

How to Facilitate the Practice Innovation Lab

Young Architects Forum

an **AIA** member group



**The American
Institute
of Architects**

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Introduction

With so much of the world in flux, how will architects adapt ways of practicing that will advance the profession?

In 2017 the Young Architects Forum hosted the YAF Summit 25 Practice Innovation Lab, focused on answering this question. Three years and one pandemic later, the question is as relevant as ever.

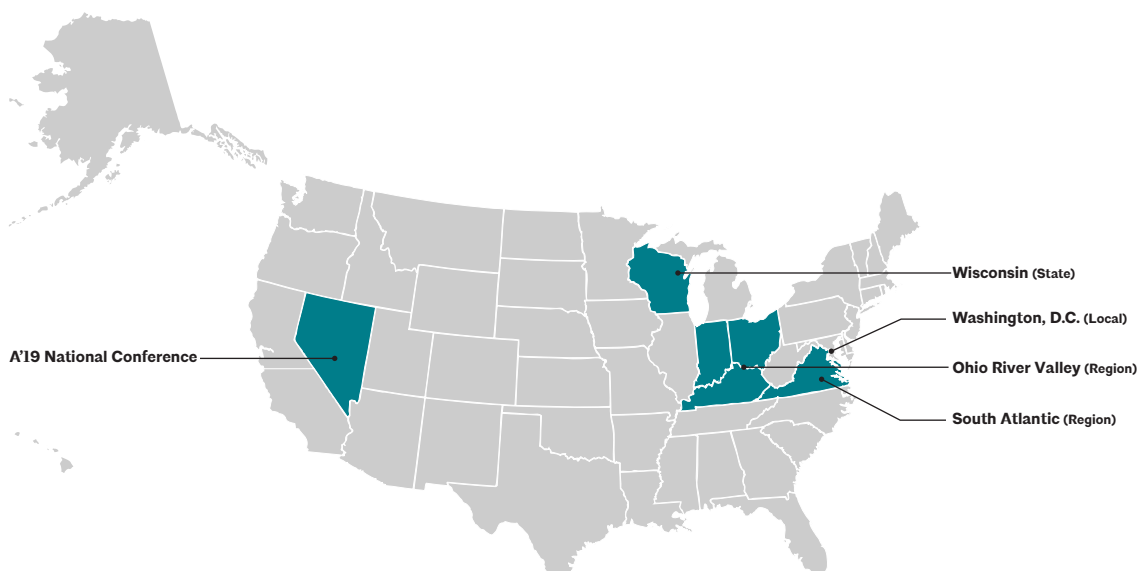
The architecture profession is constantly faced with challenges to its value and contribution to society. It's no stranger to debates about how architects should practice, or where, or to what end. The Practice Innovation Lab is an opportunity for architects to address these and other issues, large and small. The workshop is a first step in the development of new practice models that will evolve and advance the profession. It's an opportunity to challenge the status quo, spark a conversation, and improve the built environment to the betterment of ourselves and others.

The Practice Innovation Lab can be broken down into the following three ideas:

Practice: Exploring how to leverage the architect's skills to improve upon how things are done. This involves questioning the traditional boundaries of architecture and firm structure.

Innovation: Ideation of disruptive concepts, processes, and products that have the potential for lasting impact. It's an opportunity for architects to explore their entrepreneurial skill set.

Lab: The workshop is a first step in the development of new practice models that will evolve and advance the profession. A time for testing ideas and receiving feedback. It includes generating concepts with the potential to gain traction and eventually be deployed at full scale.



The Practice Innovation Lab has deployed several regional and local workshops:

Wisconsin [2019]

Format: Six-hour in-person workshop with a two-hour speaker presentation followed by focus groups and a one-hour presentation in an entrepreneurial think tank.

Synopsis: Participants registered for a single-day event. Two speakers presented in the morning about alternative paths for architects and entrepreneurs. Participants divided into teams for lunch and a two-hour workshop. They were prompted to review the 10 types of innovation and prepare a 10-minute pitch to all participants. At the end of the day, each workshop group gave an oral presentation and was ranked by the morning speakers and three additional judges. Winning titles included: Most Innovative, Most Marketable, Best Presentation, and Audience Choice.

Ohio Valley [2019]

Format: Eight-hour in-person workshop followed by one-hour keynote presentation.

Synopsis: Participants gathered for the workshop as part of the Biennial Regional Conference. Teams could

register as a unit or be grouped according to common interests at the workshop. A presentation kicked off a day long charrette focused on developing an innovative practice model. Teams reconvened the following day to present their ideas to the regional assembly as the final keynote address of the conference.

South Atlantic [2017]

Format: One-month virtual program culminating with a four-hour in-person workshop.

Synopsis: Teams were formed at the onset, and for four weeks they met virtually in guided discussions to conceptualize an innovative practice model. At the end of the month, teams gathered at the regional conference for an in-person workshop, where they presented their ideas in four-minute pitches to all participants.

New Orleans [2018]

Format: Four-hour in-person workshop.

Synopsis: AIA New Orleans gathered for two hours of discussion on identifying strategic goals, services, messaging, and communications followed by two hours of group work to construct an ideal architectural practice for the

future of the Gulf South.

Washington, D.C. [2018]

Format: Ninety-minute in-person session

Synopsis: Participants from the YAF Summit 25 Practice Innovation Lab gathered to present the topics, trends, and themes of the original workshop and test their relevance to the larger local audience. The session concluded with an interactive workshop where participants built upon these ideas and developed new innovative models for the future of architectural practice.

Las Vegas, A'19 National Conference [2019]

Format: Four 90-minute panel discussions.

Synopsis: Four consecutive sessions at the AIA National Conference in Las Vegas, focused on practice innovation. Featured panelists included venture capitalists, small business owners, and innovation grant recipients.

To establish your own Practice Innovation Lab, follow the steps in this toolkit.

Step 1: Establish Your Purpose

Consider the goals of your workshop. What are you hoping to achieve?

Define the Audience

Your intended audience plays a critical role as you begin planning your workshop. The format, duration, and impact of the workshop will vary based on the target audience. Consider the following possibilities:

- **Emerging Professional Audience:**
A workshop focused on advancing the skillset and harnessing the energy of the Emerging Professional membership.
- **Interdisciplinary Audience:**
A focused workshop bringing different industry voices together, including architects, interior designers, developers, and contractors.
- **Regional Audience:**
A workshop focused on connecting professionals from across a multi-state region with a range of experience and variety of local knowledge.

Set Goals

Develop objectives, milestones, or indicators to gauge the success of your program:

- **Timeframe:**
Will your workshop be tied to a planned event or respond to a current issue?
- **Participation:**
Will your workshop require a critical mass to achieve viability?
- **Funding:**
Will you need to raise funds to execute your workshop?
- **Relevance:**
What do your participants already know how to do? What does innovation mean to them?
- **Impact:**
What does your workshop need to accomplish to achieve lasting impact in your component or region?

Create a Team

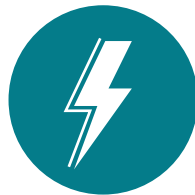
As you develop your program, consider the following roles and identify team members to help with planning and execution:

- **Communications Coordinator:**
To coordinate communication among components, members, and workshop participants.
- **Fundraising Coordinator:**
To research and apply for grants, component funding, or outside support.
- **Social Media / Outreach Coordinator:**
To create promotional materials (e-blasts, one-pagers, etc.) .
- **Graphics Coordinator:**
To create the program logo, assist with program media, and create infographics of workshop results.

Step 2: Event Structure

Innovation is more than the topic, it is the nature of a Practice Innovation Lab. Each event can be catered to rethink the basic structure.

Past PILs have fallen into the following categories:



ENERGIZE

60 – to – 90 Minute Seminar

Restimulate attendees perception of architectural practice with panelists or speakers from various professions.

- Introduce speakers from alternative professions.
- Highlight innovative concepts .
- Share new technology, practices, collaborations, and beyond.

Take-aways:

- Spark new concepts.
- Disrupt assumptions.
- Introduce innovation.



EXPLORE

4 – to – 8 Hour Workshop

Reframe architectural practice in small groups that tackle a perceived problem or void in contemporary practice.

- Includes Energize.
- Collaborate in small groups for workshop and discussion.
- Oral presentation of each small group's explorations.

Take-aways:

- Dive into a think tank.
- Reframe assumptions.
- Investigate innovation.



EXHIBIT

2+ Day-plus Workshop

Rethink perceived boundaries and limits to architectural practice in teams that identify, iterate, and generate a new idea or product.

- Includes Energize and Explore
- Practice innovation and entrepreneurship in teams .
- Visual and oral presentation prepared by each team.

Take-aways:

- Identify a perceived problem.
- Develop a new response.
- Ignite innovation.



ENERGIZE EVENT

60 – to – 90 Minute Seminar

Restimulate attendees perception of architectural practice with panelists or speakers from various professions.

EVENT OVERVIEW

Introduce innovation to your firm, state, or region by highlighting speakers from various industries and professions.

Sharing stories of success and failure provides insight into the world of innovation and helps attendees better understand the risk and reward of innovating architectural practice.

SPEAKER TYPES

Business and services

- Entrepreneur
- Venture capitalist
- Non-profit CEO
- Artist

Technology and practice

- Software engineer
- Industrial designer
- Sustainability specialist
- Material technologies
- Certified futurist

SAMPLE VENUES

- Co-Working space
- Entrepreneurial enterprise
- Energy Company headquarters
- LEED Certified building
- WELL Certified building
- University or college campus
- State or regional conference
- AIA luncheon
- Virtual

A'19 CONFERENCE

Take the Energize Event to the next level with an Innovation Track at your next conference. At the A'19 National Conference in Las Vegas, the Practice Innovation Lab Business Accelerator aimed to foster the development of innovative practice models for architects.

PRACTICE INNOVATION LAB

Part 1: Secrets from Venture Capital Investors for Design Entrepreneurs

Part 2: Disrupt or Die

Part 3: Conversations on Practice Innovation and How to Start Your Own

Part 4: The Practice Innovation Lab Shark Tank



EXPLORE EVENT

4 - to - 8 Hour Workshop

Reframe architectural practice in small groups that tackle a perceived problem or void in contemporary practice.

FORMAT

A half- or full-day workshop provides time for participants to engage in an innovative exercise. Kicking off the event with innovative speakers or thought leaders reframes attendees' assumptions and excites them to rethink those assumptions. When teams are formed, it helps to warm up with introductions. Then the teams may be prompted with specific questions that guide their innovative process. At the end of the day, each team presents its discussion or product as an elevator pitch.

Work Session 1: Elevate

During the first part of the work session, elevate your team's understanding of innovation in architecture practice as you begin to think about your pitch and develop your idea.

Work Session 2: Innovate

During the second part of the work session begin to get your hands dirty crafting your team's innovative practice model and tackle some of the required questions. Answering these questions as a group should focus your innovation into a solid idea.

Work Session 3: Breakthrough

Now that you have your inspirational idea, dive into your big pitch. Finalize your answers to the questions, select a team spokesperson, and prepare a few slides.

SCHEMATIC SCHEDULE

9 am	Arrival and introductions
10 am	Speaker presentations
12 pm	Teams formed (Lunch)
1 pm	Work in teams
3:30 pm	30 minute warning
4 pm	Presentations
5 pm	Happy hour (tour)

SAMPLE TEAM PROMPTS

Product or Service

What do you provide?
What problem do you solve?
Who are your competitors?
How will you differentiate?

Process

How do you deliver your service?
How is your firm organized?

Profit

Who is your ideal client/network?
Whom do you partner with?
How is your work/firm compensated?

Philanthropy

What problem do you solve?
What resources/skills are needed?

Alternative Team Prompts

Planet: Environmentally conscious innovations
Place: Localized situation, problem solving with parameters
Prompt: Narrative for specific time, place, and problem
Possibility: Collaborative response with another profession



EXHIBIT EVENT

2+ Day-plus Workshop

Rethink perceived boundaries and limits to architectural practice in teams that identify, iterate, and generate an innovation.

SAMPLE TEAM PROMPTS

Teams are asked to present an idea for an innovative product, process, profit model, or philanthropic effort that innovates on the practice of architecture.

- How do organizations thrive in the creative age?
- How does the role of the organization adapt to changing trends?
- What can we do that's never been done?

FORMAT

At the end of the PIL, teams have developed the schematic outline for a business venture, new product, or innovative process. To cap the event, the teams are rewarded with a high-stakes presentation that elevates the efforts of the team. Optional financial awards recognize the hard work of team members and may spur ideas into the next phase of innovation.

- Regional conference
- Keynote event
- Public event with shark tank panel of venture capitalists
- Virtual
- YouTube video summary

SCHEMATIC SCHEDULE

Day 1

- | | |
|-------|---------------------------|
| 9 am | Arrival and introductions |
| 10 am | Speaker presentations |
| 12 pm | Teams formed (Lunch) |
| 1 pm | Work in teams |
| 6 pm | Dinner (tour) |

Day 2

- | | |
|--------|-----------------------|
| 9 am | Speaker presentations |
| 12 pm | Lunch |
| 2.5 pm | 30 minute warning |
| 3 pm | Presentations |
| 5 pm | Happy hour |

OHIO VALLEY REGION PIL

How do we envision a new future from the present we already know?

This was the challenge laid out by Matt Williams of Brand Federation to the OVR Practice Innovation Lab in 2019. Over two days, teams anticipated what this future could look like and planned how architects might lead the way in redefining the creative industry.

TEAM PROPOSALS [SAMPLES]

- Calamitas: An architectural firm with a "boots on the ground" and ready-to-work approach for when disaster strikes.
- MASH: A new way of setting up a firm that is oriented toward delivering a building as a product, rather than drawings as a service.
- We4: Creating a co-op that can expand and contract based on the needs of the project.
- SNDBX: Reimagining the role of an architect to invest in problem solving beyond the building.
- <https://youtu.be/WZ5XeSTG-Ck>

Step 3: Secure a Facilitator

Dynamic workshops are led by inspirational, collaborative facilitators who can lead an energetic discussion.

The facilitator's role is critical to the success of your workshop. Select a facilitator who can:

- Engage participants by defining innovation and set expectations for the workshop.
- Demonstrate the success and failure of past innovative concepts and strategies.
- Shepherd groups through roadblocks and challenges developing new practice models.
- Inspire groups to continue to pursue innovative practices after the workshop is over.

It can be helpful to look beyond the profession and the AIA when searching for a facilitator to challenge architects to get outside the box of conventional practice models. Consider the following possibilities:

- **Futurist:**
A professional focused on researching where things are going.
- **Designer (non-architect):**
A professional who understands industry challenges and has experience developing solutions for similar design issues.
- **Academic:**
A professional whose expertise involves conveying complex ideas, concepts, and strategies to others.

Framing a mindset of innovation can be complemented by other marketing and entrepreneurial content. Some materials require prior approval from the copyright holder. Check with the publishing company before using material for a public event. Sometimes they have additional handouts or outlines to enhance the event:

Consider highlighting the work of innovative architects who are:

- Producing content marketing.
- Publishing books or blogs.
- Combining their profession with adjacent industries.

Or look beyond architecture to innovative marketing strategies, professional practice, or emerging industries for inspiration.

Step 4: Advertise the Program

Engage multiple opportunities to get the word out and maximize participation in your workshop.

AIA Channels

Utilize all available AIA channels for advertising your program, including:

- **Local Component:**
Work with component staff members to advertise your workshop on regular email blasts, newsletters, and a website.
- **Regional/State Component Network:**
Coordinate the advertisement of your workshop on state- and regional-level communication, including neighboring or nearby components.
- **Social Media:**
Establish content for regular release on component social media channels, including options for participants to register directly through those channels.

External Channels

Research opportunities to advertise your workshop in the design industry and in your community:

- **Allied Professions:**
Work with allied industry professionals including interior designers, contractors, and real estate brokers to advertise your workshop with relevant professional organizations and networks.
- **Local Media:**
Contact newspapers, publications, or digital magazines for advertisement to the public.

Other Considerations

As you develop relationships with professionals, networks, and agencies beyond the AIA, don't forget to follow up and share the results of your workshop.

Step 5: Execute the Workshop

“Never start a funeral with logistics”
– Priya Parker, “The Art of Gathering”

Final Planning

The Practice Innovation Lab toolkit begins the process by orienting your planning team with the goals and intended outcomes of your PIL workshop. After that, it is time to plan the logistics of your event. The location of the workshop or presentation can relate to your speakers and enhance the attendees’ experience. Customize the logistics to fit your workshop.

*COVID-19 note:

Follow local regulations on gatherings. Send attendees recommendations on personal protection and social guidelines in preparation for the event.

Location

The selected venue(s) can enhance your PIL workshop. It offers an opportunity to work within an energizing and collaborative space. Be creative and consider the following criteria:

- Parking or transit convenience
- Tables and chairs
- Audio and visual equipment
- Presentation screen or boards
- Separate venues for workshop and presentations

Schedule

No matter the length of your Practice Innovation Lab, the following outline will guide the experience for your attendees:

- Opening: Introduce innovation and align expectations.
- Content: Speakers, tour, or workshop reading.
- Engage, explore, and ideate.
- Conclude*: End strong with concise presentations or curated calls to action.

*This workshop opens a Pandora’s box of endless possibility. Ending strong harnesses momentum and energizes participants for the next phase of innovation.

REGISTRATION

Pre-event checklist

- Press release
- Online registration link
- Set fee
- Confirmation email with calendar Rminder, cirections to the venue, and prep material

Day of the workshop checklist:

- Welcome table
- Host (AIA staff)
- Name tags
- Handout w/ schedule and Practice Innovation Lab info
- Beverages and snacks

WORKSHOP MATERIALS

- Paper
- Pens / markers
- Large Post-it pages
- Sticky notes
- Index cards
- Easels
- Print-out prompts/worksheets

Step 6: Present Your Results

Team presentations are a highlight of the workshop. These shared ideas can be the catalyst for future companies or innovating practice!

Report Out

The opportunities for presenting innovative concepts are endless. Consider team size, audience, and judging when determining a presentation method:

- Pecha Kucha: Direct teams to curate a timed, focused presentation that levels the playing field for all teams.
- Shark Tank: Teams may choose to organize their presentations into a “sales pitch” that highlights the creativity behind the concept.
- Design Jury: Teams present to a panel of experts and create a dialogue about the proposed concept.

Multimedia Presentation

Consider what tools teams will have access to for their presentations, and challenge them to test boundaries with how they convey the big idea:

- Powerpoint presentation
- Video introducing the concept
- Prototype, model, or script
- Role play
- Combination of one or multiple modes

Feedback

No matter the style or mode of presentation, it is critical for teams to receive feedback about their ideas*:

- Use other teams as a built-in beta group.
- Allow the jury, facilitators, and speakers to weigh in and provide possible alternative considerations.
- Crowd source feedback from the convention or social media audience.

*Encourage teams to think beyond the Practice Innovation Lab. What would they change if they had more time?

WHERE THE POINTS DON'T MATTER...

Points do matter no matter the competitive level of attendees. Points add weight to the results and elevate the stakes. Turning the Practice Innovation Lab into a competition makes it fun!

Predetermine categories for teams to highlight and accrue points. Judges can score each presentation, announce winners for each category, and end with an overall “Innovation Champion.” Sample categories:

- Most Innovative
- Implement Immediately
- Most Expensive

Alternatively, you can use an online polling or website to have the crowd vote on a People’s Choice award.

Step 7: Follow Up

The conversation doesn't end with the workshop. Reach out to your teams and encourage them to keep innovating.

After the workshop, capitalize on the momentum generated by the discussion and develop a schedule for follow up with each team. Some considerations may include:

- One Week (post workshop):
Thank all participants/teams for engaging with the workshop. Follow up with sponsors/donors thanking them for their support.
- One Month:
Consolidate the workshop results and publish. Work with local, state, and regional components to issue the results to the membership. If your workshop involved allied professionals, share the results with relevant networks and organizations.
- Six Months:
Reach out to teams to gauge the development of concepts generated at your workshop. Ask how you might assist with ongoing development and encourage teams to continue pursuing innovation.

"The architecture profession is in a perpetual debate concerning the issues that impact how we practice, the value we contribute as architects, and how our work can and should impact the world around us. As the chair of the AIA's Young Architects Forum, and a person that left traditional practice nearly a decade ago, I am keenly aware of the problems facing the next generation of practice leaders: inefficient practice models that lead to overworked, underpaid, and highly unsatisfied staff. Traditional practice mirrors the success of the construction industry, which means we only thrive when our clients are building. Now is the time to engage in a conversation about our firms' business models and the necessary changes to successfully move the profession forward and retain talent. As the future leaders of the profession, the Young Architects Forum's voice within the dialog is an important one." - Evelyn Lee, AIA

Appendix

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ALTERNATIVE READINGS:

- **Upstream** | Dan Heath
- **Power of Moments** | Chip Heath, Dan Heath
- **Founder Farmer Tinker Thief** | Chris Cooper
- **User Friendly: How the Rules of Design are Changing the Way We Live, Work, and Play** | Cliff Kuang, Robert Fabricant
- **10 Types of Innovation: The Discipline of Building Breakthroughs** | Larry Keeley, Helen Walters, Ryan Pikkell, Brian Quinn
- **Made to Stick** | Chip Heath, Dan Heath
- **Blue Ocean Strategy** | W. Chan Kim
- **Start with Why** | Simon Sinek
- **Creative Careers** | Jeffrey Madoff
- **Hourly Billing is Nuts** | Jonathan Stark
- **The Win Without Pitching Manifesto** | Blair Enns
- **Switch** | Chip Heath, Dan Heath
- **Architect and Entrepreneur** | Eric Reinholdt
- **Game Storming** | Dave Gray+



EXHIBIT

South Atlantic

“A positive look towards the future of practice.”

Date: April 2019

Location: South Atlantic Region
Aspire Conference

Organizers: Ben Ward, AIA

Format: One-month virtual
program culminating with a four-
hour in-person workshop

Synopsis: Teams were formed at
the onset, and for four weeks they
met virtually in guided discussions
to conceptualize an innovative
practice model. At the end of
the month, teams gathered at
the regional conference for an
in-person workshop, where they
presented their ideas in four-
minute pitches to all participants.

Schedule

8:00 Opening Remarks

8:10 “Calling Rebel Architects”

8:45 **Elevate Session**

During the first part of the work
session, elevate your team’s
understanding of innovation in
architecture practice as you begin
to think about your pitch and
develop your idea.

9:15 **Innovate Session**

During the second part of the
work session begin to get your
hands dirty crafting your team’s
innovative practice model and
tackle some of the required
questions. Answering these
question as a group should focus
your innovation into a solid idea.

10:15 **Breakthrough Session**

Now that you have your
inspirational idea, dive into your
big pitch. Finalize your answers
to the questions, select a team
spokesperson, and prepare a few
slides.

10:45 Submit slides

10:55 Team pitches [4 minutes]

11:20 Adjourn

SUPPORT MATERIALS

The following page includes:

- Introduction & team requirements
- Weekly assignments (virtual)



EXHIBIT

South Atlantic

“A chance to create new value for the profession and its future.”

Practice Innovation Lab Introduction:

Which concept intrigues you the most? Rank from 1 to 4:

- Health by Design: How can architecture create healthier communities and individuals?
- Community by Design: How can architecture create strong, more equitable communities?
- Housing by Design: How can architecture solve the housing crisis in this country?
- Resilience by Design: How can architecture play a role in more resilient communities whether it is short-term shocks or long-term stresses?

What type of design are you currently working on or have the most experience with?

Are you presently working in an innovative manner or at an innovative firm? Describe your experience.

Week 1 Discussion Items:

Team introductions

Ice breaker

Answer the following:

- Why did you sign up for the Practice Innovation Lab?
- What inspires you?
- What would you like to get out of this experience?

Come up with a team name.

Week 2 Discussion Items:

Building Purpose: What does your firm do/provide? Who are its clients?

- What problem would you like an architecture firm to solve?
- What competitors currently exist in the space?
- How would your firm differentiate itself from its competitors?
- Who is your ideal client?
- How do you reach them?

Week 3 Discussion Items:

Enabling Value and Growth: How does your firm deliver its services, products, etc. to its client, and what type of culture does your firm have? Whom does your firm partner with?

- How is the work/firm compensated?
- How is the firm organized?

Team Requirements:

Firm name

Firm manifesto

- Mission
- Vision
- Other supplemental information



ENERGIZE

Washington, D.C.

“The architecture profession is in a perpetual debate concerning the issues that impact how we practice, the value we contribute as architects, and how our work can and should impact the world around us.”

Date: January 2018

Location: Washington, D.C.

Organizers: Abi Brown, AIA, Evelyn Lee, AIA, Larry Fabbroni, AIA, and Milan Jordan

Format: Ninety-minute in-person session

Synopsis: Participants from the YAF Summit 25 Practice Innovation Lab gathered to present the topics, trends, and themes of the original workshop and test their relevance to the larger local audience. The session concluded with an interactive workshop where participants built upon these ideas and developed innovative models for the future of architectural practice.

Submission Summary to A'18 NY

The YAF's Practice Innovation Lab held in October 2017, brought together 60 innovative thinkers working as teams to envision and pitch new practice models aimed at 'disrupting' the profession. This session will present a summary of ideas and trends in thinking that emerged as well as attendees' team business plan pitches.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Participants will be able to:

- Compare disruptive models to the status quo of modern architecture practice, utilizing the idea presented and Innovation Lab documentation.
- Build off the Innovation Lab deliverable's through interactive local component programming
- Develop innovative strategic relationships beyond the profession by adopting and evolving the process that Innovation Lab attendees have carried out.
- Assess immediate changes that could be adopted within their respective companies/ organizations to foster innovative practice model ideas.



EXPLORE

New Orleans

“Thirty architecture and design thought leaders look ahead to strategize new forms of practice for the Gulf South.”

Date: September 2018

Location: New Orleans

Organizers: Jennie West, AIA, and
Stephen Parker, AIA

Synopsis: AIA New Orleans
gathered for two hours of
discussion on identifying strategic
goals, services, messaging, and
communications followed by two
hours of group work to construct
an ideal architectural practice for
the future of the Gulf South.

Speakers + Facilitators

Rebecca Cooley | VP of
Manufactured Interior
Construction, AOS Interior
Environments

Brandon Nelson | Commercial
Lender – Senior Vice President,
Hancock Whitney

Todd Ragusa | Consulting Principal
at Ragusa Consulting

Lauren Siegel | Advisor, Trepwise

Schedule

2:00 Arrive

2:15 Introduction

2:30 Speaker 1: Lauren Siegel
on identifying strategic goals and
services

3:00 Speaker 2: Todd Ragusa:
on strategies for measuring and
communicating services

3:30 Group breakouts to
discuss own firms and backgrounds

4:00 Break

4:15 Groups construct an ideal
architectural practice for our future
in the Gulf South

5:15 Presentations

5:45 Conclusion

6:00 Happy hour



EXHIBIT

Ohio Valley Region

“Diverse specialties under one roof expand knowledge and mutual respect for all.”

Date: September 2019

Location: Ohio Valley Region
Conference

Organizers: Matt Toddy, AIA, and
Ashley Thornberry, Associate AIA

Format: Eight-hour in-person
workshop followed by one hour
keynote presentation.

Synopsis: Participants gathered
for the workshop as part of the
biennial regional conference.
Teams could register as a unit or
be grouped according to common
interests at the workshop. A
presentation kicked off a day long
charrette focused on developing an
innovative practice model. Teams
reconvened the following day to
present their ideas to the regional
assembly as the final keynote
address of the conference.

Day 1 Schedule

- 9:00 Introduction
- 9:10 Speaker
- 9:45 **Elevate Session**
- 10:30 Break
- 10:45 **Innovate Session**
- 11:45 Lunch presentation
- 2:45 **Breakthrough Session**
- 4:30 Group Q & A
- 5:00 Additional work time

Day 2 Schedule

- 11:30 Final presentation prep
- 12:00 Introduction to assembly
- 12:20 Presentations [5-7 min.]
- 1:20 Voting
- 1:30 Adjourn

ELEVATE SESSION

- What inspires you?
- Identify the problem(s) you would like to address.
- Identify the competition.
- Develop a firm name.
- Discuss how your firm differentiates itself.
- Develop a firm structure.

INNOVATE SESSION

- Focus on identifying value and growth.
- What is your firm's ideal client?
- What services does your firm deliver?
- How does your firm deliver those services?
- How is your firm compensated?

BREAKTHROUGH SESSION

- Focus on developing firm culture and relationships:
- Does your firm partner with anyone else?
- What type of culture does your firm aspire to?



EXPLORE

Wisconsin Fall Workshop

“Spark Tank”

Date: October 2019

Location: Madison, Wis.

Organizers: Katie Kangas, AIA, and Stacey Keller, AIA

Format: Six-hour in-person workshop with a two-hour speaker presentation followed by focus groups and a one-hour presentation in an entrepreneurial think tank and building tour.

Synopsis: Participants registered for a single day event. Two speakers presented in the morning about alternative paths for architects and entrepreneurs. Participants divided into teams for lunch and a two-hour workshop. They were prompted to review the 10 types of innovation and prepare a 10-minute pitch to all

participants. At the end of the day, each workshop group gave an oral presentation and was ranked by the morning speakers and three additional judges. Winning titles included: Most Innovative, Most Marketable, Best Presentation, and Audience Choice.

Schedule

9 am	Arrival and introductions
10 am	Speaker presentations
12 pm	Teams formed (Lunch)
1 pm	Work in teams
3.5 pm	30 minute warning
4 pm	Presentations
5 pm	Happy hour (tour)

Product

- What do you provide?
- Who are your competitors?
- How will you differentiate?

Process

- How do you deliver your product/service differently?
- How is your firm organized?

Profit

- Whom do you partner with?
- How is your work compensated?

Philanthropy

- What human need do you solve?
- What is your team's culture?
- What resources and skills will your firm need in-house or outsources?

HANDOUT PROMPTS:

How are you innovating the profession?

How will you measure success in 5, 10, 15 years from now?

What innovative practice do you propose?*

- Profit Model
- Network
- Structure
- Process
- Product Performance
- Product Systems
- Service

- Channel
- Brand
- Customer engagement

*10 Types of Innovation:
The Disciplines of Building Breakthroughs | Larry Keeley, Helen Walters, Ryan Pikkell, Brian Quinn



ENERGIZE

Virtual Chaos Session

Practice Innovation Lab collaboration with AIAS

Date: October – November 2020

Location: Virtual over Zoom

Organizers: Erin Conti, AIAS, Associate AIA; Kari Essary, AIAS; Alex Johnson, AIAS; Katie Kangas, AIA; Matt Toddy, AIA

Format: 60-minute virtual meeting held weekly for four weeks

Synopsis: Through the chaos of trial and error, participants will test, brainstorm, and troubleshoot virtual collaboration methods. The goal of these workshops is to test the limits of virtual collaboration, find out what it takes to innovate in the digital realm, and disrupt the practice of architecture. The sessions took on an overarching narrative of:

- Get in the car (which one)
- Grab our friends (stakeholders)
- Ask for directions (roadmap)
- Fill up with gas (energize)

WEEK 1: What is Innovation?

Virtual Collaboration Tool:

Google Jamboard

Speedboat exercise in which breakout groups discuss impacts to innovation. If the speedboat is innovation:

- What “anchors” or influences slow down or stop innovation?
- What’s “motor” or who is “driving” innovation forward?

WEEK 2: Innovation Stakeholders

Virtual Collaboration Tool:

Mural

Sorting exercise of naming many stakeholders. Then sorting into the first graph of agency/interest. Then copy and resort into a second graph of influence/interest.

WEEK 3: Innovation Roadmap

Virtual Collaboration Tool:

ConceptBoard

Mapping exercise in which breakout groups discuss the origins and destinations of innovation:

- What are the on ramps? (motivators)
- What is the objective?

WEEK 4: The Blindside

Virtual Collaboration Tool:

Miro

Graphing exercise in which breakout groups discuss the known and unknown factors of innovation:

- What do we know that we know?
- What do we know that we don’t know?
- What don’t we know that we know?
- What don’t we know that we don’t know?

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