Emerging Professional Friendly Firm Program

As we envision the future of architecture, AIA North Carolina wants to highlight and celebrate workplaces that foster growth and opportunities for Emerging Professionals (EPs) to engage in the profession and in our communities. The AIA North Carolina – Emerging Professional Friendly Firm Award and Certification was developed to honor architecture firms that create supportive, career-advancing environments for EPs to flourish. Certification will be granted annually to architecture firms that foster the growth of diverse, creative, resilient, and knowledgeable architects. The Outstanding Award will be presented annually to firms that demonstrate they go above and beyond to offer superior support and opportunities to EPs in other exceptional ways.

To apply, at least one Emerging Professional and one firm principal, from a North Carolina office, should meet to fill out the following survey together. Firms with multiple offices in NC must fill out the survey with at least one Emerging Professional and at least one firm principal from each NC office. One submission per firm. The Emerging Professional(s) should have a strong understanding of firm policies and working knowledge of their peers' status with NCARB's AXP program. The following questions are intended to be the framework and documentation of that conversation.

To be considered for the Emerging Professional Friendly Firm Certification, firms must fill in all survey questions marked with [C] which consists primarily of percentages and multiple choice questions. Please allow two hours to complete the survey.

To be considered for the Emerging Professional Friendly Firm Oustanding Award, firms must fill in all survey questions, which includes the multiple choice and short answer questions, and provide the requested supplemental information. Additional time will likely be needed for this effort.

Definition: Please note - the AIA recently updated their definition for Emerging Professionals as professionals who have completed their academic studies up to the point of licensure or up to 10 years after completion of their academic studies.

Please include part-time and full-time staff in your responses to the survey.

Firm Information

Firm Name

Firm Address(es)

If there are multiple firm locations in North Carolina, please list all addresses.

Firm Phone Number(s)

If there are multiple firm locations in North Carolina, please list all phone numbers with their location.

Firm Size

How many individuals work at the firm at all locations? Include full-time and part-time employees in the response.

Select one option

○ 1-9
○ 10-29
○ 30-49
○ 50-99
○ 100+

Total Number of firm employees working in North Carolina

(include all part-time and full time employees regardless of title and position)

Total number of Emerging Professionals working in North Carolina

(include part-time and full-time employees working in North Carolina - see definition of Emerging Professional above)

Percent of Emerging Professionals working in North Carolina

(total number of Emerging Professionals working in North Carolina divided by total number of employees working in North Carolina)

AIA NC Members

The firm employees are members of the following AIA North Carolina components: (If firm has more than one office, select all that apply.)

Select one or more options

☐ Asheville
☐ Charlotte
☐ Eastern
☐ Piedmont
☐ Triangle
☐ Wilmington
☐ Winston-Salem

Professional Services

The firm offers the following in-house professional services (check all that apply)

Select one or more options

☐ Architecture
☐ Engineering
☐ Interior Design
☐ Landscape Architecture
☐ Urban Planning
☐ Other (please specify)

Other Professional Services

Emerging Professional Definition

To verify that the firm's survey respondents understand that the AIA has updated their definition of Emerging Professionals, please retype the new definition here:

Verify Definition

Please verify - did the firm use AIA's updated definition for Emerging Professionals to complete this survey?

Select one option

○ Yes
○ No

Emerging Professional Friendly Firm Designation

Does the firm wish to be considered for the Emerging Professional Friendly Firm designation only, or does the firm wish to be considered for the Outstanding Emerging Professional Friendly Firm designation by demonstrating that it goes above and beyond for its EPs?

Select one option

○ Emerging Professional Friendly Firm- We believe the firm fosters growth of diverse, creative, resilient, and knowledgeable architects.
○ Outstanding Emerging Professional Friendly FIrm- We believe the firm goes above and beyond to offer superior support and opportunities to EPs in other exceptional ways.

Principal Names

Please include Name(s), Title(s), Email(s), and Phone Number(s).

Emerging Professionals

Please include Name(s), Title(s), Email(s), and Phone Number(s).

Equity, Diversity & Inclusion

Note: All remaining questions in this survey refer only to firm employees in North Carolina.

Percentage of firm leadership who are Emerging Professionals (for this question, leadership constitutes an individual with the following titles: Partner, Principal, Associate Principal, Senior Associate, Senior Staff, or Associate)

Percentage of Emerging Professionals who are women

Percentage of firm leadership who are women (for this question, leadership constitutes an individual with the following titles: Partner, Principal, Associate Principal, Senior Associate, Senior Staff, or Associate)

Percentage of Emerging Professionals who are racial or ethnic minorities

Percentage of firm leadership who are racial or ethnic minorities (for this question, leadership constitutes an individual with the following titles: Partner, Principal, Associate Principal, Senior Associate, Senior Staff, or Associate)

Does the firm provide diversity training or similar programming for the firm and its Emerging Professional staff?

Select one option

○ Yes
○ No
○ Other (please specify)

Other - Diversity Training

Does the firm provide reimbursement for Emerging Professionals to engage with and attend equity events, seminars, or workshops?

Select one option

○ Yes, with 50% coverage
○ Yes, with 100% coverage
○ No
○ Varies, based on position
○ Other (please specify)

Other - Equity Events Reimbursement

Does the firm provide non-vacation paid time off for Emerging Professionals to engage with and attend equity events, seminars, or workshops?

Select one option

○ Yes
○ No
○ Other (please specify)

Other - Equity Events Time Off

Does the firm have an internal equity committee or champion to provide diversity awareness and programming that includes a firm leader and an Emerging Professional employee?

Select one option

○ Yes
○ No
○ Other (please specify)

Other - Equity Committee Program

Does the firm encourage all staff to read the AIA Guides for Equitable Practice?

(https://www.aia.org/resources/6246433-guides-for-equitable-practice)

Select one option

○ Yes
○ No
○ Other (please specify)

Other - AIA Guides for Equitable Practice

Does the firm cover the cost of NOMA Membership?

Select one option

○ Yes
○ No
○ Other (please specify)

Does the firm cover the cost of NOMA Membership? (Other (please specify))

Does the firm have an affirmative action program (AAP) to outline strategies for recruiting, hiring, training and promoting women, minorities, people with disabilities and veterans to ensure that all individuals have equal opportunities in employment?

Select one option

○ Yes
○ No
○ Other (please specify)

Other - AAP Strategy

Does the firm track progress on firm diversity (gender, ethnic, racial, etc.)? If so, how does the firm quantitatively track this progress?

Select one option

○ Yes
○ No
○ Other (please specify)

[Outstanding] Short Answer - Firm Diversity Tracking

_____

_____

_____

Other - Firm Diversity Tracking

_____

Does the firm sponsor or support local/regional equity committees, groups or events? If so, how does the firm provide this support or sponsorship?

Select one option

○ Yes
○ No
○ Other (please specify)

[Outstanding] Short Answer - Equity Committee/Event Support

_____

_____

_____

Other - Equity Committee/Event Support

Does the firm have a written family leave policy? If so, describe the policy.

Select one option

○ Yes - Unpaid leave
○ Yes - Paid
○ No
○ Other (please specify)

[Outstanding] Short Answer - Family Leave Policy - Unpaid

[Outstanding] Short Answer - Family Leave Policy - Paid

Other - Family Leave Policy

Support & Compensation

Does the firm's salary and benefits package align with the AIA Compensation Survey Salary Calculator and the AIA Compensation Report for North Carolina and/or the South Atlantic Region?

(https://info.aia.org/salary/salary.aspx) and (https://www.aia.org/resources/8066-aia-compensation-report)

Select one option

○ Yes
○ No
○ Other (please specify)

Other - Salary and Benefits Package

Does the firm use accessible and current cost of living data to determine fair and competitive wages for its employees?

Select one option

○ Yes
○ No
○ Other (please specify)

Other - Cost of Living Wages

Does the firm cover the cost of an AIA membership for Emerging Professionals?

Select one option

○ Yes, with 50% covered
○ Yes, with 100% covered
○ No
○ Varies based on position
○ Other (please specify)

Other - AIA Membership Coverage

Does the firm cover the cost of NCARB fees for Emerging Professionals?

Select one option

○ Yes, with 50% covered
○ Yes, with 100% covered
○ No
○ Varies based on position
○ Other (please specify)

Other - NCARB Fees Coverage

Does the firm cover licensure fees/renewals for licensed Emerging Professionals?

Select one option

○ Yes, with 50% covered
○ Yes, with 100% covered
○ No
○ Varies based on position
○ Other (please specify)

Other - Licensure Fees/Renewals Coverage

Does the firm cover the cost of all passed ARE exams?

Select one option

○ Yes, with 50% covered
○ Yes, with 100% covered
○ No
○ Varies based on position
○ Other (please specify)

Other - ARE Exam Coverage

Does the firm provide Emerging Professionals with non-vacation paid time off to take the ARE exams?

Select one option

○ Yes
○ No
○ Other (please specify)

Other - ARE Exam Non-Vacation Paid Time Off

Does the firm emphasize the necessity to prepare for and complete the Architectural Experience Program (AXP) and Architect Registration Examination (ARE) in a timely manner?

Select one option

○ Yes
○ No
○ Other (please specify)

Other - Timely ARE and AXP Completion

Does the firm have written standards that outline the benefits of bonuses or salary increases upon completion of licensure?

Select one option

○ Yes
○ No
○ Other (please specify)

Other - Licensure Completion Benefits Standards

Does the firm recognize the completion of ARE and licensure with additional compensation including bonuses or increases in salary?

Select one option

○ Yes
○ No
○ Other (please specify)

Other- Licensure Completion Compensation

Does the firm cover the cost of ARE classes, online training courses, or preparation books for Emerging Professionals?

Select one option

○ Yes, with 50% covered
○ Yes, with 100% covered
○ No
○ Varies based on position
○ Other (please specify)

Other - ARE Training Coverage

Does the firm provide Emerging Professionals with non-vacation paid time off to study for ARE exams? If so, please describe the policy and amount of non-vacation paid time off provided.

Select one option

○ Yes
○ No
○ Other (please specify)

[Outstanding] Short Answer - ARE Study Non-Vacation Paid Time Off

Other - ARE Study Non-Vacation Paid Time Off

Does the firm provide a flexible work environment, recognizing the importance of time spent outside the office, that is equally available to Emerging Professionals and all staff? If so, provide some examples of the flexible work environment and scheduling offered.

Select one option

○ Yes
○ No
○ Other (please specify)

[Outstanding] Short Answer - Flexible Work Environment

Other - Flexible Work Environment

Professional Development

Does the firm provide reimbursement or cover the registration for Emerging Professionals to attend conventions, conferences, or other continuing education events (excluding the AIA Conference on Architecture)?

Select one option

○ Yes, with 50% covered
○ Yes, with 100% covered
○ No
○ Varies based on position
○ Other (please specify)

Other - Conference and CE Coverage

Does the firm provide reimbursement or cover the registration for Emerging Professionals to attend the AIA Conference on Architecture?

Select one option

○ Yes, with 50% covered
○ Yes, with 100% covered
○ No
○ Varies based on position
○ Other (please specify)

Other - AIA Conference Coverage

Does the firm provide non-vacation paid time off for Emerging Professionals to attend conventions, conferences, or other continuing education events?

Select one option

○ Yes
○ No
○ Other (please specify)

Other - Conference Non-Vacation Paid Time Off

Does the firm provide reimbursement or cover the registration for Emerging Professionals to attend daily AIA or field related events?

Select one option

○ Yes, with 50% covered
○ Yes, with 100% covered
○ No
○ Varies based on position
○ Other (please specify)

Other - AIA Event Reimbursement/Coverage

Does the firm provide non-vacation paid time off for Emerging Professionals to volunteer with the AIA or related field opportunities?

Select one option

○ Yes
○ No
○ Other (please specify)

Other - Volunteer Non-Vacation Paid Time Off

Does the firm encourage and provide funding and/or training for additional certifications for Emerging Professionals, based on individual interest? If so, how does the firm encourage and support additional certifications for Emerging Professionals?

Select one option

○ Yes
○ No
○ Other (please specify)

[Outstanding] Short Answer - Certification Support

Other - Certification Support

Does the firm provide or support leadership opportunities and/or training for Emerging Professionals? If so, how does the firm provide or support leadership opportunities and/or training for Emerging Professionals?

Select one option

○ Yes
○ No
○ Others (please specify)

[Outstanding] Short Answer - Leadership Opportunities

Other - Leadership Opportunities

Does the firm publicly recognize newly licensed architects upon successful completion of the ARE and fulfillment of state requirements? If so, how does the firm publicly recognize their newly licensed professionals?

Select one option

○ Yes
○ No
○ Other (please specify)

[Outstanding] Short Answer - New Licensed Architect Recognition

Other - Newly Licensed Architect Recognition

Licensing Process

For these questions below, use the definitions as outlined by ncarb.org:

An AXP Supervisor is the individual who supervises the candidate on a daily basis and has professional knowledge of and responsibility for the individual's work. The AXP supervisor is required to certify that the information that the candidate submits on their experience report is true and correct and that the candidate has performed the task competently.

An AXP Mentor offers instruction, encouragement, and advice to candidates as they navigate the path to licensure. While typically this individual does not monitor a candidate's experience reports, there are specific opportunities where mentors who are licensed to practice architecture in the United States or Canada can act as an AXP supervisor.

Percentage of Emerging Professionals in North Carolina who have established an NCARB Record and are registered with the Architectural Experience Program (AXP)?

Does the firm provide opportunities for Emerging Professionals to earn AXP experience hours in all required areas through exposure to projects at various stages?

Select one option

○ Yes
○ No
○ Other (please specify)

Other - AXP Experience Opportunities

Does the firm give all Emerging Professionals an opportunity to request to be placed on projects that will help meet the specific criteria of AXP?

Select one option

○ Yes
○ No
○ Other (please specify)

Other - AXP Specific Project Placement

Does the firm encourage and/or require each Emerging Professional to compile their AXP training requirement units for discussion at employee performance reviews?

Select one option

○ Yes
○ No
○ Other (please specify)

Other - AXP Performance Review Discussion

Does the firm provide a mentor to Emerging Professionals to help with the AXP process?

Select one option

○ Yes
○ No
○ Other (please specify)

Other - AXP Mentor Provision

Does the firm offer a mentorship program and/or provide a mentor to all Emerging Professionals?

Select one option

○ Yes
○ No
○ Other (please specify)

Other - Mentorship Program

Does the firm encourage Emerging Professionals to establish an AXP Mentor outside the office as per the AXP Guidelines?

Select one option

○ Yes
○ No
○ Other (please specify)

Other - External AXP Mentor

Do all AXP supervisors and mentors in the firm have knowledge of current AXP Guidelines and the requirements for registration in the jurisdiction?

Select one option

○ Yes
○ No
○ Other (please specify)

Other - AXP Supervisor/Mentor Guideline Knowledge

Do all AXP supervisors and mentors in the firm verify that all records are accurate before signing each Emerging Professional's experience report?

Select one option

○ Yes
○ No
○ Other (please specify)

Other - AXP Supervisors/Mentor Record Verification

Does the firm support AXP supervisors and mentors to effectively lead the development of Emerging Professionals' skills and talents?

Select one option

○ Yes
○ No
○ Other (please specify)

Other - AXP Supervisor/Mentor Support

Does the firm designate a registered architect as an in-house AXP coordinator for all Emerging Professionals on the path to licensure?

Select one option

○ Yes
○ No
○ Other (please specify)

Other - Registered Architect AXP Coordinator

Does the firm's in-house AXP coordinator meet regularly (at least quarterly) with all Emerging Professionals on the path to licensure to review their progress and to help them compile Council Record updates to NCARB?

Select one option

○ Yes
○ No
○ Other (please specify)

Other - AXP Coordinator Meetings

Does the firm own and/or provide funding for ARE preparation materials? If so, what ARE preparation resources are available to Emerging Professionals in the firm? (Examples include current study guides for all exams, flash cards, 100% reimbursement for exam preparation courses, in-house study group, etc.)

Select one option

○ Yes
○ No
○ Other (please specify)

[Other] Short Answer - ARE Preparation Materials

Other - ARE Preparation Materials

Does the firm provide opportunities for supplemental experience via activities in addition to Emerging Professionals' routine work assignments? If so, please describe the supplemental experiences provided.

Select one option

○ Yes
○ No
○ Other (please specify)

[Outstanding] Short Answer - Supplemental Experience Opportunities

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Other - Supplemental Experience Opportunities

Leadership

Does the firm encourage Emerging Professionals to develop and lead new programs or committees within or outside of the firm?

Select one option

○ Yes
○ No
○ Other (please specify)

Other - Program Leadership and Development

Does the firm provide Emerging Professionals with regular and comprehensive reviews that encourage and measure growth development at least annually?

Select one option

○ Yes
○ No
○ Other (please specify)

Other - Annual Comprehensive Reviews

Does the firm work to engage Emerging Professionals in the entire project duration, from conception through completion?

Select one option

○ Yes
○ No
○ Other (please specify)

Other - Project Duration Involvement

Does the firm provide a variety of project experiences to expose Emerging Professionals to a broad range of responsibilities and challenges?

Select one option

○ Yes
○ No
○ Other (please specify)

Other - Project Experience Variation

Does the firm include Emerging Professionals in ALL areas of the firm's practice, such as design, documentation, construction, presentations, client meetings, consultant coordination meetings, job site meetings, code reviews, etc?

Select one option

○ Yes
○ No
○ Other (please specify)

Other - Practice Area Inclusion

Does the firm encourage Emerging Professionals to participate in community groups, professional groups, design organizations, or committees within or outside the firm? If so, how does your firm encourage participation in and provide opportunities or support for this engagement?

Select one option

○ Yes
○ No
○ Other (please specify)

[Outstanding] Short Answer - Community Participation

Other - Community Participation

Practice Transparency

Does the firm openly share its salary and benefits structure and procedures with employees?

Select one option

○ Yes
○ No
○ Other (please specify)

Other - Salary and Benefits Structure Transparency

Does the firm share information about upcoming project pursuits with all staff including Emerging Professionals?

Select one option

○ Yes
○ No
○ Other (please specify)

Other - Project Pursuit Sharing

Does the firm share the state of the business regularly with all staff including Emerging Professionals?

Select one option

○ Yes
○ No
○ Other (please specify)

Other - State of Business Sharing

Does the firm provide opportunities for unlicensed Emerging Professionals to interact and/or communicate with clients?

Select one option

○ Yes
○ No
○ Other (please specify)

Other - Client Interaction Opportunities

Supplemental Materials

Please submit supporting documentation to be considered for the Outstanding Emerging Professional Friendly Firm designation in a single PDF file - max 15 MB - not to exceed ten (10) 8.5"x11" pages.

The evaluation of the submissions for this program is anonymous - please ensure supplemental materials do not include any names, marks, logos, insignia, symbols, or signs that may identify the firm. Any submission with identifying marks that could be used to identify the submission's authors will be disqualified.