Engaging Our Communities
It seems improbable now, looking back, that the events of 2021 were confined to a single year. On so many levels, it was a meaningful year — momentous, challenging, and, above all, uplifting. Recall that as the year began, our community was still very much in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, feeling the effects of isolation on our profession and on our daily lives in profound ways. Consider how far we have come.

The impact of our forced isolation was only deepened by the ironic truth that, at its core, the work of landscape architects is intersectional. Our members are charged with transforming spaces and curating experiences at the interstices between our environment and our day-to-day lives. We bring communities together, root people to place, and pull meaning out of our surroundings.

The mission of ASLA sits at the crossroads of many of the most urgent issues facing society today — climate action, environmental justice, racial equity, and historic preservation.

In that respect, 2021 was a year in which we returned to the places where our lives and our livelihoods intersect. We were humbled and amazed by the way our community, staff, and partners came together to successfully stage the ASLA 2021 Conference on Landscape Architecture safely against the looming threat of yet another COVID-19 surge. The return to in-person gatherings provided emotional sustenance to those in attendance, and over four days in Nashville, we experienced hope in the face of adversity.

Looking ahead, ASLA’s commitment to the future reflects the commitments we made in the past to protect and promote the public well-being. When our organization was founded in 1899, life expectancy among men and women was less than 50 years. Landscape architecture was a public necessity, closely linked to public health. Landscapes today play no less vital a role in our society, woven into neighborhoods, in cities and rural places, providing respite, boosting mental and physical health and welfare, and promoting equitable access to clean air, water, and soil.

I am grateful to our members and our Board of Trustees for the opportunity to engage in this transformative, purpose-driven service to our members, partners, and communities.

Torey Carter-Conneen
ASLA Chief Executive Officer

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FRONT COVER: ASLA 2021 Professional Urban Design Honor Award, Farm for the City, Philadelphia
Photo: Pennsylvania Horticultural Society for Viridian Landscape Studio

2021 ASLA Professional Urban Design Award, CityArchRiver Project, St. Louis, Missouri
Michael Van Valkenburgh Associates/Alex MacLean

Torey Carter-Conneen
ASLA Chief Executive Officer
Finding Our Future

With the 2022–2024 Strategic Plan, ASLA is charting a bold new course for the future that focuses on the needs of our members while advancing the profession.

**ASLA MISSION:** Empowering our members to design a sustainable and equitable world through landscape architecture.

**ASLA FUND MISSION:** Investing in global, social, and environmental change through the art and science of landscape architecture.

How We Got Here

At ASLA, we’ve long known that there is an evolving relationship between our communities, the profession we work in, and the planet on which we live. And that relationship has formed a cornerstone of our design philosophies. As the understanding of landscape architecture’s impact on our society grows larger, reaching ASLA’s full potential for positive change must be our collective focus.

Over the course of a year, ASLA leadership collaborated to develop a strategic plan that will help us reach our potential. We began by listening — to both the membership and leadership of ASLA. We considered where we need to go as an organization and how best to serve the members and the profession.

We held informal conversations, monthly town hall meetings with members, a series of one-on-one interviews and focus groups, and virtual — and, thankfully, some in-person — meetings with our chapters.

Two things became clear during this process: the ASLA mission statement wasn’t reflective of what we are about as an organization, and there was a need to clarify ASLA’s role as a member association versus the role of the ASLA Fund.

So, as a result of this process, we updated our core mission statement and developed a separate one for the ASLA Fund.

In response to all of the insights gleaned from our information gathering, we developed the ASLA 2030 Vision. Member input is the foundation of this vision as it painted a picture of where we are going — an exciting future for ASLA and the profession that will require all of us working together to make it a reality.

What the Future Holds

The plan articulates a vision of the organization’s future, updates our mission statement, redeline the role of the ASLA Fund, and identifies five focus areas that will direct our strategy to ensure we achieve the future we imagine (Community, Connection, Innovation, Scale, and Voice).

Some of the milestones we will achieve by 2024 are:

- Improve our member experience by updating our technology platform, making joining, renewing, and accessing tailored content easier for members.
- Expand the demographics of ASLA by attracting more members from underrepresented communities and increased professional memberships.
- Improve the linkage and transition for student members as they move into their post-academic relationship with ASLA.
- Conduct a sustainability audit for the 2022 Conference on Landscape Architecture to establish a baseline for meeting our long-term goal of achieving net-zero carbon emissions by 2040.
- Review and revize our membership categories and introduce a new updated membership dues structure to increase overall member value.

“While the plan launched in November 2021, we’re already seeing progress being made on multiple fronts.”

— Tom Mroz, FASLA
ASLA 2021 President

pointing to a newly established program that provides funding for women of color to obtain their licenses, as well as the launch of a climate action task force and advisory group focused on the overhaul of ASLA’s membership dues structure.

But there’s still more work to do: driving this kind of transformation will take time and it will require paradigm shifts, a diversity of backgrounds and thinking, and a passionate will to change to be successful.

Our members have spoken, and we are committed to integrating this work into the fabric of our organization and our profession. We believe this plan brings us a step closer to delivering on our promise to lead change in our profession, in the design community, and the world.
Leading a New Era of Infrastructure

Last year’s passage of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act includes provisions that will allow landscape architects to take the lead on projects nationwide.

For years, ASLA and landscape architects have been urging policy makers and other stakeholders to address the country’s infrastructure deficits in a holistic manner that not only repairs these critical services in a more resilient manner, but also addresses climate change, biodiversity, equity, and inclusion. The profession and ASLA have made great strides in achieving these goals, passage of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA), also known as the Bipartisan Infrastructure Bill, is by far the most far-reaching step in achieving ASLA’s recommended paradigm shift.

The IIJA provides unprecedented funding to modernize traditional infrastructure such as roads, bridges, transit, rail, ports, airports, and drinking water and wastewater infrastructure. However, it also makes groundbreaking investments in more innovative forms of infrastructure like active transportation, public lands, and broadband; provides the largest investment to address climate change; and takes critical steps to ensure environmental social justice for underserved communities.

Leading a New Era of Infrastructure

Last year’s passage of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act includes provisions that will allow landscape architects to take the lead on projects nationwide.

How Landscape Architects Helped Shape the Bill

ASLA kicked off the 117th Congress by sending a set of comprehensive policy recommendations, Landscape Architects Design Vibrant, Resilient, and Just Communities for All, to the Biden administration and Congress, and followed up with a set of specific transportation policy and funding recommendations, Landscape Architects Design Multimodal Transportation Networks for All. ASLA’s advocacy efforts, including grassroots, coalition, and direct advocacy, resulted in a final infrastructure package that includes several of ASLA’s recommendations. Specifically, the measure includes increased funding and policy changes to strengthen critical active transportation programs like the Transportation Alternatives, Safe Routes to School, Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality, and National Scenic Byways programs; Complete Streets and Vision Zero programs; and provisions to elevate context sensitive solutions, protect wildlife corridors, and removal of harmful highway projects in underserved communities.

The measure also addresses fixing our nation’s water systems, including providing additional resources for the Clean Water and Drinking Water State Revolving Funds and promoting the use of nature-based solutions to meet clean water goals. The law also includes funding and policy enhancements for our national parks and other public lands — all ASLA policy recommendations.

What This Means for Our Profession

With passage of the IIJA, millions of additional dollars will now be available for landscape architects to access to plan and design resilient, cost-effective, and healthy infrastructure projects across the nation.

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DREAM BIG with Design, a Showcase of Landscape Architecture and PreK–12 Design Learning, was the successful culmination of this new effort. The two-day virtual event featured landscape architecture and hands-on student learning — just in time to kick off the school year. Held September 23–24, the free summit included 45 prerecorded sessions in English, Spanish, Mandarin, and American Sign Language. Students and teachers could join live to interact with the presenters, or they could use the materials, including ASLA member-created lesson plans, on their own schedule. And it’s that accessibility that makes DREAM BIG with Design even more special, especially in September 2021, when many educators were unsure whether their classrooms would be in-person or online. More than 900 participants — teachers, students, ASLA members, and more — joined the event from Illinois, Connecticut, Texas, Washington, D.C., Georgia, Maryland, New Jersey, Nevada, and even Peru. For the 700 student attendees, the event provided an inspiration to dream big. After all, what could be bigger than designing theme parks for Walt Disney and LEGOLAND theme parks? These students have unlocked a new potential STEM career path, one that is built on creativity, innovation, and resilience. And they will have the opportunity to keep dreaming, thanks to ASLA’s 2022 Career Discovery and Diversity programming, including a recently held special screening of the PBS Nature and HHMI Tangled Bank Studios film My Garden of a Thousand Bees in April and a series of DREAM BIG with Minecraft camps set to launch in May.
Designing Shared Spaces

The ASLA 2021 Conference on Landscape Architecture featured new approaches to inclusive design.

For many members, attending the annual ASLA Conference on Landscape Architecture renews their passion for the profession. It’s a chance to take a step back, reflect, and learn from the best in the business. And because of the COVID-19 pandemic, that connection had never been more necessary.

After taking necessary safety precautions, ASLA successfully convened the 2021 Conference on Landscape Architecture with more than 4,000 participants at Nashville’s Music City Center, November 19-22.

From the field sessions to the EXPO floor, the energy and excitement were obvious. Attendees and presenters alike were thrilled to be back in person — making those special connections, with new friends or old classmates, in the hallways between presentations.

A Healthy Return to In-Person Events

ASLA contracted with TN Event Health to create a healthy environment for all registrants, including verifying vaccination cards, temperature checks, and masking.

The 2021 conference focused on inclusive design with the theme “Designing Shared Spaces.” Landscape architects are increasingly being called upon to ensure the long-term health of their communities. Consequently, the conference showcased multilayered plans and designs that improve community health, increase resilience to climate change, and address long-standing inequities in our society.

The conference featured more than 350 speakers in seven education tracks and celebrated award-winning work. Participants chose different types of educational experiences, from 60-minute sessions to half-day workshops, all tailored to fulfill professional development requirements.

Attendees from around the world also visited local landscape architecture projects curated by the ASLA Tennessee Host Chapter—field session committee. These field sessions highlighted Nashville’s Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), riverfront development, historic city parks, and other unique Nashville landscapes.

Eugenia Martin, FASLA, was installed as ASLA President during the annual Presidents Dinner. She is the 11th female president of the Society. Emily O’Malley-Nessey, FASLA, will serve as ASL President-Elect. Tom Mroz, FASLA, will continue to serve as Immediate Past President for one year. Also installed were incoming vice presidents Joy Kuebler, ASLA, to lead Government Affairs and Ebru Ozer, ASLA, to lead Education. Communications Vice President Jeaine Lukenda, ASLA; Finance Vice President Tamas Deak, FASLA; Membership Vice President Bradley McCauley, ASLA; and Professional Practice Vice President Adrian Smith, FASLA, will continue to serve in their roles.

Standout Sessions

The conference offered a valuable opportunity for students to meet and speak to professionals they admire and to make connections to attend the conference and experience the unmatched knowledge and networking of this four-day event.

So which topics were top of mind for the next generation of landscape architects? They included sessions that tackled justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion, and changing the culture in practice. Students and emerging professionals are seeking new ways to apply their skills beyond traditional practice and are looking to redefine leadership in practice. The conference offered a valuable opportunity for students to meet and speak to professionals they admire and to make connections for future job prospects.

Student Attendees Grow the Field

ASLA has increased its outreach to landscape architecture programs to reduce barriers to student participation. Through the ASLA Fund, more than 600 students, many of them first-time attendees, were sponsored to attend the conference and experience the unmatched knowledge and networking of this four-day event.

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By the Numbers

4,000+ Attendees
23 Sponsors
96 Education sessions
355 Speakers
234 EXPO exhibitors
700+ Students

AWARDS OF EXCELLENCE

The ASLA Professional and Student Awards honor the best in landscape architecture from around the globe.

See 2021’s student and professional winners at asla.org/2021awards

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Standout Sessions

Designing with Disabled People Now: Including Disabled People in the Design Process

Demystifying Design Processes Abroad and at Home

Shaping Design Community Voices, Community Landscapes: Building Great Ideas: Art, Science, and Reality

Debunking “Green New Deal Initiative: Processes Abroad and at Home

Transforming Neglected Urban Land in Baltimore into Bliss Meadows

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What Is SKILL|ED?

More than 400 landscape architecture professionals and students came together June 22–24, 2021, to invest in their career development. The virtual practice management program included more than 20 sessions highlighting skills crucial to career growth — education that is not always gained in day-to-day work.

The Attendees: Full professional members who wanted to advance to higher levels within their firm or practice, including 116 ASLA Student Members who received free registration thanks to generous member donations.

On the Agenda: Business and leadership training, including business development, marketing, and professional contracts.

How We’re Advancing Climate Action

How can landscape architects shape the future of our communities through climate advocacy? As always, we’re moving past theory and focusing on aggressive action and impressive impact — and our members are leading the way.

In 2021, the ASLA Climate Action Committee launched a new guide, Climate Action Now: A Landscape Architect’s Guide to Climate Advocacy, to help landscape architecture professionals become more impactful climate advocates.

LOOKING FORWARD: A New ASLA Climate Action Plan

Who: A task force, led by Climate Action Committee member Pamela Conrad, ASLA

What: A new ASLA Climate Action Plan focusing on member education, equitable mitigation, and adaptation goals

When: Debuting at the ASLA 2022 Conference on Landscape Architecture in November

Awards

An Award-Winning Magazine for Our Members

Landscape Architecture Magazine celebrated its 111th year of publication with several hard-earned honors. The magazine functions both as a survey of the most compelling events currently taking place in landscape architecture and an important communications tool, allowing ASLA to share policy developments affecting professional practice, design innovation, climate justice, and conservation with its members.

2021 EXCEL AWARDS

The EXCEL Awards is the largest program recognizing excellence and leadership in association media, publishing, marketing, and communication.

- Design Excellence: Gold
  - February/March/April 2020
  - Landscape Design: Gold
  - “June Van, Will Gardens,” and “The Thin Green Line”

- Feature Article Design: Gold
  - “June Van, Will Gardens”

- General Excellence: Silver
  - March/April/May 2020

The Power of Action

ASLA solidified its commitment to move our profession toward a more just and inclusive community in its Racial Equity Plan of Action. Released in March, the plan outlines a five-point strategy to achieve these critical goals:

1. Diversifying the Pipeline: Equipping our students and institutions to lead in this work
2. Acknowledging Racism in the Profession and Honoring the Forgotten: Making it clear where we stand and where we aim to go
3. Reshaping the Conversation and Transforming Frameworks: Establishing enduring structures for the journey ahead
4. Leading Through Education, Conversation, and Policy: Developing and disseminating content on advancing racial equity
5. Accountability: Maintaining meaningful, measurable progress

The Defense of State Licensure

In the past six years, the landscape architecture industry has faced a significant anti-occupational licensing movement. These reform proposals largely focus on reducing mobility barriers and requiring regular reviews of licensed occupations.

ASLA worked closely with the Illinois Chapter to enact Senate Bill 214, the Landscape Architecture Registration Act, which was signed into law on August 4, 2021. The ASLA Licensure Committee also provided recommendations to the Council of Landscape Architectural Registration Boards to develop a Uniform Licensure Standard for Landscape Architecture.

ASLA Member Employment By the Numbers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Employment Category</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>33%</td>
<td>Landscape architecture firm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25%</td>
<td>Student</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18%</td>
<td>Architectural, engineering, or multidisciplinary firm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6%</td>
<td>Local or federal government</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5%</td>
<td>Business</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4%</td>
<td>Design/Build</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3%</td>
<td>Academic Institution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6%</td>
<td>Other</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Members: 14,681

Mentorship

ASLA’s Mentorship Program is a unique online networking and career development tool that connects ASLA student and associate members with full professional members.

2021 JESSE H. NEAL AWARDS

Since 1955, the Jesse H. Neal Awards have been the most prestigious editorial honors in the field of specialized journalism.

- Best Overall Art Direction/Design
  - “The Wild World of Terremoto,” “June Van, Will Gardens,” and “The Thin Green Line”

- Best Single Article
  - “Lethal Glass Landscapes” by Jeff Link

- Best Profile
  - “Hello Fan (Claude Cormier)” by Brian Barth

- Jennifer Bext was named editor in chief of Landscape Architecture Magazine, ASLA’s award-winning monthly magazine, in October 2021. She is only the third woman to lead the magazine since its founding in 1910.

Our Eyes and Ears

ASLA’s 49 chapters are the lifeblood of our organization, spearheading local efforts to advance the landscape architecture profession in civic, educational, and public spheres, nationwide.

- 67% of chapters saw an increase in membership in 2021.
- More than 40% of chapters pursued Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) initiatives in 2021, up from 22% in 2019.

- 70% are LA CES™ providers, with the Texas Chapter becoming an education provider in 2021.
- 74% of chapters reported positive relationships with state licensure boards.

Connections Across the Community

...
Recognizing Excellence

Our award winners represent the best of our profession’s present and its future.

Selected by ASLA’s Board of Trustees, the ASLA honors represent the highest awards presented each year. Congratulations to each of our winners!

The ASLA Medal

The ASLA Medal is the highest honor ASLA can bestow upon an individual who has made significant contributions to the profession throughout his or her career.

Darwina L. Neal, FASLA
Darwina L. Neal, FASLA, who died last fall, dedicated her 44-year career to promoting landscape architecture through advocacy and stewardship. She was a friend to many in the landscape architecture community and a strong advocate for equity, preservation, and leadership in the profession. Her work and legacy continue to inspire us to protect the landscape architecture profession and its heritage.

Figures

These figures represent the financial position of the organization and tell a story of passion, creativity, resilience, and innovation of our community, staff, and volunteers, and the allocation of resources, including your support.

YTD TOTAL REVENUE & SUPPORT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total Revenue</th>
<th>% Change</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>2021</td>
<td>$12,972,690</td>
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<tr>
<td>2020</td>
<td>$9,972,406</td>
<td>27%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

The successful annual conference contributed nearly $1 million to the overall increase in revenue from the previous year, which allows us to provide new resources and expand our investments in communications and advocacy.

The Strength in Our Numbers

Thanks to the tireless efforts of our community and the continued diversification of our work, the state of the organization is strong.

Despite obvious challenges, we managed to gain ground on several fronts including membership, where we retained and grew our numbers close to expectations; and, in fact, expanded our outreach efforts within both educational and professional spheres. In 2022, we expect to return to and potentially exceed our 2019 operating capacity.

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SAVE THE DATE
November 11–14, 2022
ASLA 2022 Conference on Landscape Architecture
Moscone Center, San Francisco
aslaconference.com