



# Walk-a-Day in my shoes

A program created and jointly sponsored by the national  
AIA–AGC Joint Committee to create and encourage  
empathy between architects and contractors.





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The background is a solid dark blue. In each of the four corners, there is a white boot print. The prints are arranged symmetrically, with one in the top-left, one in the top-right, one in the bottom-left, and one in the bottom-right. Each print shows a distinct tread pattern, including a series of parallel ridges in the forefoot and a more complex, wavy pattern in the heel and midfoot.

## About the AIA–AGC Joint Committee



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## About the AIA–AGC Joint Committee

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### About the AIA–AGC Joint Committee

The mission of the joint committee is to emphasize the importance of collaboration between architects and contractors. To accomplish this mission, the committee focuses on the following:

- providing a working level liaison with each organization (AIA) and a forum for the exchange of information on matters of mutual concern;
- representing and advancing current positions, views, and goals of the AGC Building Division and AIA;
- acting on matters of direct interest to architects and building contractors as they relate to their participation in the construction process;
- promoting and increasing joint activities between the national organizations and their local chapters and components in order to enhance industry professionalism consistent with each association's policies and procedures; and
- in making recommendations on matters requiring attention at the highest organizational level of each association.
- Why does collaboration matter at the university level? Hear from the [Joint Committee Chairs](#).
- When collaboration works how does the project benefit? [Learn how](#).
- Learn more about [AIA](#).
- Learn more [AGC](#).



## Executive summary & Walk-a-Day overview

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## Executive summary & Walk-a-Day overview

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**Note:** *The program may occur over a single day or two days depending on the content. Content development is solely based on the chapter's preferences.*

As the design and construction industry grows and responds to the demanding needs of clients, architects and contractors must work together to respond in new ways. In 2016, the co-chairs of AIA–AGC Joint Committee Thom Penney, FAIA, and Ryan Abbott wrote an op-ed in *Engineering and News Record* stressing the importance of collaboration. According to the op-ed, projects suffer every day because of poor collaboration among contractors and design teams. Often, scenarios are forced upon both professions that affect the environment of the project. But by walking in each other's shoes, architects and contractors can improve their working relationship and build collaboration—which they must do to address owner demands and serve clients well.

The national AIA–AGC Joint Committee is suggesting that the industry approach the idea of collaboration by encouraging design and construction companies to have their staff switch places and “walk a day” in each other's shoes, sharing what they learned during this empathy-building exercise. The committee strongly encourages each organization to engage and promote this experience via their Young Architects Forum and the Construction Leadership Council as these groups can provide valuable perspective and feedback.

There are various forms of engagement within the Walk-a-Day program. In addition, engagement levels can vary by chapter, firm, and/or individual involvement.

### **Walk-a-Day (chapter level)**

- Build upon existing relationships between an AIA and AGC local and/or state level chapter(s).
- Identify a common theme or topic for the program based off of recent joint events, completed projects, and/or topics identified through member committees.
- Identify possible participants for the event. This can be an outstanding educational experience for team members with less than 10 years of experience.
- Determine location, length, and date for the event and start promotion via email to AIA and AGC members.
- After the event is complete, invite participants to complete the Walk-a-Day post-event evaluation.
- Look at lessons learned from the evaluation, and schedule the next event based off of feedback.

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## Executive summary & Walk-a-Day overview

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### **Walk-a-Day** (*firm level*)

- Find a partner for the exercise. Consider picking a partner you've worked well with in the past to start team-building for a new project. Or, consider a partner with whom you need to mend a relationship. This would be a good opportunity to build a relationship with a company you've worked with or would like to work with in the future.
- Select a project or activity at your organization that your partner could learn from. Consider big-room activities on IPD projects, coordination meetings, design charrettes or end user meetings, meetings with authorities having jurisdiction, trade contractor coordination meetings, or any essential activity. It may be most effective to have the visit occur over multiple half-days or in multiple locations—whatever is most effective for participants.
- Select one to three representatives from your company to attend activities. The experience level of the individual(s) could differ based on what you want to get out of the experience. This can be an outstanding educational experience for team members with less than 10 years of experience.
- Pose possible questions for participants to answer during and after the experience. Have the representatives treat the experience with open minds
- Invite participants to complete the Walk-a-day post-event evaluation and schedule a face to face meeting to discuss what each participant learned.

### **Talk-the-Walk** (*individual level*)

- Identify and reach out to a local companion who may be interested in Walk-a-Day, and together develop content for the program.
- Identify a topic of discussion that will be of equal interest to both participating groups.
- Identify a location, length, and date for the event and establish goals that hope to be achieved during the experience.
- After event is complete, meet up with your partner and provide feedback on lessons learned. Complete and send the Walk-a-Day post-event evaluation.



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## Executive summary & Walk-a-Day overview

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### **Possible Walk-a-Day activities:**

As participating groups consider levels of engagement, the committee leaves development of the events up to the discretion of the participants and encourages flexibility in event planning. Some examples of Walk-a-Day activities that fall into the categories above could include the following:

- Mock bid day
- A “day in the life” of a construction and architectural project manager
- Joint program for architects and contractors to discuss an array of topics including:
  - Challenges we all face
  - Leveraging technology
  - Collaboration best practices
- Joint community service project (e.g. Habitat for Humanity)
- A session including local owners to discuss topics of interest:
  - Challenges owners are facing
  - Ways in which architects and contractors can collaborate to address challenges
- Joint social event such as a fund-raiser

### **Thoughts to consider during the Walk-a-Day process:**

- Main priorities of the individual you’ve partnered with
- Obstacles and hurdles that partner faces daily
- Tasks your partner completed of which you were previously unaware
- Any generalizations about construction or architecture that were true
- Any generalizations about construction or architecture that were false
- Challenges, limitations, and opportunities of each respective role
- Constraints or challenges of the other’s job
- Design presentation to owner
- Possible conflicts faced when dealing with an owner
- Life cycle of a project for the respective profession
- Aspects of a project where the respective profession is involved
- Lessons learned
- Ways in which you could help improve relationships between yourself or your company with other individuals or companies similar to your partner



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Get started!



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Get started!

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### Sign-up process for Walk-a-Day

When participant(s) are in place, refer to the instructions below to begin the Walk-a-Day experience!

**Step 1:** Pick an event for Walk-a-Day (feel free to use the examples in the Executive Summary).

**Step 2:** Pick your participant(s) for the event.

Consider the experience level of the individuals and ensure it's appropriate given the project you've identified for Walk-a-Day. This experience can be a great educational experience for team members with less than 10 years of experience.

**Step 3:** Once you've identified the participant(s) and held initial conversations, please email AGC staff (Sarah Gallegos—[gallegoss@agc.org](mailto:gallegoss@agc.org)) and AIA staff (Marta Zaniwski—[martazaniwski@aia.org](mailto:martazaniwski@aia.org)), and let your respective AIA/AGC chapter/component know you're planning on engaging in Walk-a-Day.

**Step 4:** Submit post-event items/evaluation ([instructions in section 3](#)) to AIA or AGC staff (emails noted in step 3).

**Step 5:** Submit your continuing education credits (if you're an AIA member) via this form to AIA. Questions about submitting your CE credit? Contact Marta Zaniwski—[martazaniwski@aia.org](mailto:martazaniwski@aia.org).

Four boot prints are positioned in the corners of the slide, each with a distinct tread pattern. The top-left print is a large, detailed tread. The top-right print is a smaller, simpler tread. The bottom-left print is a large, detailed tread. The bottom-right print is a smaller, simpler tread.

Post-event success



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## Post-event success

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### **I've participated in Walk-a-Day: Now what?**

After participants have completed their Walk-a-Day experience, participants are asked to submit the items below to their respective organizations. (For AGC, please send material to Sarah Gallegos and for AIA send to Marta Zaniewski.)

- Names of participants, firms represented, and AIA/AGC chapter/component affiliation.
- Pictures (1–2) from the event (JPEG files only).
- Statement of experience ("We found this was helpful because ..." or "This could have worked better if ...").
- Once information has been sent to staff, a brief 5 question survey will be sent to participants. AIA members should remember to also submit their continuing education credits to AIA via this form.

In addition to providing formal feedback, firms and chapters are encouraged to organize networking events and share lessons learned at a wrap-up meeting or happy hour. The meeting can be a great venue to share experiences and lessons learned.

The slide features a dark blue background with four large, light blue boot prints in the corners. The prints are arranged in a square pattern, with each print showing a distinct tread pattern. The top-left print is oriented diagonally, while the others are more horizontal or vertical.

## Resources for firms & chapters



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### **Resources for firms & chapters**

These resources can be used to help promote and encourage participation in Walk-a-Day.

AIA and AGC Walk-a-Day marketing collateral

- Email
- Web banner
- Walk-a-Day flyer