

Architecture

Architecture Careers



THE AMERICAN
INSTITUTE
OF ARCHITECTS



Careers

“Architecture does not exist. What exists is the work of architecture.”

LOUIS KAHN

“Architecture arises out of our need to shelter the human animal in a spatial environment and to enclose the social animal in a group space. In this sense architecture serves our institutions and expresses the values of our culture.”

ROBERT GEDDES, FAIA, 1980

ARCHITECTURE

A Public Trust

Architects' unique talents can be beneficially employed to help foster, through design, more wholesome neighborhoods, safer streets, more productive workplaces, a cleaner environment, and more cohesive communities by:

Building to Beautify—to create and preserve what is inspiring in the built environment and communicate clearly and convincingly the value of beauty to the public

Building for Human Needs—to create environments that serve the psychological, economic, and spiritual needs of clients, inhabitants, passersby, and future users

Building for Urban Spaces—to help cities and smaller communities become safer, healthier, and more wholesome

Preserving the Planet—to assume a leadership role in preserving the environment and the planet's resources.

Adapted from *Building Community: A New Future for Architectural Education and Practice*, by Ernest L. Boyer and Lee D. Mitgang, the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching.

Career Options

In addition to a “traditional” career in an architecture firm—as a principal, project architect, staff architect, draftsman, or intern—an architectural education can lead to many other career options. Related occupations held by people with architectural backgrounds include:

Animator	Environmental planner
Architectural critic	Furniture designer
Architectural photographer	Graphic designer
Architectural programmer	Illustrator
Architectural renderer	Industrial designer
Building inspector	Landscape architect
Building pathologist	Lawyer
CAD coordinator	Market researcher
Campus planner	Model maker
Carpenter	Museum curator
Cartographer	Printmaker
City planner	Professor
City or state architect	Property assessor
Civil engineer	Publisher
Computer presentation designer	Real estate agent
Computer systems analyst	Real estate project manager
Construction inspector	Researcher
Construction manager	Set designer
Contractor	Structural engineer
Corporate consultant	Technical writer
Design/build team manager	TV/film producer
Developer	Web site designer
Document designer	

Source: *Career Options: Opportunities Through Architecture*, American Institute of Architecture Students, 1993.

Choosing a Career

discover architecture

It is diverse and multifaceted, and has many opportunities for specialization—become familiar with the options.

be interested

In the design of the built environment and public space.

ask questions

Contact your local AIA chapter; talk with architects; observe buildings and construction sites; visit schools and speak with architecture students.

prepare for professional education

Develop a broad interest in the arts and humanities and a solid background in the physical sciences, including math.

learn communication skills

Writing, speaking, freehand drawing.

read

Books and magazines on architecture and design.

Professional Education

obtain an accredited professional degree in architecture

A professional degree is required by most states for licensure as an architect.

There are 112 accredited programs in the United States, and 3 programs that have been granted candidacy.

Admission to most architecture programs is highly competitive. The number of applications has increased significantly in recent years.

kinds of degrees

Five-year first professional degree (BArch).

Four-year preprofessional degree plus two-year professional degree (BA or BS, then MArch).

Four-year nonarchitecture degree plus three-to-four-year professional master of architecture degree (MArch).

Resources

The American Institute of Architects, *Careers in Architecture*, AIA Press, www.aia.org.

Roger K. Lewis, FAIA, *A Candid Guide to the Profession*, MIT Press, 1985.

Contact The American Institute of Architecture Students (AIAS), (202) 626-7472, for career information.

Contact the director of education at The American Institute of Architects (AIA), 800-242-3837, for career information.

Visit the AIA Web site at www.aia.org.

Association of Collegiate Schools of Architecture (ACSA), *A Guide to Architecture Schools in North America*, sixth edition.

Contact the National Architectural Accrediting Board (NAAB), (202) 783-2007, for a list of schools with accredited programs in architecture.

Contact The American Architectural Foundation (AAF), (202) 626-7420, for information on scholarships.

Internship

learn about internship

Internship is a period of practical training to acquire and reinforce the discipline, integrity, judgment, skills, knowledge, and quest for learning that characterize professional practice.

become familiar with your state's requirements

Most states require a postgraduate training period (usually three years) under a licensed architect's direct supervision before you become eligible to take the Architect Registration Examination (A.R.E.).

Licensure

become licensed to practice architecture

You must be licensed in order to practice architecture.

Licensing of architects is the legal prerogative of the individual state government. Each state establishes its own requirements and a state licensing board to administer them.

Architects must be licensed in each of the jurisdictions in which they desire to practice.

Through the efforts of NCARB, guidelines for license examination eligibility and the examination itself are fairly uniform from state to state. It is important, however, to understand that there are differences as well.

Continuing Education

architecture requires a commitment to lifelong learning

Lifelong professional learning—continuing education—is essential to success and helps you responsibly meet the role society entrusts to a professional.

what is continuing education?

Continuing education enables you to keep current and master new knowledge and skills.

Many states require demonstration of continuing professional education for license renewal.

what is its purpose?

Continuing education assists you in maintaining your competence and achieving your professional goals.

what do you have to do?

Be committed to maintaining and enhancing your professional knowledge and skill; develop a personal learning program.

Resources

IDP Guidelines: Intern Development Program (The AIA and the National Council of Architectural Registration Boards [NCARB]); available from the AIA, (202) 626-7456, or from NCARB, (202) 783-6500.

Contact your state IDP coordinator.

Contact your local AIA chapter.

Supplementary Education Handbook, available from the AIA; call (202) 626-7456.

The Architect Registration Examination Handbook from NCARB is the definitive guide to the A.R.E.

Contact your local AIA chapter for information on A.R.E. preparation seminars.

PHOTO CREDITS

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