



IFI Interior Architecture/Design Education Policy (IFI IA/D EP)

The IFI Interior Architecture/Design Education Policy (IFI IA/D EP) articulates a global benchmark for Interior Architecture/Design education based on the profession's essential needs, future ambitions, global concerns, and collective influence. It sets out a universal outline with the aim to empower and inform stakeholders of the discipline - both internal and external - including students, graduates, educators, practitioners, academic institutions, professional associations, policy makers and governments.

This IFI IA/D EP aims to provide recommendations for principles and aspirational requirements that are foundational for the Interior Architecture/Design discipline and its education worldwide. It underlines the role of the Interiors discipline as an agent of change, a profession that supports human activity and fosters a collaborative environment. It sets out global objectives for Interior Architecture/Design education but allows for integration within local needs and considerations.

Principles outlined in the IFI IA/D EP can be readily implemented in higher education curricula and represent practical considerations for both academia and professional practice. These values inform the development and evaluation of future curricula and accreditation of Interior Architecture/Design education programs. They directly impact education for the Interior Architecture/Design professionals of tomorrow and, therefore, shape the future and the evolution of the Interiors discipline at large. Through their implementation and actualization, these values impact professional practice and resultant built works.

1. Global considerations for Interior Architecture/Design and their education

a. Aspirational

IFI believes in the power of Design as a vehicle for human betterment and productive improvement. IFI recognizes that all people are equal across the world and that well-designed environments help to uplift humanity and civil society. This IFI IA/D EP advocates for equal rights and that access to Interior Architecture/Design education should be granted equally to all who wish to pursue it. This is regardless of race, gender, creed, sexual orientation, cultural heritage and socio-economic background, and notwithstanding disparities brought forth across different regional contexts. That a good and quality education requires to foundationally take into consideration these and other such evolving factors as technological innovation, globalization, economic and political instability and social inequality, as well as holistic consideration of the environmental / sustainable factors.

The primary focus of the Interior Architecture/Design discipline is humanity, the ultimate client, who inhabit the spaces we design. This global principle represents the foundation on which the work of Interior Architects/Designers is built, with the necessary considerations granted to specific local milieu, culture and inspiration.

Underlying intrinsic principles, guiding Interior Architecture/Design students, educators and professionals, are the practice and promotion of good Design, the expansion of the profession and the advancement of humanity. These shared aspirations enable the philosophical and functional collaboration between academic institutions, industry stakeholders and national / international associations, with the latter representing a valuable source of consulting available to both the educational establishment and the profession at large.

b. Practical

Higher education institutions engaged with the granting of sound teaching for the design of interiors, should aim to achieve a 50% minimum of academics who hold an Interior Architecture/Design qualification.

Duration of higher education study is to be a minimum of a three (3) or four (4) year bachelor's degree, of which a minimum of 75% is discipline specific. Professional work experience may be included as part of this requirement, providing assessments demonstrate a full comprehension of the disciplinary knowledge and skill.

Academic institutions and the profession should maintain close collaboration and a strategic synergy in a variety of practical ways, such as and not limited to professional representation on course advisory panels; engagement in Design projects within course curriculum; provision of sites for professional work experience; student mentorship programs, as well as joint research projects and dual employment.

2. Interior Architecture/Design graduates' capabilities and competence

Graduates' skills should be developed through an appropriately designed teaching curriculum, and the introduction of relevant professional training is highly encouraged. Programs such as internships or apprenticeships should be established in accordance with the relevant local employment regulations, and represent valuable opportunities for learning and advancement of the following capabilities:

- Practice readiness: understanding of the professional context
- Creative Design skills: thinking, methods, processes and communication, including analogue and digital capabilities
- Foundation for life-long learning: course pathways to postgraduate qualifications
- Intellectual enquiry: theoretical, historical and research-based
- Technical skills: documentation, contract administration

3. Interior Architecture/Design graduates' qualities

As developed through education, the goal of the Interior Architecture/Design profession is to create appropriate and successful environments that are mindful of the need for quality and equality in all its facets. These considerations are to permeate the students' intrinsic understanding, along with the essence of each project and its implementation through attention to:

- Human-centered approach concerned with improvement of life for diverse populations, including minorities and marginalized groups
- Ability to celebrate and showcase diversity whilst ensuring all-encompassing awareness and respect for the cultural elements involved
- Consideration for significant environmental factors, including sustainable development and the impact of climate change
- Future-oriented mindset
- Creative and effective problem solving
- Strategic and critical thinking
- Concept development and implementation across complex assignments

4. Professional guidelines

The following principles should act as core guiding tenets for Interior Architecture/Design graduates to shape their integrity as professionals and their role within the Interior Architecture/Design discipline:

- IFI Interiors Declaration, which represents an overarching and aspirational benchmark for the profession's training and professional activity. Consideration of the IFI Interiors Declaration is deemed foundational to the profession's education
- IFI Advocacy Platforms, which embody IFI's core values and overarching mission to further and coalesce the Interior Architecture/Design discipline
- Ethical practice to contribute to overall wellbeing (including the physical/sensory, psychological and perceptual), as well as the safety of people and sustainability of the environment
- Work and its representation to accurately reflect and credit those responsible
- An upholding of human ethics, values and professional comportment as understood and essential to higher learning and professional practice

This document is the result of a globally coordinated effort spearheaded by the IFI AI/D Education Policy Review Committee. The committee worked with a global taskforce representing a select, diversified and strategic cross-section of 13 reputable institutions of higher education from around the world. It was drafted with input from over 100 IFI members during a dedicated education Workshop in Dubai 2020, followed by direct input from the international IFI community at large.

The International Federation of Interior Architects/Designers (IFI) is the global voice and authority for professional Interior Architects/Designers. As the singular Federation of Associations, IFI acts as a global forum for the exchange and development of professional practice, knowledge and experience, along with education, research and Design advocacy worldwide. IFI connects the international community to further the impact, influence and application of the design of interiors, promote social responsibility, and raise the global status of the profession. An international not-for-profit, founded in 1963, IFI expands the international network of professional Interior Architects/Designers.