

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.
- › **Develop office Community Guidelines** to support equitable, diverse and inclusive environment for office conversations.
- › **Develop office ERGs (Employee Resource Group) or Support Groups** to allow minority groups to find community and support, affirm and uplift experiences and identities, and create a safe space that promotes empowerment and action.
- › **Make a commitment to launch a specific role or representative** in firm to address equity, diversity and inclusion.
- › **Encourage 50/50 gender equity:** Promote gender equity in staff makeup, hiring practices, and selection of projects.
- › **Track and report data** on diversity of your firm’s staff.
- › **Do not “tokenize,”** expect to be educated by, or place the burdens of developing a culture of EDI within your firm on underrepresented people and groups. EDI education starts within the individual.
- › **Sponsor and participate in programs** organized by ethnic or cultural minority groups in the field.
- › **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. Encourage Principals and staff to read and embrace the AIA Guides for Equitable Practice.
- › **Develop a culture that supports diversity:** Embrace uniqueness of team members and different viewpoints. Encourage relationships built 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.
- › **Mentor architecture students:** Work with universities or through SRBX CREATE, AIACV Architecture Education Connection / AEC to connect with 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 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.

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.
- › **Encourage Diverse Leadership:** Make a commitment to promoting leadership amongst diverse staff.
- › **Develop a culture that supports diversity:** Embrace uniqueness of team members and different viewpoints. Encourage relationships built on mutual understanding and trust.
- › **Do not “tokenize,”** expect to be educated by, or place the burdens of developing EDI within your firm on underrepresented people and groups. EDI Education starts within the individual.
- › **Develop office Community Guidelines** to support equitable, diverse and inclusive environment for office conversations.
- › **Provide resources for AEP Support Groups** to allow minority groups to find community and support, affirm and uplift experiences and identities, and create a safe space that promotes empowerment and action.
- › **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:** 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.
- › **Mentor architecture students:** Work with universities or through SRBX CREATE, AIACV Architecture Education Connection / AEC to connect with K-12 and higher education.
- › **Participate in EDI trainings** hosted by AIACV and approved agencies. Read and embrace the AIA Guides for Equitable Practice.
- › **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.AIACV.ORG/EDI

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LA ORIGINAL WITH PERMISSION.

Best Practices Guide

AIA Central Valley
EDI Committee

EDI: Equity, Diversity + Inclusion

AIACV 2025 STRATEGIC PLAN FOR EDI

2025 – Educate individual members, firms, and organizations within the architecture community on the ethical, business and professional case for justice, equity, diversity and inclusion.

Develop an active Equity Diversity and Inclusion

(EDI) Committee, to promote ongoing mentorship and dialogue surrounding EDI through monthly meetings that foster community and education.

Create a culture of awareness that encourages diverse leadership and promotes advocacy at all levels:

Chapter's nominating committee; Board of Directors; committee chairs, event leaders / presenters, etc. Develop and conduct annual EDI training session for leaders and all interested Chapter members.

Keep members updated on new and pending

legislation that promotes equality/diversity and environmental change. In collaboration with the Chapter's Civic Engagement Team (CET), EDI Committee Chair, or a Board Liaison to provide an annual update on EDI.

Hold a minimum of (1 to 2) events each year

that have a strong contribution to the subjects covered in the AIA Guides for Equitable Practice. Concentrate on attracting participation by a broad range of members and firm types.

Allocate chapter funds to support participation in an annual EDI conference to facilitate connections; gain a broader understanding of the equity conversation; and identify best practices from other regions.

What are Implicit Bias and Unintentional Bias?

As citizens of a diverse society, over the years we are unconsciously influenced by 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.

AIACV EDI | ACTIONS

AIACV Community Guidelines adopted by the Board of Directors in June 2020 to support equitable, diverse and inclusive environment for office conversations.

DEAR EDI platform to share questions or topics related to equity, diversity and inclusion. aiacv.org/dear-edi/ **#IAM Campaign** publish stories of people in our profession to promote visibility and representation in our field

Promote a clear stance on EDI topics relevant to our local community and national events through messages to our chapter in collaboration with the Board of Directors.

Facilitate a network of EDI Leaders and Champions in our chapter. Ongoing EDI Firm Summits and networking events.

Provide a list of EDI Resources to our chapter through the AIACV website.

Create and promote an EDI Commitment to be signed by firm owners, AIACV Board members and Committee leaders.

Empowering events to promote EDI and support in our community to be hosted every 2 years.

Annual EDI focused event at Experience Architecture.

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.

MITIGATING UNINTENTIONAL & IMPLICIT BIAS IN HIRING PRACTICES

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 credentials to vet candidates.

Prior work experience at less prestigious firms:

Focus on candidate's previous role, skills mastered, and projects completed rather than status of previous firm.

Do not appear to "fit" the firm's existing profile:

Bias can infiltrate hiring practices in age, gender, sexuality, background, interests, or political affiliation of candidates.

MINIMIZING BIAS IN HIRING 5 EASY STEPS

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.

FIRMS: HIRING FOR EDI

Post listing on a variety of job boards: Ensure 1/2 of job boards used are:

1. available free to the public
2. are non-member organizations
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 deadline, read applications at 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.