

Committee on the Environment

an **AIA** Knowledge Community



Messaging at AIA headquarters points to the organization's commitment to design for climate action and healthy, equitable communities.



Letter from the chair

By Julie Hiromoto, AIA

The New Year is always a time of transition and evolution. It brings an opportunity for renewal, fresh perspective, and exploration of new strengths and expertise. We are honored to have four new members joining the national Advisory Group (AG) this year.

[Read more >](#)

AIA President to COTE: “Don’t ask what will happen. Be what happens.”

By Jane Frederick, FAIA

Those are the words of historian and activist Rebecca Solnit. She was writing about another activist—young Greta Thunberg of Sweden—the teenage girl who has focused the world’s eyes on climate change.

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Frick Environmental Center by Bohlin Cywinski Jackson (BCJ), a 2019 COTE Top Ten Award winner. Image: Ed Massery.

Toolkit Tales: How firms are using the Framework for Design Excellence

By Kira Gould

We've been asking firms about how they use the Framework for Design Excellence in their practices—in project work, client conversations, training, awards submittals, storytelling, and in other ways. We profiled the efforts of Lassell Architecture, Opsis, and NBBJ in late 2019. Here's our latest snapshot about how one firm is doing this.

[Read more >](#)

AIA Climate Action Plan update

By Marsha Maytum, FAIA

In response to the overwhelming support by members and the ratification of Resolution 19-11 for Urgent and Sustained Climate Action by the AIA Board in September, the AIA has embarked on creating a Climate Action Plan for the AIA and the profession. This document will outline AIA's commitment to prioritize and support urgent climate action.

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New COTE AG member: Billie Faircloth, AIA

By Kira Gould



Billie Faircloth, AIA, is a partner at KieranTimberlake. As the firm's Research Director, Faircloth encourages collaboration between disciplines and industries and is driven by pursuit of the question: "Why do we build the way that we do?".

[Read more >](#)

Defining Design Excellence: Design for Ecology

By Kira Gould

The AIA Framework for Design Excellence is written as a set of 10 measures. These are very different from design guidelines; they are a construct for open dialogue that leads to a deeply integrated design solution. Design for Ecology focuses on the interaction between the built and natural environment.

[Read more >](#)

What we're reading

[Scaling High Performance in an Era of Climate Urgency](#)

By Gwen Fuentes | LMSa

[A Great Carbon Reckoning Comes to Architecture](#)

By Audrey Gray | Metropolis

[Map Offers Insight into COTE Top Ten Winners](#)

By Paula Melton | BuildingGreen

[If You Are Serious about Sustainability, Social Equity Can't be Just Another Add-on](#)

By Katie Okomoto | Metropolis

Calendar

Want more information on environmental events across the country? [Explore the COTE calendar >](#)

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