



April 17th, 2026

Committee on the
Environment



Designing Impact: Climate Solutions Across People, Practice, and Projects

On Friday, April 17th, 2026, the AIA Los Angeles Committee on the Environment (COTE) is proud to host the 9th annual 1.5°C Symposium on Climate Change. This year's symposium shifts the conversation from policy to practice, and from intention to action.

In a time of political uncertainty and climate urgency, this event asks: How can individuals, firms, and communities drive real, tangible change? The 2026 Symposium will explore how climate action is scaled across projects of every size, within firms of every structure, and across sectors often siloed from each other. From small-scale pro-bono efforts to market-driven green development, the event will celebrate and elevate practical, resilient, and replicable strategies. Attendees will engage with Southern California-based impact projects, sector-specific insights, and a network of collaborators reimagining what's possible. Our goal is to democratize knowledge, strengthen cross-sector connections, and accelerate a just transition in the built environment.

We warmly invite architects, designers, engineers, urban planners, developers, contractors, policy-makers, researchers, authors, academics, and all stakeholders in the built environment to contribute to this pivotal event.

Session Formats

- Individual Presentations – 20 minutes, plus 5 minutes Q&A. Present impactful case studies, strategies, or tools with clear applications to practice.
- Panel Sessions – 30-minute moderated discussions with 3–5 experts, plus 10 minutes Q&A. Bring diverse perspectives to pressing climate challenges.

At this symposium, we're excited to explore not only the successes of the mainstream AEC industry, but also to highlight the innovative grassroots movements that are breaking away from traditional certification programs to define their own metrics. We are particularly interested in how these movements and practices measure their progress and outcomes. We want to understand not only the achievements but also the methods and tools used to assess and validate these results. Throughout the course of the symposium, it is our intent to delve into a diverse array of topics, ranging from detailed research papers, to large-scale construction projects, to the policies that shape our communities.

Tracks for Submissions

Track 1: Projects in Practice – From Small to Large Scale

Track 2: Project Finance, Capital Flows, & Strategic Partnerships

See more information on tracks and submission requirements on the following page



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Track 1: Projects in Practice – From Small to Large Scale

Highlight design, implementation, and policy solutions that drive climate action across the built environment.

Possible Project topics include:

- Scaling impact: from small-scale design to citywide transformations
- People power: workforce, pro-bono, and grassroots climate action
- Creative and practical pathways to net-zero and regenerative design
- Climate resilience in practice: fire defense, sea-level rise, extreme heat
- Materials and methods: carbon sequestration, circular economy, supply chain innovation
- Policy in practice: translating best practices across Southern California
- Community-driven climate solutions and justice-based approaches
- Health, wellness, and environmental co-benefits in design
- Cross-sector collaborations that accelerate change
- Tools and metrics for measuring progress and replication

Track 2: Project Finance, Capital Flows, & Strategic Partnerships

Explore the financial underpinnings of climate-ready projects, with a focus on early-stage development, value creation, and risk mitigation from the perspective of developers, clients, and community organizations.

Possible Finance topics include:

- Where real estate capital is moving in terms of sustainability
- Value creation and risk mitigation through climate-readiness
- Financial strategies for early-stage community and developer-led projects
- Innovative funding models for equitable and resilient development
- Aligning incentives: bridging public funding, private investment, and community priorities
- Case studies: financing net-zero, adaptive reuse, or regenerative projects
- Partnerships between capital providers, community groups, and design teams
- Opportunities for scaling the green project pathways in Southern California and beyond

Submission Details

Submit via Google Form at our submission link here:

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdGxa5E32fw7i1iNIUErNMisMFFMV5tjtxjHhMjuUZHkayaLA/viewform?usp=sharing&oid=113053076100554583315>

Deadline: November 14, 2025

Notifications: Selected speakers will be notified by November 28, 2025

Questions: Contact us at aia.cote.losangeles@gmail.com

We look forward to reviewing your contributions and to sharing a day of practical, inspiring, and action-oriented dialogue to shape a more sustainable and just future.