

2022 Call for ACD Board Members

The Ask -

[The Association for Community Design](#) (ACD) is a membership organization connecting practitioners engaged in creating equitable, healthy, and resilient communities since 1977. Originally conceived as a professional networking organization for leaders of community design centers, since 2014 ACD has expanded program offerings and focused more explicitly on supporting built-environment professionals engaged in creating more just and equitable communities across the rural-urban transect.

We are a group of value-aligned individuals, design practices and organizations that believe in:

Justice: Buildings, streets, open spaces, cities, and systems must be designed to welcome, protect, and work for all members of a community, regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, religion, age or place of birth. Design must ensure community self-determination and control at every step of the process.

Accountability: We acknowledge that design practitioners have a role in addressing injustice and we hold ourselves and our allied professions responsible for transforming design practice. We reflect on our systems, internal and institutional, and we change those that don't work for justice.

Radical Partnerships: Our collaborations are rooted in supportive and non-competitive union.

Diversity: We believe the most relevant and responsive solutions are a result of inter-generational and interdisciplinary team collaboration that holds life experience as equal to academic and professional knowledge.

ACD has three core programs which support the goal of creating more just and equitable communities;

ACD Conference & Convenings: An annual convening, hosted in partnership with a local institution, firm, or organization. Prior to the pandemic, the event occurred over 3-4 days, at locations across the country in June of every year. In 2020 and 2021, the conference continued to share research, work, findings, build coalitions amongst practitioners, and incentivize exchange between national practitioners and local organizations as a virtual gathering hosted in the fall.

ACD Fellowship: ACD is seeking funding to make permanent an extremely impactful year-long fellowship program for emerging professionals working to dismantle systemic injustices, empower disenfranchised communities, and expand thought leadership within the built environment. While we seek the necessary funding, we continue to practice partnering with established practitioners within the field of community design and activism to develop business models, expand professional networks, and further personal research and presentation of our members.

ACD Research: Beginning in 2017 ACD engaged in a multi-year research supported by the Surdna Foundation to explore firms, philosophies, and design processes which promote racially just practice. At the conclusion of this research in 2020, the Racial Justice research project will include a first-of-its-kind website with resources, findings, and next steps for design practitioners.

During 2020 - 2021 ACD welcomed more than 1,000 community designers into our network to "find their people," learn together, and design with communities. We did this through a monthly webinar series, and an annual conference attended by 300 professionals, that elevated and supported emerging leaders in the field from diverse backgrounds, and disciplines united by the goal of creating a more just and inclusive design and planning practices. You can support ACD's mission to advance more equitable communities by joining the board in organizational development, communication, content creation, and venues for connection.

In the coming year ACD faces a number of exciting challenges. First and foremost, we will plan and execute our third conference since the beginning of the pandemic. We will once again assess whether this will be an in-person, online, or hybrid gathering, with all the implications that decision carries. We will publish the much-anticipated Racial Justice Research publication and celebrate that launch. We will continue to advance fellowship resources that are accessible to anyone looking for support in their practice of equitable design or related fields, both through our existing offerings (Circles of Practice, Embodied Practice Workshops, Formal Fellowship) and through new opportunities. We will continue to seek partnerships that support aligned organizations like Design As Protest, the Design Justice Network, Open Architecture Collaborative, Dark Matter University, NOMA, and other organizations seeking an equitable and just built environment. We will continue to communicate our mission effectively on a variety of platforms to reach members and others who will benefit from our offerings. And, to support all of the above, we will continue to seek the means to streamline and strengthen our all-volunteer run operations.

We are looking for at least 6 new board members to fill openings in leadership positions on all of our [six committees](#) (Organizational Development, Communications, Membership & Partnership, Fellowship & Mentorship, Research & Resources, Conference & Convenings). We are looking for individuals who are seeking to support equitable space and place design by supporting practitioners doing this work every day, or seeking careers in this space. If you want this world to exist, we need your help to build and sustain it. Each Committee on our working board will need a new chair or co-chair in the coming year, so we are particularly looking for experienced, driven new members who have immediate and ongoing capacity to take on scheduling, brainstorming, prototyping, communicating, and otherwise getting things done.

What does that mean? Our working board members commit to joining two committees, one operating committee (Org Dev, Membership, Comms) one programming committee (Conference, Fellowship, Research). This helps braid our programs, facilitating easy communication and coordination. It also expands the group of people you will meet and work with directly! Each committee meets twice a month at a set time. Committees are chaired (or co-chaired!) by a Working Board member who helps hold the group accountable to meet mutually agreed upon goals, often by writing agendas, setting up meetings, and checking in with board members who have experienced changes in capacity. Committee Chairs and Co-Chairs meet monthly to track progress and project needs for assistance and funding, as well as to connect as a body of mutual support. We currently have every-other month all-board meetings that are opportunities for checking in together and planning for the longer term. In addition, our board members commit to a 3-year term of service, uphold their fiduciary duty to the nonprofit organization, maintain an active ACD membership, and represent ACD's mission, values, and work in the world.

The board is a social support network for people in this space. It will connect you to others doing this work, and gives you a chance to make a real difference in the field. It also is a space for learning new organizational skills you might not otherwise have access to -- like budgeting, taxes, social media campaigns, webinar hosting, conference planning, etc. If you have all these skills already, we promise we have even more to offer you, and we'd love to have you on our team. Finally, the board interacts with our advisory board, an amazing group of women who once served on our board or otherwise do incredible equity and justice work.

In summary, we are looking for 6 amazing, driven, friendly folks to join our board and advance ACD's mission, [applications are open online](#) and close January 17th. Board members will be selected by early February 2022, onboarded and begin board service in early March 2022

QUESTIONS? Contact Maria at mbergh@communitydesign.org or Stephen at sklimek@communitydesign.org