AIA Historic Resources Research Scholarship

**Application Deadline: 12:00 p.m. EDT Friday, May 17, 2013**

The [AIA Historic Resources Committee (HRC)](http://www.aia.org/hrc) is proud to offer the 2013 AIA Historic Resources Research Scholarship. This program asks one selected emerging professional (defined below) to conduct gap analysis research to determine whether the Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS) collection, housed in the Library of Congress, is meeting the needs of today’s AIA members and to make recommendations for improving its usability and fill gaps in the collection. In short, the goal is to ensure that the HABS collection is fully serving the AIA membership, particular the approximately 6,200 members of the HRC.

* The Scholar will spend their summer conducting comprehensive professional research on HABS Collection and conducting a survey of HRC members.
* The Scholar will have their completed work published on AIA websites.
* The Scholar will be funded for their research and work in full equivalent to a 12 week summer architectural internship at $7,000.

## Research Topic & Scope

Background: The Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS) was formed in 1934 in a tripartite agreement between the National Park Service (NPS), the American Institute of Architects (AIA), and the Library of Congress (LoC) to record America’s architectural heritage through measured drawings, histories, and photographs. From its inception, Leicester B. Holland—the Chair of the AIA Committee on the Preservation of Historic Buildings (the precursor to the current Historic Resources Committee or HRC) and Chief of the Fine Arts Division of the LoC—envisioned the HABS collection as a highly beneficial tool for the architecture profession. As with the architects working in Colonial Williamsburg and other areas of the fledgling historic preservation profession in the 1930s, HABS could serve as a database of period specific building designs and motifs. Likewise, the collection could be mined for those same motifs for use in new, revival-style designs. Thus since 1934, when the AIA signed on as a partner in that landmark agreement, the collection has been a valuable resource for its membership, providing baseline information on specific buildings, building types, or various elements of design. In addition, over the years HABS has experimented with new recording technologies to better facilitate the documentation process, such as Computer Aided Drafting, photogrammetry, and laser scanning.

Nearly eighty years later, the question arises as to how well the collection—and in fact HABS documentation in general—serves current AIA members. Does the documentation in its current form still meet professional needs? Does the collection include building types, styles, and diversity that they need the most? The documentation has been available online for nearly twenty-years, significantly increasing its availability, but how easy is it to query? Is more indexing needed to better access the collection, and if so, what are the “search terms” or keywords that should be included in the database for this purpose.

This project proposes that a survey and gap analysis of the HABS collection be undertaken to determine how useful a tool it is for today’s AIA professional users and to make recommendations for improving its usability and fill gaps in the collection with regard to particular building forms. In short, the goal is to ensure that the HABS collection is fully serving the AIA membership, particular the approximately 6,200 members of the HRC.

The proposed topic – or scope of work - for the research scholar would be to:

* At the onset, the research scholar will work closely with his/her mentors to develop a budget, schedule and timeline for completing the work.
* The scholar will develop, administer and analyze a survey of the HRC members to determine how they currently use the HABS collection, current usefulness, what types of buildings members working with but are not necessarily finding among the HABS records, and other important information to be determined. The scholar will use the results to inform a search of the records to determine if gaps exist in the types of buildings represented, and/or if the issue is one of accessibility. If the latter is the case, are the terms used by the profession among those used by HABS archivists, or are new terms and/or targeted indexing needed? Are there other ways of identifying building forms most useful to the AIA HRC membership?
* A report will be prepared for the AIA HRC making recommendations for filling gaps and/or ways to make the collection’s online interface more effective and user friendly. The HABS program will then know how best to target its resources to both improve access to the collection and develop projects to record the types of building forms most frequently sought after.

The work will be carried out under the supervision of mentors from HRC, who will review the work on a weekly basis (via email, telephone, or in person if feasible) to ensure it is meeting HRC objectives. In addition to the AIA HRC mentors, the scholar will be working closely with Anne Mason, the HABS/HAER/HALS collection manager and liaison with the Library of Congress.

## Eligibility

The scholarship application is open to all emerging professionals defined as:

* Undergraduate and graduate students in NAAB-accredited architecture programs,
* Architectural interns active pursuing licensure, and
* Young architects (architects with 10 years or less of licensure), and
* Member of AIA or AIAS during the term of the scholarship.

If the scholar does not hold the required membership due to financial hardship, HRC may offer to cover the AIAS membership cost for this year. Please include explanation in your application.

## Application Requirements and Deadline

Please submit one PDF to [hrc@aia.org](mailto:hrc@aia.org?subject=HRC%20Research%20Scholar) no later than **12:00 p.m. EDT on Friday, May 17, 2013.** The PDF should contain the following while not exceeding 5mb in size or 15 pages in length:

* Resume or Curriculum Vitae with complete contact information;
* A short description of your research experience and why you would be a good candidate for this research project (not to exceed 1000 words);
* One Letter of Recommendation;
* A list of courses taken & other educational experience relevant to the research to be completed;
* A small sample/portfolio specifically demonstrating your experience for this type of research.

## Selection

Applications will be evaluated by a jury of practicing architects and AIA staff. A scholar will be selected following the application deadline. The 2013 recipient will be announced on the [AIA KnowledgeNet](http://network.aia.org) website the week of May 20, 2013.  
  
Following the selection process, the Scholar will be put in touch with a mentor to develop a work plan together for the project duration between June 3, 2012 and August 30, 2013.

## Funding

The selected research scholar will be paid $7,000 for their summer research effort and work product. This is equivalent to a 12 week internship at 40 hours per week. This money can pay for the scholar's research expenses, cost of living, and in essence, their time spent working on this project. The scholarship funds will be distributed over the course of the work period.

## Research Products

The scholar will be required to deliver a final report of their findings in a format agreed upon by the scholar and mentors. The scholar will be invited to submit to a presentation on their findings at AIA conferences, contribute content to the [Architects Knowledge Resource](http://www.aia.org/akr), and participate in AIA multimedia presentations such as audiocasts or webinars.

## Questions?

Contact [hrc@aia.org](mailto:hrc@aia.org?subject=HRC%20Research%20Scholar).