



REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Seeking Session Facilitators for 2025 Business of Architecture Series

[AIA Seattle](#) invites proposals from qualified consultants and facilitators for the 2025 Business of Architecture Series, a new 3-part professional continuing education program to occur Fall 2025.

We are seeking dynamic, experienced facilitators to design and lead interactive learning sessions focused on the business of architectural practice—including sustainable business, equitable firm culture, and strategic visioning. This series is a critical investment in strengthening the skills, leadership capacity, and resilience of architectural firms and professionals across scales, with an emphasis on equitable and sustainable practice.

PROGRAM OVERVIEW & GOALS

Context Overview

- **Structure:** 3 half-day sessions (4 hours each; anticipated 12 LU/HSW credits total)
- **Proposed Session Dates:** September 17, October 15, November 12 in Seattle*
 - **Dates may be flexible depending on facilitator and venue availability*
- **Target Audience:** 40–60 attendees per session (architects, firm leaders, allied professionals, emerging professionals)
- **Format:** Interactive workshops featuring compelling presentations, real-world case studies, hands-on activities, and facilitated knowledge exchange. The program will be structured with both full series and a la carte registration, and each session should build on the last.

Program Purpose / Goal(s)

- Equip participants with practical skills and strategic insights essential for managing and sustaining architectural practices across firm sizes.
- Empower architects to lead with purpose by integrating justice, equity, diversity, sustainability, and ethical decision-making into business practices.
- Advance knowledge in key areas of business strategy, financial resilience, and operational leadership to support long-term relevance in a rapidly evolving profession.
- Foster dialogue and collaboration across career stages and firm types, creating a space for visionary thinking, inclusive professional growth, and hands-on skill-building.
- Facilitate connections and explore alternative ways of doing that support resilient architectural practice in a changing market and landscape.

Program Description

AIA Seattle's *Business of Architecture Series* is a 3-part educational series focused on skill building for the business of architecture, no matter the firm size. Each half-day session will be facilitated by industry experts consulting on topics at varying scales of building and maintaining equitable and sustainable practice and processes. These dynamic workshops will offer a rich blend of compelling presentations, real-world case studies, hands-on activities, and plentiful opportunities for knowledge exchanges.



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The program is designed to enhance business acumen across the architecture profession, with a particular focus on leadership skills, management education, equitable practice, and firm culture. The series aims to provide architects and firm leaders with tools and insights to build resilient, sustainable, future-ready practices, grounded in equity, adaptability, and visionary leadership.

Led by expert facilitators, participants will collaborate with cross-disciplinary leaders and engage with tailored, practical content rooted in real firm experiences. The series will intentionally bring together firm owners, industry leaders, and emerging professionals, while continuing timely and relevant conversations about the profession, the business of architecture, and the future of practice.

FACILITATOR ROLE

Scope of Work

Selected facilitators will be responsible for:

- **Collaborating w/ AIA Staff & Planning Team:** Work closely with AIA Seattle staff and planning team members to refine program content and ensure sessions meet learning objectives and program goals. Prep meetings will be held in Summer 2025 to further discuss and finalize content, format, logistics, and engagement.
- **Developing Tailored Curriculum:** Design tailored session content in support of the program goals, target session topics, and AIA Seattle's mission, vision, and values. Sessions should incorporate practical skills, interactive activities, case studies, and knowledge exchange opportunities. Provide information necessary for aligning materials with AIA's Continuing Education System (CES) requirements.
- **Centering Equity Wholistically:** Center equity, resilience, and leadership in content development and delivery, drawing from real-world examples and diverse perspectives.
- **Facilitating Session(s):** Lead the 4-hour, in-person workshop(s) in Seattle, including presentations, discussions, and collaborative exercises.
- **Delivering Attendee Materials:** Provide any pre-session materials or post-session resources for participants as appropriate to support their learning and engagement.
- **Developing Evaluation Report:** Prepare a brief report identifying final outcomes, successes and opportunities of the session(s), and any notes or recommendations for the future.

AIA Seattle staff will manage all coordination and event logistics.

Desired Qualifications

We are seeking facilitators who bring:

- Expertise in architecture firm operations, business strategy, financial management, leadership development, and/or equitable practice.
- Experience facilitating dynamic, engaging workshops for professional audiences, particularly in the architecture or allied industries.



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- Experience integrating justice, equity, diversity, sustainability, and ethical leadership concepts into business education.
- Strong collaborative skills and ability to tailor relevant content to a range of firm sizes and career stages.

We welcome proposals from individuals, small teams, or firms, including cross-disciplinary practitioners with relevant expertise.

TARGET SESSIONS

In 2025, this new series will consist of three workshops, anticipated with the following framework:

- **Session 1: How (Operations)** – Explore firm financial resilience in volatile times: profit models, market trends, compliance, risk, and operational strategies, **in support of sustainable business**
- **Session 2: Who (People)** – Discuss recruitment, retention, benefits, staffing, clients, community partners, collaboration, business models, and labor equity, **in support of equitable firm culture**
- **Session 3: Why (Vision)** – Focus on strategic visioning, goals, impact, branding, business development, and institutional legacy, **in support of a clear value proposition across all aspects of the firm**

Consultants may propose leading one or multiple sessions, depending on interest and expertise.

ADDITIONAL CONTEXT & ALIGNMENT

AIA Seattle is a 501c6 nonprofit membership organization serving 10 counties and approximately 2500 members with a mission to champion the central role of architects in creating and sustaining a better built environment and a vision for a culture of design that fosters equitable, resilient, and thriving communities.

The *Business of Architecture Series* is a timely and mission-aligned initiative that addresses urgent needs across the profession while creating space for learning, collaboration, and leadership development. The practice of architecture is undergoing significant transformation—from evolving business models, market volatility, and shifting workplace cultures. This program directly addresses this changing landscape by fostering collaboration among design professionals and framing the business side of architecture not just as a means to an end, but as a critical site for equity, resilience, and leadership.

This is a first-time offering with the potential to grow as part of AIA Seattle's professional education program portfolio. Other components (such as AIA Oregon) are similarly recognizing the need for education on the business of architecture, and we hope AIA Seattle's program can reinforce this demand and model a replicable format. This program is uniquely positioned to explore:

- **Leadership development** through targeted business education, cross-pollination between firm sizes and roles, and values-driven conversations on justice, equity, and labor



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- **Practice management excellence** via timely, relevant topics on firm operations, finance, and strategy and real-world insight into both internal operations and external market challenges
- **Long-term impact** by building foundational knowledge, inspiring stronger, more adaptable businesses, and fostering a sustainable, resilient profession
- **Joint collaboration** by welcoming input from a cross-section of professionals, including potential partnership with labor equity advocates and consultants from adjacent fields

Like all of AIA Seattle's work, this education program is being designed with our members for the profession. AIA Seattle's *Professional Practice Steering Committee*, consisting of firm owners and emerging leaders, is playing a significant role in strategic oversight of this new programmatic initiative. We are actively considering how we can foster collaboration to ensure a truly holistic and representative dialogue that we can continue to grow. Ultimately, this series is about investing in the long-term vitality of the profession—by supporting the people, practices, and principles that will carry it forward.

APPLICATION & SELECTION

Proposal Requirements

Please submit the following materials as a single PDF:

- **Statement of Interest** (1 page)
 - Indicate which session(s) you are proposing to facilitate (How, Who, Why)
 - Briefly describe your facilitation approach and experience relevant to the target session topic(s) and program goals
 - Highlight relevant professional experience and/or expertise in architecture, business, leadership development, and/or equity in practice
- **Proposed Tailored Session Content** (1-3 pages)
 - Outline ideas and strategies for tailoring session content, including potential sub-topics, facilitation strategies, and interactive activities you would bring to the session(s) of interest
 - Identify any challenges or opportunities to help refine target session content and outcomes
- **Sample Session Outline or Work Sample** (1-2 pages)
 - Provide a sample agenda, presentation outline, or training content you have previously developed or delivered (preferably similar to proposed topics)
- **Presenter Information** (1 page)
 - Include headshot and bios of facilitators and any key presenter(s)

Selection Criteria

The selection process will consider the facilitator's qualifications, experience, proposed methodology, timeline, budget, and alignment with our organizational goals. Proposals will be evaluated based on:

- Relevance of experience to proposed session content and program goals
- Demonstrated facilitation skills and interactive learning approaches
- Commitment to integrating equity, resilience, and ethics into business education
- Effectiveness of the proposed strategies and methodologies



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- Overall proposal quality and feasibility
- Value within the stated budget

Finalists may be invited for a short meeting or call before final selection.

Timeline

June 2: RFP Submission Deadline

June 13: Consultant(s) Selected and Notified

Late June / early July: Initial Planning Meeting w/ AIA Seattle Staff & Planning Team Members

July 11: Materials Ready for Program Launch

Compensation

Selected consultants will be contracted at an estimated **\$1,000–\$2,000 flat rate (per session)** inclusive of all prep and delivery. The exact amount will be determined based on the number of sessions delivered, the scope of services provided, and estimated travel expenses for facilitators outside the Seattle region.

Submission Instructions

Proposals must be submitted by **June 2, 2025**. To submit, please [upload the PDF via this link](#).

Questions?

For inquiries or clarifications regarding this RFP, please contact AIA Seattle's Senior Programs Manager, Zoë Guckenheimer, at zoeg@aiaseattle.org.