AIA will prioritize in this outreach engaging prospective members from under-represented racial and ethnic populations with the goal of achieving a diverse membership that more accurately represents the field and the community.

3.b. Strategies and Approaches

AIANO's approach to member services, engagement, and recruitment will include the activities in the chart on the following page (presented in no particular order). All these activities will be disseminated and promoted to the broad community of New Orleans architects and professionals in allied fields who will be encouraged to both attend and collaborate on the activities, and to become members or affiliate members. For each of the activities in the chart, it is indicated which of the AIANO's three pillars that activity aligns with and/or relates to.

Activities/Approaches	Service	Advocacy	Partnership
a) Systematic documentation and compiling of relevant information and best practice models and templates (produced by both AIANO and national AIA), accessible to members as hard-copy handouts, online PDFs, and posted on the AIANO website;	✓		
b) Develop and implement a robust annual calendar of professional development activities and events , including: formal CEU-worthy workshops, peer exchanges (such as the Design Practice Exchange or DPx), lunch-and-learn sessions on the practice and the business of architecture (see summary list of topics above), and symposiums (such as the 2030 Symposium); these programs will be conducted and promoted, where relevant and appropriate, in collaboration with partner organizations in the AEC community/industry, as both presenters and participants;	✓		✓
c) Develop and implement a robust annual calendar of building tours conducted and promoted, where relevant and appropriate, in collaboration with contractors, engineers, and others, as both presenters and participants; augment the building tours with exhibits in the AIA Design Center and on the AIANO website that document the tours and provide "behind the pictures" detailed explanations of design and construction approaches and challenges;	✓		✓
d) Provide access for members to the Tulane Lecture and other relevant college and university-based programs and events , and where appropriate, accredit relevant offerings;	✓		✓
e) Develop, and implement roundtable discussions with architects and others in the AEC community and foster these cross-field/cross-disciplinary relationships in order to collaboratively address shared cultural, regulatory, and environmental challenges; document and disseminate these discussions in an effort to catalyze follow-up action among motivated stakeholders;	✓	✓	✓
f) Develop and implement a robust annual calendar of networking and social events for both architects and others in allied AEC fields.	✓		✓

Activities/Approaches	Service	Advocacy	Partnership
g) Provide structured opportunities for members to offer input into AIA's policy advocacy positions and recommendations, and for members to participate in advocacy activities with the goal of establishing AIANO's advocacy role as both for and from the profession;		✓	
h) Active promotion and highlighting individual architects, architecture firms, and firm owners/partners for achievement and excellence (including the Design Awards winners), and also new hires and graduates, and other news-worthy developments in the local architecture community.	✓	✓	
i) Provide support (including potential financial support) for AIANO's various constituent groups or organizations including: Women in Architecture (WIA), National Organization of Minority Architects (NOMA), Small Firm Exchange (SFx), Emerging Professionals (EP), Young Architects Forum (YAF), American Institute of Architecture Students (AIAS), Committee on the Environment (CotE), and others, to ensure these groups are both active in and of themselves and integrated into all other AIA programs and activities.	✓		✓
j) Develop and implement the messaging and contacts for a multi-faceted and strategically targeted media strategy that generates coverage in traditional media outlets (print, TV, radio), AIANO's own new media (website, email blasts, social media), and coverage in the newsletters and publications of partner organizations and associations.	✓	✓	✓

4. Public Facing Activities

AIANO has three primary audiences for its public-facing activities. These are:

- a) Architecture, engineering, and construction community/industry (AEC, including businesses, associations, and individuals in the design and build fields);
- b) Political, business, and civic leaders;
- c) Public at-large.

Described below are the goals and approaches for engaging with these constituencies.

4.a. Goals & Approaches: AEC Community/Industry

AIANO seeks to build a collaborative and solution-oriented community of design and build professionals that can advance the public's awareness and value of design best practices, and further outcomes related to a high-quality built environment that is diverse, sustainable, and equitable. AIANO seeks to develop and nurture long-term, mutually beneficial, cross-industry relationships through which to collaboratively addressing shared cultural, regulatory, and environmental issues and challenges

Relationships with AEC partners will also enhance the business development of AIA members and integrate architects more fully into the evolving design & build competitive landscape.

AIANO's approach to creating and developing these relationships will include activities as follows:

- a) **Active and targeted dissemination** of AIA news updates, professional development materials, and event promotion to a growing list of AEC partners and prospective partners;
- b) Develop and implement **CEU-worthy workshops and events** that engage construction attorneys, general contractors, and engineers as both presenters and participants;
- c) Develop and implement an **annual calendar of building tours** that engage general contractors, subcontractors, and product vendors (again as presenters and participants) that highlight best practices and pitfalls at multiple stages of the construction process.
- d) Connect all the above activities to **Project Pipeline** and other organizations and initiatives focused on promoting architecture as a career, especially among underserved and marginalized communities, so that AIA actively engages the next generation of design and build professionals.

4.b. Goals & Approaches: Political, Business, and Civic Leaders

AIANO seeks to create and develop active relationships with the prominent leadership in New Orleans political, business, and civic life. In terms of city government, these relationships are intended to clarify and streamline the permitting process, and to identify and address the

requirements and processes that are persistent roadblocks to moving projects forward. More broadly, AIA seeks to be an integral and essential participant in all high-level discussions that impact New Orleans' built environment, and to have the input and expertise of architects valued by the decision-makers in all sectors of the community. AIA will endeavor to ensure that all its policy positions and recommendations serve not only the best interests of the community, but also the full range of the AIA membership.

AIANO's approach to creating and developing these relationships will include activities as follows:

- a) **Active dissemination** (again: AIA news updates, professional development materials, and event promotion) and **in-person outreach** to political, business, and civic leaders conducted regularly (i.e., at least quarterly) by AIA leadership;
- b) **Regular contact with City officials** directly involved in the permitting process as well as higher level city officials whose roles touch issues related to the financing and development of New Orleans' built environment;
- c) AIA-sponsored (or co-sponsored) **town hall-style events** that engage public officials to hear professional and community input about issues related to the built environment;
- d) Ensure all political, business, and civic leaders are **encouraged to attend AIA-sponsored (or co-sponsored) events** such as the Design Awards and the building tours, with a special effort to invite City Council Members to events in their districts.

4.c. Goals & Approaches: Public At-Large

AIANO seeks to increase public understanding and appreciation of the value of architecture and the role of architects in enhancing the quality of life for all those who live and work in New Orleans. Specifically, AIA seeks to enhance the public's understanding of the role of design in all quality of life issues including better land use, stormwater management and other sustainability issues, public safety, economic development, and culture and tourism. Also, public outreach will be designed to attract individuals, especially young people representing the diversity of the city, into architecture and related fields.

AIANO's approach to creating and developing these relationships will include activities as follows:

- a) **Leverage the AIA Design Center space** with displays, activities, and events that draw people in, including: ads and announcements on the windows, bookstore, members work and other publications on display, etc. These activities can be done in collaboration with other organizations and businesses (e.g., bookstores such as Baldwin & Co.)

- b) **Develop an online digital resource** with a building tour guide and map, perhaps as a revenue-generating activity;
- c) Develop a **relationship with New Orleans & Co.** (formerly the Convention and Visitors Bureau) to ensure information and materials about New Orleans architecture is a prominent part of their promotion of the city to tourists and visitors;
- d) **Leverage the Design Awards** not only by increasing attendance at the event itself, but also by creating tours of the recognized properties; scheduling meetings with the award winners and the city's political, business, and civic leadership; and highlighting the winners in AIA publications and materials over the course of the year after their recognition at the awards event.
- e) **Create publications for wide public dissemination** by identifying topics of interest (e.g., historic buildings, new innovative design, architecture and stormwater management, etc.), engaging professional writers to develop the pieces, and actively disseminating these publications to the full range of AIA's stakeholder constituencies;
- f) **Active outreach to local high schools and colleges** (in collaboration with Project Pipeline, among others) for dissemination of publications and materials, engagement in AIA activities and tours, and career- oriented activities and events that promote architecture and allied fields as careers.

4.d. Key Messages for AIANO's Public Awareness Activity

AIANO's public awareness activities will be shaped by a series of core messages about both architecture's role in the quality of life and about architects and the architecture profession. These messages are summarized below. AIANO will refine these messages and then incorporate them into materials (print and online), media (both traditional media relations and social media), and activities and events targeting AIANO's three key community constituencies, i.e., the AEC field; political, business, and civic leaders; and the public at large.

4.d.1. Messages Regarding Architecture and the Quality of Life

- a) **Architecture is a cultural asset**: Just as New Orleans celebrates its music and cuisine, so too should we celebrate architecture as an important cultural asset. New Orleans' unique architectural history enhances the quality of life for residents and attracts tourism dollars and other investment. AIA plays a central role in creating public awareness and appreciation of this essential aspect of the city's cultural heritage.
- b) **Architecture is fundamental to resiliency**: New Orleans residents, businesses, and policy makers are justifiably concerned about the city's resilience in the face of catastrophic weather events. Architects are essential strategic partners and resources (to government, to builders and contractors, to local residents, etc.) when it comes to

those aspects of the built environment and the related land use policies and practices that will position and prepare New Orleans for any eventuality.

- c) **Architecture and a sustainable environment**: New Orleans experiences the negative impacts of water pollution, coastal erosion, street flooding, subsidence, sea level rise, climate migration, and other climate change impacts as much, if not more than, many other American cities. Through AIA, architects are essential strategic partners and resources with regard to issues of environmental protection and sustainability.
- d) **Architecture is good business in the 21st Century**: New Orleans is experiencing an economic renaissance that is being driven by a strong small business community and various resources that support entrepreneurship and innovation. At the same time, business models and operations are changing in response to developments like the COVID pandemic which have forced employers and entrepreneurs to rethink their physical space needs. Fundamental to the city's ability to attract and retain these businesses is a robust community of architects who help reimagine and re-create the physical spaces that can best support the businesses and business models that will drive the region's economy in the 21st century.

4.d.2. Messages Regarding Architects and the Architecture Profession

- a) **Architects play a significant role in creating the built environment**: Architects bring both technical expertise and design creativity to the creation of the built environment. Their role involves planning and design, navigating the permitting and other regulatory compliance systems, and creating drawings and other tools for engineers and construction managers.
- b) **Architects are a valued component of the complex design-and-build field**: The design and construction of buildings, cityscapes, and neighborhoods involves a large and varied array of professions and professional expertise. Architects join with urban planners, engineers, a wide variety of construction trades and specialties, landscape architects, and others to create a high quality and relevant built environment. A built environment that supports the quality of life in a city requires all the critical expertise.
- c) **Architecture as a profession and a career should be accessible to everyone**: Anyone with the interest and perseverance can become an architect and build a career in the field. As with any professional field, there are educational requirements and prerequisites, licensing and continuing education obligations, etc., but there are also resources and supports (many available through AIA) that can help young people of all backgrounds explore and access this exciting and fulfilling field. AIANO strives to have the professional more accurately reflect the composition of the New Orleans community.
- d) **Architects serve clientele at all scales/sizes of buildings and all levels of financial means**: Architects contribute to a wide range of building projects. Their expertise is important in the planning of residential, commercial, municipal, recreational, industrial, and institutional buildings. From massive facilities to tiny homes, the experience and

training of architects is key to creating a functional layout that meets the needs of the building's owners/users, is reflective of the owners'/users' brand, is responsive to the stresses of environmental and temporal forces, and is focused on the safety and wellbeing of occupants. Architects have an enormous impact on a building's cost, comfort, safety, and durability at all scales.

- e) **Architects are significant assets on planning boards and commissions**: Architects are problem-solvers with experience and expertise that can be valuable assets to planning commissions and boards, nonprofit Boards of Directors, and other professional and civic organizations. AIANO can be a useful vehicle to identify and place local architects in such positions.
- f) **AIANO is a major resource**: AIANO, as the professional association of architects in Greater New Orleans, is a significant resource to both architects and the wider public. It provides architects with technical, professional, and career development services, as well as an effective advocacy voice. AIANO also links all sectors of the community with local architects and with the architecture field for the purposes of education and awareness, facilitating collaboration and connection between community members and architects, and identifying and leveraging synergies and shared perspectives that can create a high quality and sustainable built environment that benefits all New Orleanians.

4.e. AIANO's Advocacy Agenda and Activities

A key role for AIANO is advocacy around issues related to the built environment. In this role, AIANO must be a champion for architecture and design best practices while balancing the best interests of its membership and the quality of life for all New Orleanians. There are three types of issues that potentially constitute AIANO's advocacy agenda: 1) issues related to permitting, building codes, zoning, etc., around which AIANO must be proactive and vigilant; 2) emergent and/or unanticipated issues regarding the built environment that require an AIANO reaction; and 3) requests from other organizations and advocacy groups for AIANO's support and/or endorsement.

Below are some process steps and guiding principles regarding AIANO's involvement in advocacy:

- a) The **Advocacy Committee takes the lead** on shaping AIANO's advocacy posture and activities. The Advocacy Committee must exercise good judgement about when an issue or position needs to be approved or affirmed by the full Board. In addition, while the Board has final authority over these decisions, they must also exercise good judgement about when to solicit the input of the membership regarding a particular issue or position.
- b) There is a substantial body of resources, model language, and other **resources related to advocacy available through AIA National**. As a related matter, AIANO should be in

consistent communication with AIA Louisiana about local advocacy issues and activities so there are no conflicts or inconsistent messaging.

- c) Consistent and sustained **relationships with City and Parish officials** is essential to AIANO's effectiveness in policy advocacy. During AIANO leadership transitions, there needs to be a **good "hand-off" of these relationships which includes rigorous documentation** to preserve the history and institutional knowledge regarding AIANO's advocacy activities.

5. Additional Aspects of Program Implementation

5.a. AIANO's Program Content and Delivery Mechanisms

5.a.1. AIANO has a significant body of programmatic content or topics that it delivers both internally to members and externally to the public at-large. The tracks or strands of content include the following:

- a) Architecture best practice (including CEU-worthy content for architects);
- b) Career development for both experienced and aspiring architects (e.g., portfolio development, professional mentoring, etc.);
- c) Business management for architecture firm owners/managers:
 - Basic management practices (hiring and human service management, financial management, marketing, etc.);
 - Architecture-specific business practices (navigating the licensing and regulatory environment including permitting, procurement, code enforcement, etc.);
- d) Sustainability issues in the built environment (e.g., water management, green infrastructure, etc.); *
- e) Issues of equity, and inclusion in the built environment. *

* *Note: There are sustainability and equity issues that cut across all the categories above. For example: architecture best practice includes sustainability and equity, and management practices includes equity and inclusion in human resource management and organizational culture. Items "d" and "e" above are intended to specifically reference how sustainability and equity issues are reflected in the built environment, notwithstanding how those issues overlay all the content areas.*

5.a.2. There are the following structures and methodologies for delivering the content:

- a) Continuing education:
 - In-depth workshops (for CEUs);
 - "Lunch & Learn" sessions (for CEUs);
 - Informal presentations in response to member requests;
- b) Building tours;
- c) Issue-specific or problem-solving roundtables;
- d) Peer exchange:
 - One-on-one professional mentoring or exchange;
 - Firm-to-firm exchange (e.g., the small firm exchange or SFx);
- e) Activities in the AIA office space:
 - Exhibits highlighting Design Award winners, and firms/projects representing a diverse cross-section of the architecture, engineering, and construction (AEC) fields;
 - Co-working or study space;
 - Library of materials and resources representing AEC best practice (see item "f" below);
- f) Materials (print and online; AIANO will develop an extensive print and online "library" that includes print, audio, and video documentation of selected professional development and educational activities.

5.b. AIANO's Collaboration with Partners in Allied Fields

As referenced in an earlier section, AIANO will deliver the above content in **collaboration with individuals, firms, and associations in allied design-and-build fields**. Building that collaborative network of design-and-build professionals will involve the following approaches:

- a) **Identify "early adopters" and grow over time**: AIANO will identify individuals and businesses that are enthusiastic about collaborating with AIANO and develop programs activities that leverage all the partners' expertise and perspective. Based on the success of these initial programs, AIANO will reach out to others in the design-and-build community to expand the collaborative offerings.
- b) **Rigorous documentation of collaborative programs**: AIANO will document all its collaborative offerings and will disseminate that documentation to support outreach for additional partners;
- c) **Develop initial programs around strategically selected topics**: AIANO will work with its partners to develop initial programs that are best suited to collaboration and that will have the most demand. Such topics potentially include:
 - Alternative and evolving building project delivery methods, e.g., Construction Management at Risk (CMAR);
 - Water management and green infrastructure;
 - Building tours highlighting the contributions of all the design-and-build partners;
 - Marketing for architecture and design-and-build firms;
 - Diversity, equity, and inclusion in the workplace and implementation of AIA National guidelines.

5.c. AIANO's Support for Constituent Groups

In addition, there are a number of constituent groups that are subgroups of AIA members or other affiliated entities that deliver activities, resources, and support to their respective constituencies. These groups include:

- a) Emerging Professionals
- b) Small Firm Exchange (SFx)
- c) Women in Architecture (WIA)
- d) AIA Students (AIAS; affiliated with their respective postsecondary institutions)
- e) National Organization of Minority Architects (NOMA LA)

These groups have their own active annual calendars of activities conducted independently and/or in collaboration with AIANO. Going forward, AIANO will respond to requests for assistance and support for these groups ' activities, and will strive to have one major event per year with each of the constituent groups. The AIANO website will also support the constituent groups through, for example, promoting all their events and activities and a "pay it forward"

button that enables AIANO members to subsidize a student or an emerging professional to participate in AIA events.

5.d. Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion: AIANO's Commitment and Approach

AIA New Orleans, together with AIA National and our counterpart components throughout the country, is committed to a strong and sustained effort to promote equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) in our work. We understand that this effort involves the development and sustained implementation of processes, systems, culture, and values within AIANO as the local AIA component, within local architect firms and the field in Greater New Orleans, and as this commitment is reflected in the built environment. Further, we understand that we must reach out to the AIA membership to get their perspectives, needs and recommendations regarding EDI issues, and to the community, both residents and the various relevant organizations and groups, to understand the needs, priorities, and perspectives of underserved and traditionally marginalized groups that will then shape AIANO's approach.

5.d.1. Core Concepts

AIA National has generated a significant body of documented model programs and appropriate language that can be used as the basis for AIANO's EDI activities. The following three points from AIA National's website begin to articulate some **key foundational concepts**:

- a) The American Institute of Architects, as part of the global community, is building a **culture of equity, diversity, and inclusion** within the profession of architecture to create a better environment for all. Achieving this vision has a direct impact on the relevance of our profession and the world's prosperity, health, and future.
- b) **Justice in the built environment**: In the creation of the built environment, justice can take the form of **just processes** (process that involve people who have experienced harm) and **just outcomes** (spaces that are safe, welcoming, and worthy of the beings who inhabit them).
- c) **Equitable practice**: ensuring that firms meet the career development, professional environment, human resource (including recruitment), and cultural awareness expectations of current and future employees and clients.

5.d.2. Activities and Approaches

AIANO staff and leadership will **conduct a wide-ranging community outreach effort** to both gather information and build relationships that will support the planning and implementation of a multi-faceted EDI initiative both internally for AIANO and externally for the field and the community. The following are potential activities, vehicles, and approaches for that initiative:

- a) A **reactivated and re-energized EDI committee** (structured as a subcommittee of the AIANO Executive Committee; see Board Development section of this strategic plan)

including both AIANO leadership, other AIANO members, and strategically selected community representatives to plan, implement, and oversee the effort.

- b) The **application of EDI principles as a "critical filter"** for all AIANO programmatic, organizational, and resource-related activities to ensure those principles are reflected throughout the organization.
- c) Serving as a **repository of EDI-focused materials, models, and resources** for local architecture firms, including referrals to organizations and individuals who can provide technical assistance in this area.
- d) **Engaging a qualified consultant, advisor, or organization to conduct an "equity audit"** to identify strengths, weaknesses, and gaps in AIANO's internal EDI-related policies and practices, and to generate recommendations for improvement.
- e) Assembling resources and referrals through which **local architecture firms can conduct their own internal equity audits** and develop corrective action plans.
- f) Encourage AIANO members to engage with the **Design as Protest movement**, and embrace the **Design Justice Demands** (<https://www.dapcollective.com/demands>).
- g) Pilot, assess, and refine **roundtables or other opportunities for local architecture firms to come together** to share EDI-related issues and concerns, as well as successful models and initiatives.
- h) Explore opportunities to collaborate with community partners to offer **low-cost or pro-bono architecture services** to low-income residents, homeowners, and community-based nonprofits.
- i) Continue and expand the commitment to **Project Pipeline** that provides a pathway for young people from underserved and traditionally marginalized communities into the architecture profession, with the goal of having architecture as a professional field more accurately reflect the composition of the community.
- j) Develop and assemble documentation of **successful models for promoting EDI principles in the built environment**, and in collaboration with community partners, **advocate for those principles** with policy makers, public officials, business leaders, and real estate owners and developers.

6. Fund Development and Sustaining Revenue Mix

6.a. AIANO's Recent Revenue History

The spreadsheet on the following page presents AIANO's recent revenue history, specifically expenses and revenues budgeted for the current year, i.e., 2022, and actuals for the most recent years (2021) and the pre-COVID year (2019). This is intended to set-up the following sections on plans for expanding AIANO's revenue base in the most promising and (financially) sustainable way.

Overall, it must be said that AIANO has a robust and diverse revenue mix that includes membership dues and other membership-related revenue; earned income from program activities and facilities rental; support from philanthropic institutions; and substantial revenue from an active calendar of fundraising events. While there are areas with potential for growth, the overall mix has the potential to sustain AIANO into the future and to support the ambitious directions in the strategic plan.

	2022 Budget	2021 Actual (most recent)	2019 Actual (pre-COVID)
EXPENSES			
Staff (salaries, overtime, benefits, payroll taxes)	169,616	139,761	143,222
Other expenses	223,208	120,356	218,145
TOTAL EXPENSES	392,824	260,117	361,366
REVENUE			
CORPORATE INCOME			
AIANO Memberships	107,000	107,126	97,840
AIA National Revenue Share	13,582	10,342	15,388
Professional Affiliate Memberships	30,000	11,811	7,864
Total Dues	150,582	129,278	121,091
Sustaining sponsorships	27,500	25,000	21,000
AIA document sales			327
TOTAL CORPORATE INCOME	178,082	154,278	142,418
EVENTS (registration, entry, sponsorships)			
Design Awards	81,625	44,106	75,790
Golf tournament	41,700	39,176	40,380
Bowling tournament	22,000		23,940
Crawfish boil	14,000		11,507
Holiday party	8,000	1,000	24,065
Special event			900
TOTAL EVENT INCOME	167,325	84,282	176,582
PROGRAM INCOME (registration, sponsorships)			
Education programs	8,500	16,152	15,560
YAF	1,000		1,175
TOTAL PROGRAM INCOME	9,500	16,152	16,735
GRANT INCOME	5,000		6,500
WIA INCOME			6,665
FACILITIES INCOME			
Facility rental	4,500		600
Mardi Gras rental	10,500		11,000
TOTAL FACILITIES INCOME	15,000		11,600
OPERATIONS INCOME			
Website advertising	-	580	495
Staff reimbursement			33,997
Uncategorized (primarily PPP loan forgiveness)	15,000	32,565	527
TOTAL OPERATIONS INCOME	15,000	33,145	35,018
TOTAL INCOME	389,907	287,857	395,519

6.b. Promising Areas for Revenue Growth

A review of AIANO's recent revenue history and the programmatic directions in the strategic plan yielded a number of areas in which there is significant promise for expanding revenue. It is worth noting that even modest revenue growth will have an outsized impact of the level and quality of AIANO's programming. Those areas of promise include:

- a) **Professional Affiliate Members**: The expanded approach to collaboration detailed in the strategic plan, especially with individuals and firms in allied fields related to the built environment (i.e., engineering, construction, building materials, and other related services) will result in increased engagement with the AEC community which will then create the potential for increased professional affiliate memberships.
- b) **Sponsorship of program activities**: Again, the increased programmatic collaboration with AEC individuals and firms will increase the potential to attract sponsors for the various programs.
- c) **Educational program revenue**: There are two ways in which AIANO can expand its revenue from the educational programs: revisit the fee structure for both members and non-members; and expand the audience/participants. The increased audience will in part be driven by the expanded collaboration with the AEC field, hopefully generating programs with a wide appeal.
- d) **Facilities rental**: As COVID restrictions and concerns abate, there will be more opportunities to attract rental of the AIA office space for social events, especially related to Carnival season and the Mardi Gras parades. In addition, AIANO can consider slight modifications to the space that will enable the marketing of "professional" uses of the facility for client meetings, work space, or other such uses. Engaging food vendors and others for "pop-ups" may also enhance the attractiveness of the AIA space of rentals.
- e) **Grants from philanthropic institutions**: AIANO has some experience with grants, but only to a very limited degree. The public-facing programs have the potential to attract philanthropic support, especially the issue-specific, problem-solving roundtables; the online building tour app; and the high school and college outreach.

6.b.1. Additional notes on selected aspects of fundraising:

- a) **Clarifying the Role of the Board**: All Board members must be involved in some aspect of fund development, i.e., identifying prospects, cultivating and soliciting donors and sponsors, supporting the events. Board members should be clear on what training they need to be effective in these roles, and what staff support and materials will be most helpful. (See the Board Development section of this strategic plan for more detail on the committees and structures for the Board involvement in fundraising.)

- b) **Fundraising events – the Crawfish Boil**: AIANO has a busy annual calendar of fundraising events. While the events serve to build community among members and partners as well as raise funds, they have become a dominant component of the organizational workload. All events will be assessed in terms of overall benefit (both financial and organizational), cost-effectiveness, the degree of committed leadership and person-power, uniqueness in the New Orleans fundraising space, and potential for partnership. On the basis of this assessment, the Fundraising Committee and the Board will modify the annual calendar of events (and set the calendar as early as possible) to maximize the benefit to the organization.

- c) **Upgrade the Website**: AIANO should revisit the organization's website to make it as easy of possible for donors and sponsors to contribute. This can include the overall architecture and visual appearance of the site, as well as tools like QR codes and the like.

- d) **Engage a grant writing consultant**: While there is potential for expanded philanthropic support from foundations and corporate giving programs, this will involve substantial legwork to research and identify appropriate prospects and prepare the proposals and related packets of supporting materials. AIANO should engage a local grant writer to work with the staff on the research and proposal preparation necessary for this aspect of fund development.

7. Developing the AIANO Board of Directors

7.a. Role of the AIANO Board

The roles and responsibilities of the AIANO Board of Directors can be grouped into two broad categories: governance functions (i.e., the legal responsibilities and obligations of all nonprofit Boards) and management support functions (i.e., those functions that would otherwise be done by staff, that are conducted in coordination with staff, and that reflect the needs of the organization at a particular point in time). The role of the AIANO Board is summarized in the following chart.

Governance Functions	Management Support Functions
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Hiring, supervision, and firing authority over the Executive Director;• Fiscal oversight/fiduciary responsibility;• Setting organizational policies;• Ensuring compliance with all relevant laws and regulations;• Ensuring the effective functioning of the Board.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Prioritizing goals, ensuring accountability for follow-up• Program planning and implementation, recruitment of trainer and participants• Fundraising (events, sponsorships, ...)• Advocacy, engagement with political, business, and civic leaders• Partner outreach, recruitment, and engagement• Member recruitment and engagement, constituency liaison• Committee recruitment, ensuring committee leadership consistency through transitions• External representation of the organization, including media relations• Providing advice and expertise to staff regarding both programs and administration

7.b. AIANO Board Committee Structure

The following pages contain two charts. The first is the basic AIANO committee structure, and the second shows those functions on which the committees have to coordinate and/or collaborate.

There are a number of **operational guidelines** that apply to the standing committees of the AIANO Board. These are:

- a) Unless otherwise specified, committees can include both **Board members and non-Board members**.

- b) All committees and subcommittees will have a **designated chairperson who will provide leadership** and coordination of the committee's activities, and will be responsible for reporting on activities and results to the Board.
- c) Each committee will have its own **meeting schedule that is appropriate to the work** to be done. A committee's meeting schedule may change over the course of the year as the workload changes, e.g., when a program activity or fundraising event is approaching, the responsible committee may have to meet more frequently.
- d) In some cases, a **subcommittee can consist of one or two people** who develop action steps that they bring back to the full committee for discussion and approval.
- e) Although the various committees are responsible for specific tasks or functions, **in some cases, decisions need to be affirmed by the full Board**. The identification of those issues that have to be affirmed by the full Board is the responsibility of the Executive Committee, in consultation with the respective committee chairs.
- f) Because AIANO is a membership organization, the activities of nearly all the committees involve communication and engagement with AIANO members. The **Membership Committee will take the lead on all communication with members**, but depending on the nature of the communication, will coordinate with one or more other committees. The leadership and support roles of the committees is specified in the following section, "Coordination and Collaboration Among the AIANO Committees."

Note: There have been a number of suggestions about how to present the plan for the Board committees visually. The following section is intended to create as much clarity as possible about the division of responsibilities among the committees for the functions of the Board. It can be decided later how to present the committee structure in some graphic format.

Committee	Summary of Role	Subcommittees
Executive Committee: composed of the officers of the Board and selected others	Coordinating and facilitating the meetings and activities of the Board, ensuring accountability of the other committees for follow-up and results (Note: Executive Committee will include liaisons to each of the other committees for this accountability role.)	Governance: ad hoc, as necessary to develop by-laws revisions and other policy documentation for approval by the Board J.E.D.I: consists of Exec. Comm. members and other Board and non-Board members, ensures all AIA committees and their activities demonstrate a commitment to equity, diversity, and inclusion

Committee	Summary of Role	Subcommittees
Finance Committee: consists of Board members, chaired by Treasurer	Reviewing the organization’s finances, monitoring performance relative to the budget, regularly reporting to the Board on all financial matters, overseeing the annual audit, including selecting the auditor.	
Membership Committee	Planning and implementing member recruitment, communication, and engagement activities (including member social events), supporting AIA member constituency groups: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emerging Professionals • Small Firm Exchange (SFx) • Women in Architecture (WIA) • AIA Students (AIAS) • National Org. of Minority Architects (NOMA LA; not an AIANO member subgroup, but an independent nonprofit partner organization) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Holiday Party
Program Committee	Planning and implementing all AIANO programs (workshops, tours, lunch-and-learns, roundtables, symposiums, etc.); recruitment of program partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2030 Committee • Design Practice Exchange (DPx) • Design Awards (w/ FR Comm.) (Perhaps others pending workloads)
Policy Advocacy Committee	Planning and implementing AIA’s policy advocacy activities; engagement with the city’s political, business, and civic leadership; recruitment of advocacy partners	
Fundraising & Development Committee	Planning and implementing all fundraising and revenue-related activities (other than fee-based program events); external communication, newsletters, annual reports, and media relations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design Awards (w/ Program Comm.) • Crawfish Boil • Bowling Tournament • Golf Tournament

7.c. Coordination and Collaboration Among the AIANO Committees

The following table provides a framework for how the various AIANO Board committees will collaborate and coordinate their activities. Below are some notes about the chart.

- a) The chart indicates **which of the committees takes a leadership role** for a particular

function or activity, and which other committees are involved.

- b) **Sometimes, leadership for a particular activity is shared between committees.** The respective chairs of those committees will be responsible for ensuring that the shared leadership happens smoothly.
- c) The purpose of specifying which committee has lead responsibility and which have support responsibility is to ensure **consistent messaging, to share the workload, and to minimize redundancy.**
- d) The involvement of the **committees with a support role can take several forms.** It can be, for example, publicizing the activities to their constituencies, participation in planning, or recruitment of partners.
- e) It is the **Executive Committee's responsibility to ensure there is effective coordination** and collaboration among the committees.
- f) **This is not necessarily an exhaustive list** of functions, but rather an attempt to characterize an approach to the distribution of responsibilities and collaboration across committees.

	----- AIANO Committees -----					
Selected Functions and Activities	Executive	Finance	Membership	Program	Policy Advocacy	FR & Devel.
Ensuring commitment to J.E.D.I. principles	LEAD	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Revisions to by-laws and other organizational policies	LEAD		✓			
Financial oversight and reporting on finances to the Board	✓	LEAD				✓
Communication with AIA members			LEAD	✓	✓	✓
New member outreach and recruitment			LEAD	✓	✓	✓
Programming involving AIA constituent groups			LEAD	LEAD		

	----- AIANO Committees -----					
Selected Functions and Activities	Executive	Finance	Membership	Program	Policy Advocacy	FR & Devel.
Program partner recruitment			✓	LEAD	✓	✓
Advocacy partner recruitment			✓	✓	LEAD	✓
Design Awards			✓	LEAD	✓	LEAD
Promotion, outreach, and recruitment for fundraising events		✓	✓	✓	✓	LEAD
Recruitment of sponsors for fundraising events		✓	✓	✓	✓	LEAD
Engagement with political, business, and civic leadership of New Orleans			✓	✓	LEAD	✓
External communication and media strategy			✓	✓	✓	LEAD

7.d. Board Composition and the Recruitment of New Members

AIANO will continue to recruit new Board members, when seats become open, from among the membership, with a focus on identifying individuals who have a passion for the directions in the strategic plan and are ready and able to dedicate the necessary time and effort. In addition, the Board committees will recruit their members with an eye toward preparing and vetting those individuals who might eventually be nominated for the Board.

The Board might also be well served to identify non-architects, perhaps from sponsoring or partner organizations, who would bring valuable expertise and perspective to the Board. For example, AIANO could identify attorneys, media specialists, and/or AEC professionals whose expertise and contacts align well with the directions in the strategic plan and would be significant assets on the Board. Similarly, community leaders representing marginalized populations or under-served neighborhoods could strengthen AIANO's equity and inclusion initiatives.

AIANO differs from other community-based nonprofit service providers in that it is a professional association with state-level and national affiliations. The recruitment of non-architects for the Board would require by-laws revisions and some discussion with AIA National about their guidelines for such Board recruitment. It is important to note that there is not currently a consensus, either among Board members or the general membership, about whether or how to bring non-architects onto the Board or into some other leadership role. There may be a way for AIANO to access this professional expertise and constituency representation through Advisory Committee(s) or other similar vehicles, or perhaps adding non-architects as ex-officio, non-voting Board members. This topic will get further discussion and various options will be considered as AIANO undertakes implementation of the strategic plan.

8. Staff and Board Roles and Division of Responsibilities

8.a. Overview

AIANO has a broad mission, an ambitious set of program directions, and a small two-person staff. This creates the need for a creative approach to workload distribution in which the Board must play a major leadership role. This can be a challenge since many of the current Board members are working professionals and have a limited "bandwidth" for AIANO activities.

Given the mission of the organization and the directions in the strategic plan, the broad categories of AIANO's workload are:

- a) Internal operations and administration (financial management, facilities management, etc.);
- b) Programming and continuing education for members;
- c) Planning and implementing the annual calendar of fundraising events;
- d) Public-facing education and awareness activities;
- e) Advocacy and engagement of the city's business and political leadership;
- f) Partner recruitment and engagement;
- g) Member recruitment;
- h) Coordination and development of the Board;
- i) Ensuring all activities align with AIANO's "EDI" values.

Going forward, the Board will take real leadership, as well as substantial legwork, for AIANO activities in many of the above categories. Further Individual Board members will be encouraged to identify those activities they are prepared to "own" and to which they can dedicate significant time to the necessary workload.

Finally, it will be the responsibility of the Executive Committee and the other Committee chairs to ensure that Board members are taking on their assigned tasks effectively, that people are accountable for both the level of activity and for results, and that all activities are adequately and appropriately coordinated and aligned.

8.b. Workload Management

The following structures, processes, and action steps will be put in place for AIANO to manage its workload effectively.

- a) The **staff will focus** on the following aspects of the organization's workload:
 - Internal operations and administration;
 - Event logistics (both program and fundraising events; such activities as scheduling, communication, identifying and reserving space, etc.);
 - "Advance work" for the Board's engagement of the City's business, political, and civic leadership;
 - General support for the Board and its committees in terms of communication, documentation, tasks lists, and institutional knowledge.

- b) The **Board, through its committees, in conjunction with AIANO members and other volunteers, and with appropriate support from staff, will take the lead** on planning and implementing activities in the following categories:
- Member recruitment and engagement;
 - Partner recruitment and engagement;
 - Programming and continuing education for members;
 - Planning and implementing the annual calendar of fundraising events;
 - Public-facing education and awareness activities;
 - Advocacy and engagement of the city's business and political leadership.
- c) **Every committee will articulate the specific support they need from staff**, and the Executive Committee will review these requests to ensure the staff's workload is manageable and appropriate.
- d) **Every Board member will sit on at least one committee and will have a specific individual plan** for the activities that they will dedicate significant time to. Board members unable or unwilling to play this role will be asked to roll off the board so that seat can be filled with someone who can make the necessary committee.
- e) A plan will be developed for providing the **training that Board members need** in order to play their assigned roles effectively.
- f) AIANO will **revisit the meeting schedules of the full Board and the committees** to maximize their effectiveness, make best use of members limited time, and clarify responsibility for specific tasks. **One potential approach** to a revised meeting schedule is as follows:
- The full Board could meet less frequently, either every other month (i.e., 6 times per year) or quarterly (4 times per year), primarily as a business meeting with brief committee reports.
 - Committees, both standing committees and ad hoc committees convened for specific purposes or events, could meet as needed to manage their assigned tasks. Most of the substantive work of the board will happen through the committees.
 - The Executive Committee, composed of the officers, the President-elect, and the past President, will meet monthly and will focus on ensuring that the overall workload is being managed adequately and that the Committees and the individual Board members are accountable for their assigned tasks.

9. Implementation of the Strategic Plan

This is an ambitious and aspirational strategic plan. AIANO currently has a significant body of high quality and well-received programming, centered around the training, professional networking, and community-building activities for members, as well as an active annual calendar of fundraising events and community education and awareness activities. The strategic plan also includes a number of new and/or renewed directions for AIANO, including expanded and enhanced collaboration with partners in the design-and-build community; engagement of the city's political, business, and civic leadership; a renewed commitment and concerted effort regarding equity, diversity, and inclusion; and a restructuring of the Board and its committees; among others. These are exciting directions for AIANO that will be of significant value to both the membership and the community. They will also require a considerable commitment of time and effort on the part of AIANO staff, Board members, and the AIANO membership, supported by additional volunteers and partner organizations.

9.a. Year 1 Priorities and Action Steps

In that context, it is difficult to project a timeline for implementation when there is so much additional planning and preparatory work that must come first. Therefore, the key implementation action steps for the coming year, i.e., calendar year 2023, are as follows:

- a) **Continue current member programming, community education, and fundraising activities**: AIANO must maintain its core activities even as the organization plans for the new directions in the strategic plan.
- b) **Present the strategic plan to the membership and begin to gauge interest and willingness to be involved**: After the AIANO Board adopts the strategic plan, they will then present the plan to the annual meeting of the membership with the clear message that member engagement and active participation is essential to successful implementation. There should be clarity about how members can be involved and processes for members to indicate their interest and the specific focus of their desired engagement.
- c) **Implement the restructuring of the Board and its committees**: The reconfigured Board committees must be in place in order to effectively engage the membership and other community partners. Committee chairs will be identified to lead the detailed planning of their committees' activities. It will be particularly important to establish the Executive Committee's reconfigured role as overseeing and coordinating the activities of the Board and its committees.
- d) **Prioritize the new and renewed directions in the plan**: Informed by the show of interest by the membership, AIANO will establish preliminary priorities for the implementation of member services and engagement, public-facing activities, and fund development strategies. This articulation of priorities will determine the sequence of implementation over the coming three to five years.

- e) **Identify and engage the AEC "early adopter" partners**: AIANO will identify and engage prospective partners in allied fields who are interested and energized to participate in the planning and implementation of the collaborative activities described in the strategic plan.
- f) **Pilot selected activities**: Based on the identified priorities, the mobilization of the membership, the success in engaging AEC partners, and the extent of additional planning, the AIANO will select a short list of activities that reflect the organization's new directions (both programmatic and revenue-related) and pilot them in 2023. These Year 1 pilots will be rigorously documented and assessed, and those assessments will serve as the basis for subsequent ramping up.
- g) **Engage a contractor for the grant-seeking effort**: AIANO will identify and engage an independent contractor who can work with staff to research prospective sources of philanthropic support, develop boilerplate proposals and related materials, and begin submitting proposals to appropriate foundations and corporate giving programs.

9.b. Planning for Subsequent Years

At the end of 2023, the AIANO Board will conduct a formal process for assessing the implementation of these Year 1 activities and will use that assessment to develop plans for the further implementation of the strategic plan over the coming multi-year period. This process will be conducted at the end of every year. AIANO will assess the past year's strategic plan implementation and revise plans for the coming year. As a framework for planning, it is important that AIANO establish specific action steps in the following categories:

- a) Member Services, Engagement, and Recruitment (including relevant partner collaboration)
- b) Public-Facing Education and Awareness Activities (including relevant partner collaboration)
- c) Advocacy and Engagement of the City's Political, Business, and Civic Leadership
- d) Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion
- e) Fundraising and Revenue
- f) Board Development and Board/Staff Communication and Coordination

Finally, the Board will build into its standard operations consistent attention to progress implementing the strategic plan. Every Board meeting will include reports on implementation highlights, roadblocks, and changed circumstances in selected areas of the plan, and there will be an annual process for assessing implementation and modifying as necessary the strategic plan as whole.