

American Institute of Architects
Managing Director, Component Relations
Position Profile
April 2010

This profile provides information about the American Institute of Architects and the position of Managing Director, Component Relations. The profile is designed to assist individuals in assessing their interest in and qualifications for the position. A separate position description is also available. The search is being conducted by:

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Profile Methodology

The profile for the position of Managing Director, Component Relations of the American Institute of Architects (AIA) was developed using organizational data and information acquired from discussions with members of the national board of directors, executive directors of AIA components of various sizes, presidents of member-led (unstaffed) components, staff of the national component, and other stakeholders. The outreach was conducted to identify and prioritize the skills, knowledge, experience, qualifications and qualities required and desired in a Managing Director of Component Relations.

About the Organization

AIA was formed in 1857 and is the leading professional membership association for licensed architects, emerging professionals, and allied partners.

Goal/Mission: With nearly 300 state and local chapters, the AIA serves as “the voice of the architectural profession and a resource for its members in service to society.” AIA carries out their goal through advocacy, information, and community. Each year the AIA:

- Sponsors hundreds of continuing education experiences to help architects maintain their licensure;
- Sets the industry standard in contract documents with more than 100 forms and contracts used in the design and construction industry;
- Publishes online publications;
- Provides countless Web-based resources for emerging architecture professionals;
- Conducts market research and provides analysis of the economic factors that affect the business of architecture;
- Hosts the annual AIA National Convention and Design Exposition;
- Serves as an advocate of the architecture profession;
- Champions architects’ future by enhancing public belief in the value of design; and
- Promotes design excellence and outstanding professional achievement through an awards program.

The American Institute of Architects is governed by a Board of Directors, a nationally elected governing body that provides long-range strategic leadership. The Board is composed of nationally elected AIA officers, including the president, president-elect, four vice presidents, secretary, and treasurer; elected representatives (directors) from each of the AIA's 18 regions; two associate AIA members; two representatives from the Council of Architectural Component Executives; an elected international director; a student representative (the president of the American Institute of Architecture Students); and two public representatives elected by the Board. The AIA's executive vice president and CEO is an ex officio member.

Walk the Walk (Sustainability):

The American Institute of Architects is committed to the goal of reaching carbon neutral buildings by 2030. That goal can be achieved through the support of architect members, who stand ready to provide invaluable counsel on reclaiming brownfields, renewing urban areas, and reshaping the current landscape toward a more renewable future.

Components of the AIA:

Complementing the Board are nearly 300 state and local components (or chapters) which link AIA members into a supportive network, providing members an opportunity to make a significant difference for the profession.

- Local components sponsor a wide range of activities, including educational conferences, community service projects, post-disaster and urban design workshops, and Architect Registration Exam preparation classes.
- Many state components offer educational conferences and networking opportunities and they play an integral role in representing member interests before state legislatures and regulatory agencies on architecture-related issues.
- The national component of the AIA unites local and state members in the common causes of advocacy, community, and knowledge. Networking and national volunteer opportunities are available through knowledge communities and the Center for Communities by Design.

Managing Director, Component Relations Position:

The Managing Director is responsible for the communication and relationships between the Institute's nearly 300 state and local components and the national component. There are currently five staff reports, two of whom work remotely in regional component support positions. The Managing Director reports to the Vice President of Member Value and Communication. The Managing Director will regularly be invited to attend executive staff meetings and to meet with the EVP/CEO in order to effectively represent and communicate component needs and concerns and to become more knowledgeable of national initiatives and their potential impact on components and component relationships.

Specific needs for this position vary somewhat based on the size of the Chapter, but most of what stakeholders deem important for a successful Managing Director are shared universally.

The individual should proactively support components by:

- Fostering a productive and collaborative relationship between and among all components of the Institute and between and among the elected component leadership and the national elected leadership in concert with the VP MVC and EVP/CEO;
- Fostering a culture of understanding and respect of the critical role and linkage the components provide to the members and the profession;
- Assisting with membership recruitment and retention efforts;
- Addressing component concerns and issues with decisions, programs, and actions that initiate at the national level;
- Focusing on grass roots issues and initiatives;
- Soliciting input from components before making decisions that directly affect them;
- Evaluating current use of financial resources based on needs expressed by components;
- Cross training department staff;
- Developing appropriate resources for each type/size component;
- Developing resources in the appropriate format (paper or electronic) based on specific component need; this role would be more to create and oversee a strategy for developing resources, providing templates and marketing and meeting assistance, etc than doing the tactical work;
- Providing templates/guides for leadership positions at the component level;
- Providing marketing and meeting planning assistance in guide format;
- Actively assisting with chapter web site development and integration with national's site;
- Organizing current resources better so they are easily located;
- Reaching out to inactive chapters;
- Travelling regularly to develop the link between national and components;
- Solidly understanding the AIA structure and politics;
- Assisting with leader to leader communication; and
- Serving as an advisor to CACE., CACE exec comm. and the CACE president.

The Managing Director should also:

- Be a strong advocate for components and department staff and exercise clout at the executive level;
- Conduct a review of the current department staffing structure;
- Have the ability to frame issues from the components' perspective;
- Strengthen the sense of trust and respect between components and national;
- Have the ability to understand how decisions made at national affect components; and
- Determine how many unstaffed chapters exist, where they are located, and how to support and integrate them into the system.

To be successful in this position an individual should ideally possess the following skills and characteristics:

- Strong component relations experience and background in an association with a large component group and a complex organizational structure;
- Strong grass roots experience at the state and local levels;
- Exceptional listening skills and engaging/interactive work style;
- Effective communicator;
- Assertive, flexible, and adaptable;
- Committed to setting and adhering to priorities and deadlines and responding in a timely manner;
- Authentic and honest relationship builder;
- Ability to think strategically and function at both the “big picture” and the “detail” levels; and
- Realize that one size doesn't fit all.

An underlying assumption is that the individual who assumes the Managing Director position will either be knowledgeable in the field of architecture or will quickly learn about architecture, architects, and the built environment. A passion for the profession and the grassroots /bottom up nature of AIA is essential in order to fully understand and advocate on behalf of component staff.

This is a tremendous opportunity for an individual who enjoys representing components and thrives in the critical role of serving as the conduit between chapters and the national organization. Individuals who meet the requirements and are interested in pursuing the position of Managing Director of Component Relations should forward their resume and cover letter to: AIA@assnstrategies.com.