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## Goals for the AIA|LA

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**2020** – Increase representation of ethnic and cultural minorities and women in leadership roles by 1% (7 people). Increase members of ethnic and cultural minorities and women by ½% (20 people).  
**2030** – Membership should reflect diversity of the City and County of Los Angeles

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## AIA|LA's Commitment to EDI

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**Infuse Presidential Awards Policy** with values of EDI as guidelines for the selection process.

**Track and report data on diversity** and make data available to membership in reports and online.

**Foster and promote leaders** that truly speak to EDI and represent diverse perspectives. Consider not only ethnicity, but also age, physical ability, nationality and language, and field of design practice.

**Publicize and commemorate contributions** from architects of cultural backgrounds and genders that have been historically underrepresented.

**Recognize work** that benefitted from EDI practices.

**Publicize the benefits** of adopting EDI practices from a business perspective.

**Celebrate Emerging Professionals** who have achieved career milestones, such as licensure.

**Support new architects** with creation of networking opportunities with experienced mentors and peers.

**Organize college tours of Historic Black Colleges & Universities** (HBCUs) to allow firm leaders and hiring teams to see student talent and understand legitimacy of other architecture programs.

**Map a list of resources** for student mentorship in communities across Los Angeles.

**Create programming** that brings architects to communities as leaders, allies, and friends. Organize free sessions for community to meet with architects, understand architecture and the built environment.

**Facilitate partnership of firms with community projects;** acknowledge firms that participate.

**Host seminars** to foster cultural competence, and address implicit bias and harassment.

**Advertise opening of Pre-Qualification list** for government contracts. Facilitate adding small firms to these lists.

**Organize ad-hoc Small Firm Advisory Committee.** Focus on improving rate and time of payments for large government contracts to small businesses.

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## FIRMS: Hiring for EDI

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**Post listing on a variety of job boards.** Ensure ½ of job boards used are 1) available free to the public; 2) are non-member organizations, or; 3) target underrepresented populations in the profession.

**Select a hiring panel** that represents the firm and represents EDI.

**Early Bird Bias:** Do not overvalue applications that arrive early. Wait until the deadline and read all applications at the same time.

**Create Assessment Rubric:** use consistent criteria to evaluate applicant's qualifications, and ensure all applicants are subject to the same evaluation criteria. ARs mitigate potential bias, such as overvaluing certain qualities in top candidates.

**Moving Targets:** Do not change requirements for the position as the search proceeds, especially in order to include or exclude particular applicants.

**Offer transparency for career path opportunities** including possibility for promotion, pay increases with advancement.

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# EDI: Equity; Diversity; Inclusivity - 2018

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## Mitigating Unintentional & Implicit Bias in Hiring Practices

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**Bias can be Contagious**

**Factors that might trigger bias:**

*Non-Traditional career paths:* Recognize and accept a variety of career paths as valid for fulfilling job requirements.

*Degrees from historically less prestigious institutions:* Evaluate candidates on their credentials and talent, not their school. Rethink and create alternate models to vet candidates.

*Prior work experience at less prestigious firms:* Consider more than prior firm's reputation focus instead on candidate's previous role, skills mastered, and projects completed.

*Do not appear to "fit" the firm's existing profile:* Bias can infiltrate hiring practices in age, gender, background, interests, or political affiliation of candidates.

### Easy Steps for Hiring for EDI

1. Create a short list of 5-8 candidates; select 2-4 finalists.
2. Conduct all interviews in same format, similar conditions (room, time of day).
3. Maintain same interviewer panel for all interviews.
4. Ask same set of questions and ask questions that respect variety of backgrounds.
5. Philosophy: remove bias, create level playing field.

**What are Implicit Bias and Unintentional Bias?** As citizens of a diverse society, over the years we form favorable or unfavorable attitudes or stereotypes that affect our unconscious assessment of others. These biases are automatic and are based on characteristics such as gender, race, age, country of origin, or other dimensions of identity.

## Medium to Large Firms



- **100% commitment of Executive Leadership** to addressing issues of EDI. Lead by example – educate leadership team on unconscious bias and harassment, and how to infuse EDI into all firm practices, both internal and external.
- **Diverse Leadership Teams:** Make a commitment to increase diversity & gender balance; studies indicate this leads to better innovation & financial benefits.
- **Make an internal commitment to launch a specific role or representative** in firm to address issues of equity, diversity and inclusion.
- **Encourage 50/50 gender equity by 2020:** Promote gender equity in staff makeup, hiring practices, and selection of projects.
- **Track and report data** on diversity of your firm's staff.
- **Sponsor and participate in programs** organized by ethnic or cultural minority groups in the field. Show firm support by attending conferences and engaging in initiatives organized by these groups.
- **Create an in-house “university”** for all employees to attend continuing education courses to foster personal career growth.
- **Organize EDI trainings for staff** from AIA recommended companies, focusing on issues of implicit bias in the workplace and the profession, workplace harassment, and unconscious bias in hiring practices.
- **Develop a culture that supports diversity:** Embrace uniqueness of team members to allow exposure to different viewpoints, build relationships on mutual understanding and trust.
- **Build and embrace alternate workplace models that foster inclusivity.** Author internal anti-discrimination policies, offer flexible hours, telecommuting, etc. These EDI practices will help retain employees and reduce turnover.
- **Recognize and celebrate** projects that were particularly successful in addressing issues of EDI. Share on social media and online platforms.
- **Focus on K-12 education:** Appoint employees to participate in programs mentoring children in underserved communities; work with LA chapter to send ambassadors to schools.
- **Mentor architecture students:** Work with universities or through SPARK, ACE, SoCalNOMA, or the Chapter to connect with students in K-12 and higher education.
- **Ensure there is diversity and community representation** in architectural renderings, imagery and presentations.
- **Highlight benefits of EDI initiatives in firm and practice to clients.** Clients are not always attuned to issues of EDI, but if it is presented as a benefit of using your firm, they will learn to recognize its inherent value and expect it in the future.
- **Urge clients to practice Community Outreach techniques** to build trust with community when not cost prohibitive.

## Small to Medium Firms



- **100% commitment of Principals** to addressing issues of EDI. Lead by example – educate yourself on unconscious bias and harassment, and how to infuse EDI into all firm practices, both internal and external.
- **Develop a culture that supports diversity:** Embrace uniqueness of team members to allow exposure to different viewpoints, build relationships on mutual understanding and trust.
- **Build and embrace alternate workplace models that foster inclusivity.** Author internal anti-discrimination policies, offer flexible hours, telecommuting, etc. These EDI practices will help retain all employees and reduce turnover.
- **Encourage 50/50 gender equity by 2020:** Promote gender equity in staff makeup, hiring practices, and selection of projects.
- **Sponsor and participate in programs** organized by ethnic or cultural minority groups in the field. Show firm support by showing up for initiatives and conferences organized by these groups.
- **Mentor architecture students:** work with universities or through SPARK, ACE, SoCalNOMA, or the Chapter to connect with students in K-12 and higher education. Volunteer as an ambassador to K-12 schools.
- **Participate in EDI trainings** hosted by AIA/ALA and approved agencies.
- **Ensure there is diversity and community representation** in architectural renderings, imagery and presentations.
- **Recognize and celebrate** projects that were particularly successful in addressing issues of EDI. Share on social media and online platforms.
- **Highlight benefits of EDI initiatives in firm and in practice to clients.** Clients are not always attuned to issues of EDI, but if it is presented as a benefit of using your firm, they will learn to recognize its inherent value and expect it from firms in the future.
- **Urge clients to practice Community Outreach techniques** to build trust with community when not cost prohibitive.

For more information please visit  
[www.aialosangeles.org](http://www.aialosangeles.org)



AIA  
Los Angeles



EDI:  
Equity; Diversity; Inclusivity  
Best Practices Guide  
2018