

# Academy of Architecture for Health: Strategic Plan

Updated from December 2016 version, and approved by the Board, August 2022

## Academy of Architecture for Health



### 1 PURPOSE & PROCESS

The Academy of Architecture for Health (AAH, or Academy), a Knowledge Community of the American Institute of Architects, has undertaken a broad-based strategic planning process to better understand and serve member needs. Between March and November of 2016 the Academy's Board consulted the membership – from most active to least involved – via interviews, focus groups, and a membership-wide survey to solicit input on current program value and improving its value proposition.

The Academy Board recognizes that this plan represents a waypoint on the road to the future, since it is clear the future practice of architecture will be profoundly different from today's practice and will ultimately require a very different Academy. We therefore make changes which will provide a return in the short-, near-, and long-term. The strategic themes for the Academy are focus and discipline in execution while at the same time seeking and embracing the future of professional practice and healthcare delivery.

In 2022, following the disruption of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Board re-evaluated the strategies adopted in 2016, made necessary modifications, and adjusted the Board structure to better align with the current initiatives. The mission and vision remain.

### 2 MISSION AND VISION

The Mission Statement of the Academy has been updated as a part of this process. The mission outlines the reason for the Academy's existence:

*The AIA Academy of Architecture for Health provides knowledge which supports the design of healthy environments by creating education and networking opportunities for members of – and those touched by – the healthcare architectural profession.*

The Academy's vision, which is what we hope to achieve by executing on our mission:

*Together, we will improve the world by serving as the authoritative voice for the design of healthy environments, leading the way to effective future practice, and advocating with those who share our goals.*

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## 3 GOALS & OBJECTIVES

The strategic plan is founded in a belief that the Academy must continually evaluate and adjust to meet the times, can improve its offerings and provide the extraordinary membership experience that will keep the organization vital. The Academy's core competencies include our beliefs that guide our goals and objectives:

1. We stand for equity and human rights.
2. We stand to strengthen physical health, mental health, and wellness in our communities.
3. We stand for a sustainable future and to protect communities from the impact of climate change.
4. We stand to improve the quality of patient care environments.
  - Using an Evidence Based Design process
  - Addressing challenges in existing aging facilities
  - Proactively designing for patient safety
  - Striving to improve all patient, staff, and organizational outcomes
  - Delivering environments to support Integrated Care
5. We stand to increase the voice of the patient, staff, and multi-disciplinary stakeholders in the design process.

## 4 STRATEGIC FOCUS AREA 1: INITIATIVES

We exist to serve the needs of our members, and so the work we do reflects this core mission. This strategic focus area recommits us to the work of the Academy by reorganizing many of the administrative and governance tasks we perform as separate from our list of initiatives, leaving us with a clear view of our most important work. It also differentiates 'core' work – that which is sought and usable by all – from our support for 'special interests' which we may also be well positioned to deliver. At our core:

**We Provide Networking Opportunities** for our members via conferences and events.

**We Educate Our Industries** about healthcare architecture. To accomplish these goals,

**We Communicate** on these topics with our members using a mix of passive and active vehicles.

- Tactic 1 – Focus resources by investing in our strengths.
- Tactic 2 – Look for opportunities to sunset mature and programs of narrow interest to create the space for expansion elsewhere.

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- Tactic 3 – Provide opportunities for those with special interests to customize their Academy experience without investing AAH resources.
- Tactic 4 – Align AIA National initiatives (e.g., climate action, diversity) with the goals of the AAH and all committees. These initiatives should be embedded in the way we think, what we do, and how we interact with each other.

## 5 STRATEGIC FOCUS AREA 2: TALENT

If our reason to exist is service to members, then our membership is our most valuable resource. As a volunteer organization, we value the time committed by our members to our mission and desire they find involvement with their Academy among their most rewarding professional experiences. We recognize we serve communities both actively and passively depending upon the members' level of interest and desired involvement. To keep Academy involvement rewarding to current members and attractive to the next generation of professionals, we will:

**Provide clarity to the membership experience** to efficiently use member time at whatever level they may wish to commit,

**Provide continuity** via a clear pathway for progressive commitment to the Academy and its work by members, and

**Empower Committee Chairs** to serve as extenders of governance and to complete all tasks associated with their appointment.

- Tactic 1 – Develop a template for committee structure and onboarding process which provides information for prospective members as to time requirements, outlines connections to the Board and AAH leadership and ensures continuity.
- Tactic 2 – Better connect committees and the active members who serve on them with Academy leadership and strategic direction.
- Tactic 3 – Outline and publish the pathway to Board and leadership membership for those interested.
- Tactic 4 – Create common tools and means of access which connect the resources of local component committees and the Academy's educational and professional resources, enabling the member's commitment to begin at a local and most accessible level.
- Tactic 5 – Focus mentoring and recruitment on emerging professionals, thereby securing continuity and visibility among our future leaders.

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## 6 STRATEGIC FOCUS AREA 3: LEADERSHIP

An opportunity and obligation for the Academy is to serve as the credible voice of the healthcare architectural profession and ‘give back’ the knowledge accrued. We will both leverage and serve the broader AIA as well as our passive and active members and the healthcare industry by:

**Providing More Knowledge, Easily Accessed**, for those we wish to connect (inward-looking),

**Connecting with and Influencing Others** whether their interest is passive or active and orientation internal or external, and

**Serving as the Voice of Healthcare Architecture** within and without, communicating the power of design to inspire and improve health.

- Tactic 1 – Connect the membership by providing a rich base of knowledge either aggressively ‘pushed’ to members or available to be ‘pulled’ from an online library.
- Tactic 2 – Influence the architectural profession and the healthcare industry by maintaining targeted connections where we can serve as the credible voice of healthcare architecture.
- Tactic 3 – Influence government and media in those areas where we are the authoritative voice by communicating how good design can improve health and healthy outcomes.

## 7 STRATEGIC FOCUS AREA 4: ORGANIZATION/GOVERNANCE

With a firm understanding of the mission, membership and reach of the Academy, we can organize and govern ourselves efficiently and effectively. With an eye to providing greater continuity and consistency of effort, the Board will focus on strategic questions and decision-making, and provide fiduciary oversight of its administrative and operational responsibilities which will be professionally managed. This requires we:

**Align Academy Governance** better with the delivery of its work on behalf of members,

**Improve Governance Functionality** by making it more transparent, lean, and supported by strong committees and local components, and

**Better Connect the Local and National Membership Experience** by providing value to local component committees (connections and collaboration are facilitated), and

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**Secure access to the resources** required for a sustainable future and optimize investment value.

- Tactic 1 – Retain a full-time AIA staff liaison to facilitate operations and administration of the Academy and support management of committees.
- Tactic 2 – Provide continued support and collaboration with the Components Council representing local component healthcare committee chairs for purposes of aligning and leveraging collective efforts around education and networking.
- Tactic 3 – Align the Academy Board roles to streamline strategic and fiduciary oversight. Accomplish this, in part, by empowering committees and committee chairs to act while simultaneously improving connection to our strategic direction.
- Tactic 4 – Ensure current and future sources of support (human, financial, relational) and serve as the clearinghouse for sponsorship and development efforts.

## 8 CONCLUDING STATEMENTS AND ORGANIZATIONAL CHART

The Academy of Architecture for Health is built on the shoulders of many of the giants of the healthcare design industry. Its 75+ year history is filled with many firsts, and it has served throughout its existence as the model ‘Knowledge Community’ for the American Institute of Architects. The environment for professional associations (in general) and ours (in particular) is very different today than in the past, especially in terms of:

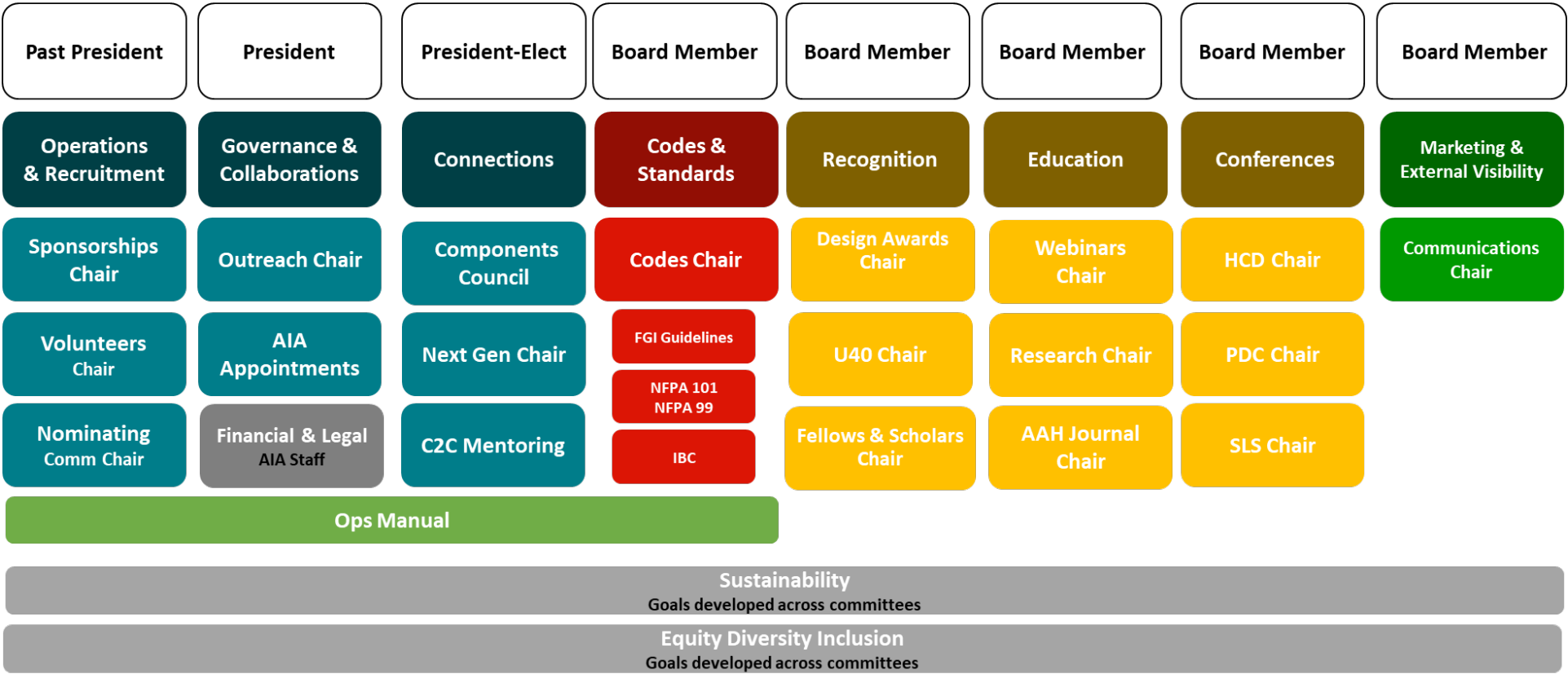
1. Time pressures
2. Value expectations
3. Member market structure
4. Generational differences
5. Competition, and
6. Technology.

With these and other factors in mind, the Academy Board set out to at the same time *focus* our efforts on what is important today and continue to develop the Academy’s future. The strategies, tactics, metrics and timeframes which form this plan provide the roadmap for transformation of our association. We welcome all who share our vision to join us on this journey.

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## Organizational Chart (Updated 2022)



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 Knowledge Community