

# Understanding our Professional Commitments to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

**LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE (LA)**

**April 2020**



CHRISTOPHER C. GIBBS COLLEGE OF ARCHITECTURE  
**DIVISION OF LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE**  
*The UNIVERSITY of OKLAHOMA*

# How LA professional orgs define diversity...

- ASLA “strives to be representative and reflective of the communities we serve.” They go on to say that we have not yet lived up to our ambitions as a profession.
- The ASLA defines diversity as, “celebrating difference based on gender, race, sexual orientation, sexual identity, culture, or ethnicity.”
- In addition, ASLA defines Equity as, “fairness”, while Inclusion means “for all people”.
- <https://www.asla.org/dei.aspx>

# How LA professional orgs define who is underrepresented...

- ASLA desires to better represent the communities the profession serves and to be “fully reflective of our nation” by 2025.
- Representation goals are determined by comparing the racial breakdown within the total US population (2012) against Landscape Architecture Graduates (2014, 2017).
- Underrepresented groups are those with larger shares in the US overall population than can be found in LA graduate figures.
- <https://www.asla.org/uploadedFiles/CMS/AboutJoin/MirroringTheNationOfficial.pdf>

# How LA professional orgs measure underrepresentation...

- Hold Diversity Summit and Conference addressing the issues related to underrepresented groups
- [https://www.asla.org/uploadedFiles/CMS/Meetings\\_and\\_Events/Diversity\\_Summit/2017\\_ASLADiversitySuperSummitReport\\_FINAL.pdf](https://www.asla.org/uploadedFiles/CMS/Meetings_and_Events/Diversity_Summit/2017_ASLADiversitySuperSummitReport_FINAL.pdf)

# How LA professional orgs describe their professionals' obligations and commitments to diversity, equity and inclusion...

- ASLA
  - <https://www.asla.org/dei.aspx>
  - <https://www.asla.org/uploadedFiles/CMS/AboutJoin/MirroringTheNationOfficial.pdf>
  - <https://www.asla.org/diversitysummit.aspx>
  - [https://www.asla.org/uploadedFiles/CMS/Meetings\\_and\\_Events/Diversity\\_Summit/2018%20Diversity%20Summit%20Summary.pdf](https://www.asla.org/uploadedFiles/CMS/Meetings_and_Events/Diversity_Summit/2018%20Diversity%20Summit%20Summary.pdf)
  - <https://www.aslaconference.com/achieving-diversity-inclusion-and-equity/>
- LAF
  - [https://www.lafoundation.org/sites/default/files/2019-12/LAF\\_DEI\\_2019\\_surveyfindings.pdf](https://www.lafoundation.org/sites/default/files/2019-12/LAF_DEI_2019_surveyfindings.pdf)
  - <https://www.lafoundation.org/news/2018/11/dei-smithgroup>
  - <https://www.lafoundation.org/news/2018/08/dei-mithun>
  - <https://www.lafoundation.org/news/2018/07/dei-sasaki>
  - <https://www.lafoundation.org/news/2019/09/dei-stantec>
  - <https://www.lafoundation.org/news/2020/03/dei-anchor-qea>
  - <https://www.lafoundation.org/news/2019/01/dei-hra-advisors>
  - <https://www.lafoundation.org/news/2018/10/dei-mahan-rykiel-associates>
- Others
  - <https://www.designcouncil.org.uk/sites/default/files/asset/document/inclusion-by-design.pdf>
  - <https://www.sasaki.com/voices/diversity-in-design-designing-for-diversity/>
  - <https://www.smithgroup.com/perspectives/2018/exploring-equity-diversity-and-inclusion-in-the-landscape-architecture-profession>

# Principles of diversity and inclusion or best practices that exist to guide us as LA educators...

- To better represent the communities and people landscape architects serve
- To make a commitment to increase resources and actions that:
  - recruit and retain underrepresented students to landscape architecture programs;
  - help mentor graduates into professional life and leadership;
  - and foster an inclusive and welcoming practice environment.
- By 2025, we will endeavor to achieve a professional profile that correlates with the 2012 population-share estimates, while working toward the longer-term goal of parity with 2060 projections for the nation as a whole.

# Principles of diversity and inclusion or best practices that exist to guide us as LA researchers...

The reality of climate change will disproportionately affect people of color and low-income communities. LA research involving climate change will directly benefit DEI initiatives. A New Landscape Declaration was crafted during the 2019 annual meeting which addresses climate change. Here are the main tenets:

1. Build your knowledge, skills, and credentials involving understanding climate change.
2. Design with nature.
3. Aim for zero carbon, zero waste, and equity on all your projects.
4. Reduce the ecological footprint at home and in the office.
5. Build teams across disciplines, practice types, and publics. Implement a research project with academic, community, and practice partners.
6. Work upstream to influence policy and planning.
7. Speak for those not at the table and make sure they're included next time.
8. Reconsider how you allocate your time. Serve on boards, associations, and zoning commissions.
9. Give financial support to landscape architecture, environmental, or other charitable non-profit organizations.
10. Support candidates that stand for your priorities, for the environment and social equity.

# Principles of diversity and inclusion or best practices that exist to guide LA in engaging the community...

- Engaging the community defined as **Education**, **Research**, and **People**
- American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA): **P**, **E**
  - ASLA Diversity Summit
- The Council of Educators in Landscape Architecture (CELA): **E**, **R**
  - CELA Joint Diversity Statement
- Council of Landscape Architectural Registration Boards (CLARB): **P**, **E**
- Landscape Architectural Accreditation Board (LAAB): **E**, **R**, **P**
- Landscape Architecture Foundation (LAF): **E**, **R**, **P**
- Professional Practice: **P**
  - Sasaki Associates
  - SmithGroup
  - And others...

# LA upholds professional commitments to diversity and inclusion by...

- Recruitment of faculty
- Recruitment of students from diverse backgrounds
- Faculty encouraged to receive Ally, Implicit Bias and Unlearning Training
- Some CEU's obtained by faculty are in DEI
- Issues of DEI are integral to all LA courses (specifically design studios)

LA has identified the following opportunities for improvement toward creating a more inclusive and diverse division and/or college...

- Continue to recruit and retain our students
- Continue to recruit and retain our faculty
- Work to develop larger LA PAB that reflects the profession and our students
- Continue to include DEI in our courses AND develop robust content into the future
- Empower (current) students today to become the leaders of the profession tomorrow