

PEOPLE+

June 28-29, 2019

Greenwood, MS

Hosted by the Delta Design Build Workshop + friends

Association for Community Design Annual Conference

Request for Proposals

PEOPLE+

Community design work begins with an understanding of the power of people first. It is the web of relationships, history, narrative, mythology, and aspirations embodied in the people of a community that is the fabric of a place. This conference will highlight these experts on place; the people who work, celebrate, struggle, organize, worship, and live in the neighborhoods we live, work, and play in. The 42nd Annual ACD convening will give us all a microphone and turn the amp up to 11 so as to focus on stories of PEOPLE+ _____.

The work of community design is frequently focused on strengthening urban communities, and this work is vitally important, however the work that is being done in rural communities is equally as important and this conference is a call to expand the conversation to include both the rural and urban. Rural places can sometimes feel like the end of the line, particularly for marginalized communities. Policies made in Washington, D.C. or state capitals filter down to the organizations working in the neighborhoods who have to deal with the decisions of those who may, or may not hold their best interest at heart. Aren't the residents, the locals, the radical few who stay put, sources of untapped breadths and depths of knowledge?

At PEOPLE+, we are inviting community designers to apply to speak alongside stakeholders and elevate the voices of the experts in place. As community designers, we seek to listen to those with whom we partner, and this year's convening will carve out space for the voices of people plus the designers who work on their behalf to hear each other.

+CONTEXT

Just as rural places can feel like the end of the political, financial or geographic line, rural people can feel their work and ideas are peripheral to the bigger, newer and seemingly more innovative urban world. The Mississippi Delta is the home of the blues, a genre that inspired the vast majority of modern music. In the Delta, visitors can also be inspired by writers, painters, cooks, activists and others who have portrayed the best of the human spirit. The Mississippi Delta also lays plain the great injustices and inheritances of the worst of the human spirit through the ever present divisions that remain as a result of a history of slavery and civil rights battles. Despite this history, and though mired at the bottom of nearly every poll for health, education, and poverty, there is magic in the Delta, wrought of both the good and bad that seem to have seeped into the soil.

The hosts, speakers, and events of the PEOPLE+ ACD convening will provide insights into the context of the Mississippi Delta and how both lifelong residents and those new to the area have sought out authentic and individualized understandings of the people and places in this region.



Greenwood will serve as home base for a few days as the experience of the Delta unfolds through a gathering of those on a shared mission to understand and elevate context in their everyday work. Join us for long summer evenings sitting on the porch, enjoying iced drinks together!

+VALUES

At the ACD Conference, we seek to practice these values:

- To re-center historically and currently marginalized communities, voices, perspectives, and expertise.
- To embrace the whole person, not just the professional identity.
- To foster space for critical dialog to support growth, acknowledge privilege, and allow for failure.
- To support non-hierarchical spaces that lift up knowledge of all kinds, lifting lived experience as equal to formal training.
- To create safer, braver, and kinder spaces.
- To acknowledge that design is inherently political and has political and social consequences.
- To provide intergenerational spaces and conversations that will strengthen our field.
- To demonstrate that authentic participation and shared power is critical for equitable impact.

+THEMES

Conference Tracks:

- + **Equity:** Systems of oppression and inequity disproportionately impact Communities of Color. How can community design actively work to build power and offset barriers to make more just places?
- + **Engagement:** Young people and vulnerable communities are valuable assets not often included in community decisions. What are ways to include these groups in design and community activism?
- + **Resilience:** In the face of adversity, our neighborhoods continue to bounce back. How do cultural heritage and people, as well as environmental conditions, impact a place's ability to persevere?
- + **Innovation:** The practice of community design continues to evolve on large and small scales. What are alternative approaches to our practice that catalyze change?

Conference tracks are offered to provide broad themes to foster focused dialog on connective topics. Submissions are welcomed to address the tracks above or align with the conference theme. Strong workshop proposals will align with conference values and will be explicit on how they embody those values. Additionally, panel proposals that include a variety of perspectives, including resident and community partner voice will be prioritized.

REVIEW PROCESS + TIMELINE:

We are seeking proposals for presentations and workshops from the disciplines of community design, urban planning, architecture, landscape architecture, public health, social design, community organizing, environmental design, and other related fields. Interdisciplinary



presenters outside the traditional fields of community design that impact the work of the built environment are welcomed.

Proposals that include multiple perspectives, including resident and community partners will be prioritized. Please be sure to review conference values to identify places of alignment with your proposal.

All proposals will be reviewed by a jury comprised of experts from community, nonprofit, design, public sector and academic arenas, including Delta Design Build Workshop staff and the Conference Steering Committee.

Schedule:

Release Date: March 1, 2019

Deadline for submissions: April 5, 2019

Selected presenters will be notified by April 30, 2019.

Submission instructions:

Sessions should be 30 or 60 minutes in length, and can be organized as either a presentation, panel, roundtable discussion or hands-on workshop or activity. You may also propose a 5-minute “quickfire” presentation which will be grouped with other similar presentations during the conference.

All submissions should be submitted via the online form:

<https://goo.gl/forms/ILzHJ9vJSbDrJEre2>

Accepted presenters will be given free attendance to the conference.

Contact information:

If you have any questions, please contact aoneill@communitydesign.org

For more information see: www.communitydesign.org/peopleplus

About the Conference:

The Association for Community Design’s Annual Conference brings together university faculty, students, design professionals, community members, firms, nonprofits and local government representatives to facilitate dialogue on the intersection of community design, equity, and environmental justice while also sharing unique perspectives from the host city which changes every year. By building skills, honing cross-disciplinary techniques, and openly examining on-the-ground experiences we deepen and amplify our impact.

Travel:

Greenwood is a 2-hour drive from the Jackson Medgar Wiley Evers Airport (JAN) in Jackson, MS or Memphis International Airport (MEM) in Memphis, TN. Both airports offer rental car options. Amtrak stops in both Jackson and Memphis also link directly to Greenwood, though the airports and Amtrak stops are only accessible by car (both airports allow Uber and Lyft).



Amtrak stops directly in Greenwood on the historic “City of New Orleans” line. We recommend this route if at all possible. Board in Chicago for dinner and breakfast before your arrival or catch the train in New Orleans for an afternoon ride up through various ecosystems. The train has numerous other stops in towns and smaller cities.

As we approach the conference, a rideshare spreadsheet will be available for attendees to connect and carpool.

