

AIA Seattle and Seattle Design Festival Board Leadership – Role Description

About AIA Seattle

Mission: We champion the central role of architects in creating and sustaining a better built environment.

A chapter of the [American Institute of Architects](#), AIA Seattle is a 501c6 nonprofit, membership service organization. Founded in 1894, AIA Seattle is comprised of over 2,500 architects and allied professionals throughout the Puget Sound region. AIA Seattle serves [10 counties](#): Clallam, Chelan, Island, Jefferson, King, Kitsap, San Juan, Skagit, Snohomish, and Whatcom through our chapter and the Northwest Washington Section. AIA Seattle is one of four Washington components affiliated with [AIA Washington Council](#).

[AIA Seattle membership](#) is open to anyone with a professional or personal interest in architectural practice, and in the creation or appreciation of the built environment.

About Seattle Design Festival

Mission: We unleash the design thinker in everyone to illuminate Seattle’s challenges and ignite action.

[Seattle Design Festival](#) (SDF), a 501c3 nonprofit organization, was founded in 2011 as a strategic initiative of [AIA Seattle](#) to promote public dialogue and community engagement about the role and impact of design in urban life. Beyond the delivery of the festival, SDF produces exhibits, public events, and design competitions to unleash the design thinker in everyone.

Our Aligned Vision and Values

AIA Seattle and Seattle Design Festival work as two distinct organizations under an aligned vision and shared values.

Our Vision:

We envision a culture of design that fosters equitable, resilient, and thriving communities

Our Values:

- Demonstrate and promote design excellence
- Represent our collective design voice, while valuing individual contributions
- Speak up on important issues, convene courageous conversations and embrace risk when it serves our mission
- Advocate for opportunity, diversity, and inclusion in practice and process
- Consider future generations and elevate sustainability to safeguard our Northwest landscape, community and climate
- Foster cross-industry connections and partnerships to magnify our collective impact

About the Boards of Directors

In 2021, the two organizations began working towards alignment in governance structures which includes meeting together, engaging in joint strategic planning, and considering paths forward for sustainable growth and resource development for both organizations. Multiple Board members of the

Boards of Directors of AIA Seattle and Seattle Design Festival serve on both Boards. In 2022, the Boards will further develop aligned governance structures and continue to engage together towards a shared vision.

Board Member Responsibilities

Board Members provide leadership and governance.

Leadership

- Determining mission, strategies and program priorities
- Ensuring resources are used towards mission and vision fulfillment
- Determining the metrics to evaluate the effectiveness of the organizations and the Boards of Directors
- Bringing diverse viewpoints to the decision-making process of the Boards
- Representing the organizations to the public, the media, and policy makers
- The AIA Seattle Board hires and manages an Executive Director

Governance

- Ensuring strategic and financial stability to guarantee long-term success and sustainability
- Ensuring compliance with laws and regulations relating to nonprofit corporations
- Maintaining and reviewing bylaws and operating guidelines
- Establishing an annual budget and operating objectives
- Participating in resource development through sponsorship drives and personal giving at a meaningful level within the giving capacity of the individual Board member
- The AIA Seattle Board fulfills unique governance requirements of maintaining effective communication and interaction with AIA at the state, and national levels

Board Member Commitment

Board members actively participate in Board meetings and retreats, programs, events, committees, stakeholder outreach, and fundraising. Board terms are a three-year commitment beginning in September.

Board members can expect to spend six or more hours each month fulfilling their responsibilities.

Activities include:

- Monthly Board meetings, currently scheduled for the third Thursday of each month from 4-6pm. This includes preparation by reviewing relevant Board packets, and sometimes action items following meetings
- Monthly Steering Committee meetings: Each Board member serves on one or more steering committee (see full description below), dependent on the individual Board member commitment
- Annual Board planning retreat, usually in May/June, mandatory attendance, typically 2 days and one night in the Seattle area

- Sponsorship development and stewardship through a staff supported campaign effort over the course of the year. This includes identifying potential sponsors, contacting sponsors by email and phone, and identifying new potential sponsors

Timeline

- January – March: Membership Advancement Steering Committee engaged in outreach to potential Board members
- April: Potential Board candidates confirm their interest and commitment to Board service
- May: Board of Directors of organizations review nominated Board members and vote on candidates. Approved candidates submit headshots and bios. SDF Board candidates are then fully confirmed members of the SDF Board, with service beginning in September. AIA candidates include “I AM AIA” content for publishing on website and in voting materials
- June: AIA Seattle membership votes to confirm AIA candidates
- September: Board term begins

Steering Committees

Each Board member serves on a Steering Committee. Steering Committees coordinate resources with priorities and mission, and communicate between committees and the Board. Steering Committees are chaired by Board members, but may include additional members who are not on the Board.

AIA

Public Policy Board Steering Committee members direct advocacy efforts of the organization and make recommendations to the AIA Seattle Board regarding positions and advocacy activities.

Professional Practice Steering Committee members guide the chapter’s educational programming and serve as a liaison between the AIA Seattle Board and the organization’s member-led Knowledge Communities.

Membership Steering Committee spearheads member recruitment and renewal efforts, reviews and improves member benefits, and leads member retention and recognition efforts. The Secretary of AIA Seattle serves as the chair of this committee.

SDF

Seattle Design Festival Council is a steering committee focused on developing the theme and expanding relationships for the festival and other SDF activities.

Joint Steering Committees

Executive Committee members participate in ongoing organizational management, and represent AIA Seattle at the national level. This committee includes the AIA President, President Elect, Past President, Secretary, Treasurer, Advocate Director, as well as a non-voting participant from the SDF board.

Finance Committee members oversee the annual financial review, monitor the budget, and manage the organization’s reserve investments. The treasurer of AIA Seattle serves on the Finance Committee.

Development Committee members work with staff to lead sponsorship and fund development activities.

Membership Advancement Steering Committee (MAC) is the nominating committee who steward forward leadership of both organizations. This includes identifying candidates to serve in leadership roles and outreach to those candidates for board positions and support advancement in regional or national leadership opportunities.