

Council for Interior Design Accreditation

Mission

The Council for Interior Design Accreditation (CIDA) advances the interior design profession as the definitive source for quality standards and accreditation in higher education.

History

The Council for Interior Design Accreditation (CIDA), previously named Foundation for Interior Design Education Research (FIDER), was established in 1970. The founding organizations were the Interior Design Educators Council (IDEC), the American Institute of Interior Designers (AID), and the National Society of Interior Designers (NSID). AID and NSID merged in 1975 to form the American Society of Interior Designers (ASID). The intent of the founders was to promote excellence by developing standards for interior design education and to acknowledge the increasing demands of an emerging profession.

In 1997, interior design professional association leaders joined the Board of Trustees in planning sessions to address the need for financial support of accreditation and to reflect a shared commitment to design education. The governance structure was identified as a strategic issue. With the support of the founding organizations, CIDA was restructured in 1999 into a Michigan nonprofit corporation, designed to maintain productive connections with all “communities of interest”.

The collaboration between interior design educators and practitioners has continued over the years through participation in CIDA and support of its accreditation activities. Today, CIDA maintains relationships with the American Society of Interior Designers, the International Interior Design Association, the Interior Design Educators Council, the Interior Designers of Canada, and the National Council for Interior Design Qualification.

Funding

Support for CIDA comes from fees paid by interior design programs seeking accreditation and accredited programs, contributions from individual interior designers and the interior design professional associations, contributions from industry, and the proceeds from events sponsored by several publishers of the interior design magazines.

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Board of Directors

The Board of Directors, as governing body, is responsible for ensuring that CIDA fulfills its mission. The Board sets standards for postsecondary interior design education, maintains relationships with the design community, and secures funds and other resources. The Board of Directors is responsible for maintaining the legal, fiscal, and ethical integrity of CIDA.

There are nine Directors on the Board, each serving a maximum of two three-year terms.

Each of the following constituent groups has a liaison on the Board:

- American Society of Interior Designers
- Interior Design Educators Council
- International Interior Design Association
- Interior Designers of Canada
- National Council for Interior Design Qualification

The Directors representing the groups listed above appoint one Director to represent each of the following interests:

- Public
- Industry
- Accredited interior design programs
- CIDA's Accreditation Commission

The executive director is an ex-officio member of the Board.

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Accreditation Commission

The Accreditation Commission acts as an independent body regarding the accreditation of academic programs and is the final authority on all decisions relating to accreditation status of programs. This includes, but is not limited to, final decisions on accreditation status of programs.

With the exception of the public and accredited program representatives, the Accreditation Commission is made up of individuals with prior experience in accreditation of interior design programs, including service as a site visitor and as a team chair or co-chair. This ensures an appropriate level of understanding of CIDA's accreditation practices and procedures. Educators must be affiliated with an interior design program accredited by CIDA and must meet one of the following criteria: (1) NCIDQ qualified, or (2) professional member status with an interior design professional association. Practitioners must meet one of the following criteria: (1) graduate of an interior design program accredited by CIDA, (2) NCIDQ qualified, or (3) professional member status with an interior design professional association. A balance shall be maintained between practitioners and educators within the following Commission membership:

Interior Design practitioners and educators	6
Public representative	1

The chair of the Commission reports to the Board of Directors.

Accreditation Commissioners serve three-year terms with a maximum of two terms. The Board of Directors makes appointments from qualified candidates.

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Standards Committee

The Standards Committee develops, reviews, and revises standards for the purpose of the assessment of postsecondary programs in interior design, taking into consideration the body of knowledge and changes in society, higher education, and the profession. Standards are written to ensure measurability and reliable application. Standards Committee recommendations are reviewed by the Accreditation Commission and forwarded to the Board of Directors for approval. The Standards Committee reports to the Board of Directors.

Appeal Board

The Board of Directors appoints nine individuals who are familiar with the accreditation process and the field of interior design to an Appeal Board. The Accreditation Commission may appoint five members from this Board to serve, as needed, on a panel to hear an appeal of an adverse decision made by the Accreditation Commission. The Appeal Panel is responsible for reviewing the appeal and may affirm the decision of the Commission or remand the decision to the Commission for further consideration.

Site Visitors

Site visitors serve as team members on site visits to interior design programs seeking accreditation. In addition, site visitors serve as readers of Visiting Team Reports and provide comments to the Commission about the reports. Site visitors must have appropriate academic credentials, teaching or relevant professional experience in the field of interior design, objectivity, and strong communication skills. Site visitors are appointed by the Board of Directors following an application process. (Also see Site Visitor Qualifications.)

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Site Visitor Qualifications

Site visitors review programs seeking accreditation. One important characteristic of accreditation, as a non-governmental system of quality assurance, is that it is a peer review process. Consequently, site visitors are drawn from the field of interior design and play an important role in the accreditation process. As on-site evaluators, site visitors are responsible for gathering evidence and developing informed judgments regarding program compliance with CIDA Standards. To serve in this role, volunteers must apply and supply references that testify to professional and personal qualities that will contribute to the effective participation of the volunteer. Experienced site visitors will periodically be asked to serve as visiting team chairs or co-chairs.

Minimum qualifications for site visitors are:

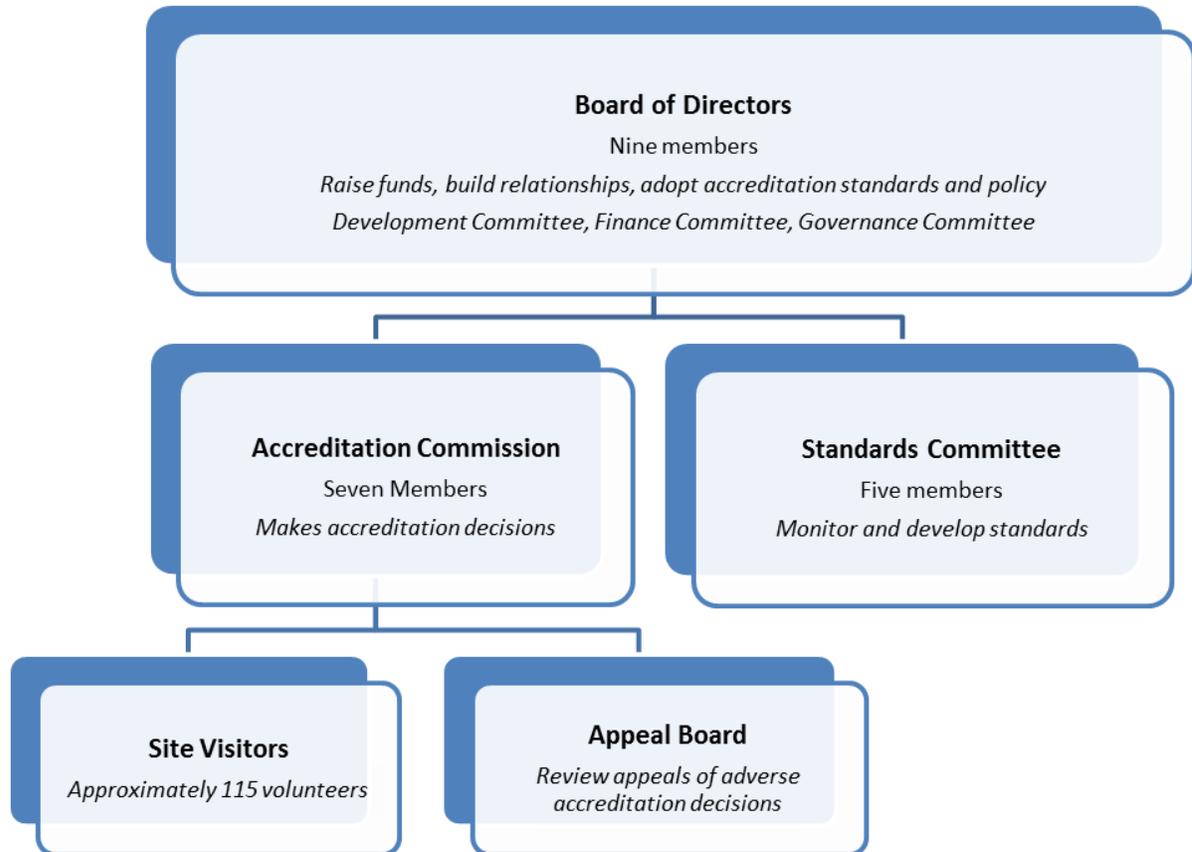
- Commitment to CIDA's mission and Code of Ethics.
- Willingness to devote the time necessary to participate fully in at least one site visit annually.
- Willingness to participate in training activities.
- Appropriate academic credentials. As the bachelor's degree is generally accepted as the terminal degree for professional practice in interior design, all site visitors must have the equivalent of a bachelor's degree in interior design or a closely related discipline.
- Experience in teaching or relevant professional practice in the field of interior design. Experience should indicate a broad exposure and expertise, not a narrow and exclusive focus on one particular area of interior design. An educator must be currently teaching in, or have taught in, a CIDA-accredited interior design program. A practitioner must have had some relationship to education during the course of their professional life. For example, he or she may have worked as a critic, supervised interns, worked as an adjunct faculty, or served on an educational advisory board.
- Objectivity and open-mindedness.
- Strong communication skills, both oral and written.
- Ability to work well as a team member.
- Sufficient professional references.

Site visitors are given training to familiarize them with CIDA Standards, practices, and procedures. An on-going training program promotes good practices in accreditation and informs about changes to accreditation processes, procedures, and standards. Site visitors are evaluated by their fellow team members as well as by the programs they visit.

Site visitors do not receive honoraria. Site visitors are not to accept any gifts of significant value from the programs being reviewed.

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Council for Interior Design Accreditation Governance Structure



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Conflict of Interest

The standard of behavior at the Council for Interior Design Accreditation is that all staff, volunteers, and board members scrupulously avoid conflict of interest between the interests of CIDA on the one hand, and personal, professional, and business interests on the other. This includes avoiding actual and potential conflicts of interest, as well as the perception of conflicts of interest.

To this end, no CIDA representative, including members of the Board of Directors, Accreditation Commission, Standards Committee, site visitors, staff, and consultants, may participate in any way in decisions in which he or she has a financial or personal interest (or appearance of the same) or with respect to which, because of present business, organizational, institutional, or program association, he or she has divided loyalties or conflicts (or the appearance of same) pertaining to the outcome of the decision.

CIDA representatives must disclose financial or personal interests or affiliations that pose a conflict of interest. If an actual, potential, or perceived conflict of interest exists, the CIDA representative may not participate in discussions or vote on matters affecting the outcome or decision. This is not intended to restrict participation in discussions or decision-making that has no clear and direct impact on the business, organization, institution, or program with which the CIDA representative is associated.

An interior design program that is scheduled for evaluation by CIDA is responsible for identifying conflicts of interest and for requesting certain site visitor(s) be replaced. CIDA staff will do all that is reasonably fair in replacing individuals provided a clear conflict of interest is identified by the program in accordance with the above policy.

Examples of conflicts of interest include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Graduation from the program being evaluated for accreditation,
- A close personal and/or professional relationship with someone associated with the program being evaluated for accreditation,
- Service as a consultant to the program being evaluated for accreditation.

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Code of Ethics and Conduct for All Volunteer Appointees

Appointment to a position with the Council for Interior Design Accreditation is an honor. To uphold the integrity of this honor, an appointee is expected to:

- Strengthen understanding of the role of accreditation in interior design education among professionals, professional organizations, industry, institutions, educators, and students;
- Communicate CIDA information accurately;
- Maintain confidentiality of privileged information;
- Recognize and accept responsibility to uphold all procedures and policies of CIDA;
- Maintain loyalty to CIDA, pursue its objectives, and support the public interest;
- Serve CIDA impartially, offering no special privileges to any member organization or interest group;
- Refrain from promoting self-serving interests of any individual group or organization;
- Engage in no CIDA activities for personal gain;
- Promote and maintain the highest level of integrity in all CIDA activities;
- Cooperate in every reasonable and proper way with staff, directors, commissioners, and others;
- Maintain the highest standards of personal conduct.

Volunteering for the Council for Interior Design Accreditation

The interior design educator or practitioner interested in serving as a volunteer site visitor should review the description of duties and qualifications before completing the Site Visitor Application form. Application materials are also available from the CIDA office.

A person interested in serving on the Standards Committee should forward a copy of his or her resume or vitae, with a cover letter expressing interest, to the Board of Directors in care of the CIDA office.

The Board of Directors makes all volunteer appointments. Inquiries may be directed to the CIDA office.

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Program Consultants

As a service to programs, the Council for Interior Design Accreditation maintains a list of individuals who have demonstrated the appropriate background and experience to provide consulting services to programs.

Individuals on the list of consultants have demonstrated:

- A strong understanding and practical experience in applying current CIDA Standards during the accreditation process;
- A broad and in-depth knowledge of interior design education either through service as a CIDA site visitor, extensive experience as a faculty member at an accredited interior design program, or a combination of the two;
- Demonstrated commitment to quality interior design education through professional and service activities;
- Professional attributes, including strong communication skills, open-mindedness, ethical behavior, dependability, and timeliness.

Consultants serve in an advisory capacity as set forth in an independent service contract between the individual program and consultant. Programs may contract with a consultant to provide a broad range of services depending on the interests and issues affecting program development. The list of consultants includes each consultant's self-identified area(s) of expertise.

The individual program and consultant negotiate a service contract, including compensation for services rendered, independent of CIDA. Being added to CIDA's list of consultants does not guarantee that an individual will receive inquiries or contracts from programs to provide consulting services. CIDA does not maintain guidelines or provide advice to programs or consultants related to services and fees other than the Rules and Restrictions for consulting below.

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Rules and Restrictions for Program Consultants

In order to be added to the Council for Interior Design Accreditation's list of consultants, individuals must sign a statement agreeing to abide by CIDA's confidentiality and conflict of interest policy. Consultants must also agree to disclose to CIDA the creation of a service contract with a program as soon as it is formed.

An individual who has served as a consultant to a program may in no way participate in the CIDA accreditation review of that program. Consultants may not be contracted to complete the Program Analysis Report or be in attendance at a CIDA site visit to the program.

The following italicized statement must be included in each service contract between a consultant and a program. The service contract must be signed by both the consultant and the program director.

Both parties entering into this service contract understand that enlisting the services of a program consultant does not guarantee a successful outcome to an accreditation review by the Council for Interior Design Accreditation. When providing independent consulting services, consultants do not officially represent the views of the Council for Interior Design Accreditation. The consultant's recommendations and guidance related to program quality or any other aspect of the program do not replace the judgment of a CIDA visiting team or CIDA's Accreditation Commission.

To this end, the consultant's recommendations and guidance to the program will not be considered as part of the CIDA review process. While the program may state that third-party consultation was provided as part of the program assessment process, the consultant's specific recommendations or guidance to the program may not be submitted to CIDA as part of the Program Analysis Report or in any other form.

If CIDA receives documents that include the consultant's recommendations and guidance, the documents will be returned to the program without review. CIDA site visitors or Accreditation Commissioners having access to this information will not be allowed to participate in the accreditation review process for that program.

In accordance with CIDA's confidentiality and disclosure policy, CIDA will not provide a consultant with information related to a program's application or accreditation review beyond that available to the general public. A program, however, may choose to share information related to an accreditation review with a consultant.

Current CIDA Board members and Accreditation Commissioners may not provide consulting services to programs.

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Becoming a Program Consultant

Individuals interested in being added to CIDA's list of consultants must apply by completing the application form and submitting a cover letter, resume, and letters of reference attesting to the individual's experience and ability to provide consulting services (see Program Consultant Application). The application form is available from the CIDA office. A non-refundable application fee of \$150 is required.

The Accreditation Commission reviews applications and decides if an individual meets the requirements to be added to CIDA's list of consultants. If the individual is or has been a CIDA site visitor, performance evaluations on file in the CIDA office will also be considered.

If the Accreditation Commission determines that an applicant is qualified, the applicant must sign a statement that he or she has read the documents and agrees to abide by relevant policies for program consultants. Once this signed statement is received, the applicant will be added to the list of program consultants.

Consultants are required to pay an annual maintenance fee of \$50 in order to remain on CIDA's list. This modest maintenance fee helps defray administrative costs. Failure to pay the annual maintenance fee will result in removal from CIDA's list of consultants.

Consultants will be required to participate in training when CIDA Standards are revised. Consultants may also occasionally find it useful to attend an accreditation workshop or observe a site visitor training session in order to maintain a strong understanding of current accreditation process and procedure. Consultants will be notified of these opportunities and are individually responsible for all costs associated with attending accreditation workshops and other training activities.

Applying for and being added to CIDA's list of program consultants does not guarantee that an individual will be contracted to serve as a consultant to a program.

Current CIDA Board members and Accreditation Commissioners are not eligible to provide consulting services to programs.

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Assistance to Interior Design Programs

The Council for Interior Design Accreditation provides assistance regarding all accreditation policies and procedures. This service is available from staff members in the CIDA office. Periodically, CIDA conducts workshops for applicants to provide information about the accreditation process. In addition, Accreditation Commissioners and staff are available at the annual IDEC Conference to discuss accreditation and respond to questions.

Recognition

The Council for Interior Design Accreditation is recognized as a reliable authority on interior design education by the **Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA)**. The CHEA-recognized scope of accreditation is professional-level interior design programs that culminate in a bachelor's or master's degree located in the United States or internationally. CHEA is a nonprofit organization of colleges and universities designed to serve as a national advocate for accreditation. The mission of CHEA is to promote academic quality through formal recognition of higher education accrediting bodies and to coordinate and work to advance self-regulation through accreditation. CHEA's purposes include:

- Providing a needed public voice – speaking to the state of quality in higher education
- Warranting quality – setting expectations for quality primarily through formal recognition of accrediting organizations;
- Serving constituents – assisting colleges, universities, accrediting organizations, students, for example through information-sharing and enhancing usefulness of accreditation

Staff

The on-going work of conducting accreditation, providing information to the public, and maintaining relationships with various important constituencies is administered by a staff based in Grand Rapids, Michigan.

The executive director is the chief administrative and executive officer of the Council for Interior Design Accreditation and supports the functioning of the Board of Directors in fulfilling CIDA's mission. The executive director is assisted by additional personnel necessary to carry out administration of accreditation, standard setting, and general office functions.

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Website

The Council for Interior Design Accreditation web site is <http://www.accredit-id.org>. The site includes the official list of accredited programs, resources for programs and site visitors, and other basic information about CIDA.

Accreditation Policy and Procedure

Accreditation policy and procedure is available for download on CIDA's website. This policy and procedure serves as a comprehensive reference to all matters relating to CIDA and the accreditation process.

Council for Interior Design Accreditation Office

206 Grandville Avenue, Suite 350
Grand Rapids, Michigan 49503-4014
Office Hours: 8:30 am to 5:00 pm Eastern Time

Telephone 616.458.0400
Fax 616.458.0460
E-mail info@accredit-id.org

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Important Dates

Application for Accreditation (required only for programs seeking initial accreditation)
Submit no later than one year in advance of planned site visit.

Request for site visit dates
Submit as early as possible, or no later than one year in advance of the planned site visit.

Program Analysis Report
Due eight weeks prior to site visit

Progress Report
Program is notified six months prior to due date
Due date is based on date of last accreditation decision (see Maintaining Accredited Status, page 1)

Annual Fee
Invoiced in fall of each year, due January 1
Late fee applies (see Fees and Forms, page 1)

Site Visit Fee
Invoiced and is due prior to site visit