

# Member Service Alignment FAQs

- **What is Member Service Alignment?**

Member Service Alignment is a plan to bring components across each state together in collaboration, with the goal of ensuring that all AIA members receive the services they have a right to expect from the AIA.

- **What is meant by “Core Member Services?”**

Core Member Services are basic deliverables—categorized into seven service areas--which all members have a right to expect from the AIA component network. AIA national, state and local components all have a role to play in delivering specific services designed to elevate public awareness, advocate for the profession, communicate with members, provide educational opportunities, maintain membership and manage their operations, finances and governance.

- **Who exactly delivers all of these Core Member Services?**

Components determine who within the boundaries of their states will deliver each Core Member Service. Many components already deliver all of these services and more, while others will need to partner with other components in their state to do so.

- **Why do components have to coordinate delivery of Core Member Services?**

The purpose of statewide coordination is to provide a valuable and consistent experience for all AIA members.

- **How do a state’s components work together to address service gaps or overlaps?**

Components throughout each state will participate jointly to develop a Member Service Agreement. These agreements will identify who will deliver each specific Core Member Service to that state’s members and will direct the funding appropriately.

- **Why does each chapter have to offer 18 CES credits a year? *(new entry)***

Architect members are required to obtain 18 CES credits per year, with 12 of those credits being HSW. AIA members in surveys consistently rank the AIA CES programs they receive as the most important member benefit. For both of these reasons, the MSRTF felt each chapter should make that many credits available to their members.

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- **We don't offer that many credits now. How can we manage this?** (*new entry*)

If your chapter does not have the capacity to offer that many credits currently, you may partner with another chapter to do so. You could also air an online AIAU program at a gathering of your members. One final option would be to work with another AIA CES provider, so long as your chapter handles course and credit administration in CES and has some input into the content.

- **Why isn't a state Political Action Committee (PAC) a required Core Member Service?**

While PACs perform a very important mission for the AIA, some state laws present barriers to PAC activity. Therefore, that is not a Core Member Service requirement and is, therefore, optional. Assuming all other Core Member Services are met, PAC activity is one element among many that may put a state in consideration for exceeding Core Member Services requirements and thereby grant them a five-year accreditation term.

- **How will you know whether Core Member Services are being delivered?**

An accreditation process will be used to verify that Core Member Services are being delivered. Each of the seven service areas has at least one way to demonstrate success in that area. Documentation that the particular service is being delivered varies by the nature of the activity but is specified in the application.

- **How and when does a component apply for accreditation?**

Components that meet Core Member Services will be accredited for three years. Components that exceed Core Member Services will be accredited for five years.

- **How will the accreditation application work? Is there a template available? When can we start submitting things and uploading supporting documents?** (*new entry*)

The accreditation application will be available in October, 2015, in the form of an online portal for answering questions and uploading your documentation. Until that is ready, you can start gathering your documentation as outlined in the Core Member Services section of the Member Service Plan Toolkit. The

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questions will change in form only, not in their content. When the online portal is ready, all components will be notified.

- **What if a component cannot show that it provides the Core Member Services to its members?**

That component will not be awarded accreditation. That component will be given one year to improve its services and will be offered guidance from AIA National for that purpose.

- **May a component appeal if it is denied accreditation?**

A component that is denied accreditation will have 90 days to appeal to the Institute Secretary. The Secretary will review the file and invite input from the component. The Secretary will specify any areas of Core Member Services which have not yet been met. The Secretary's decision will be final.

- **What happens to components that don't get accredited?**

Components will have one year after receiving a denial of accreditation (and the conclusion of any appeals) to fill the specified gaps in their services and reapply. They have the option of working on their own or in coordination with another component in their state to address any shortfalls identified. After that year, if the accreditation team finds that Core Member Services are still not met, the Institute Secretary will direct the component to begin transitioning into an alternate structure and engage with a partner component within their state to ensure Core Member Services are delivered to their members. Members will be reassigned by the Secretary accordingly.

- **How will accreditation affect components that use Association Management Companies (AMCs) to staff their operations?**

In fairness to members, components using AMCs must provide the same services as other components. If any Core Member Service is not part of the current AMC scope of work, the applicable agreement or contract may be revised to cover all Core Member Services. Or, any component using an AMC may partner with another component in their state to deliver one or more Core Member Services and record this plan in the statewide Member Service Agreement.

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- **How are Core Member Services connected to my component's funding from National?**

Going forward, funding will be based on how components bring value to AIA members by providing Core Member Services. Funds will be allocated directly to components according to the number of members in each state and according to a collective state agreement. This new funding distribution model will phase in gradually over five years, starting in 2016. Funds will be allocated by state on the basis of membership measured on December 31 of each year. Components within each state will decide collectively how to apply these funds.

- **What do a state's components have to do to get their funding?**

To ensure that all of a state's members are receiving Core Member Services, each component has the opportunity to self-assess its operations. Then all of the state's components need to hold statewide leadership conversations, to share information about any gaps and overlaps in service that may exist which might be addressed in partnership. This is also the opportunity to discuss how resources should be allocated. Each state's member service agreement must outline how the funds will be applied to each component within the state. Each component's president, president-elect and executive director (if any) must sign the agreement.

- **Will we get to see what is happening to the revenue share at the other components in my state?**

In order to ensure that statewide conversations are transparent and productive, each component must be prepared to share its current year revenue share information with fellow components within their states.

- **Where did the money in the former National revenue sharing model come from?** *(new entry)*

The portfolio of funding has included AIA Career Center revenues (also known as the "job board") and AIA Contract Document sales. Full Service Distributors (those chapters that sell paper documents in the U.S.) also receive revenues associated with Documents-on-Demand and marketing development.

- **Where will the money in the new National funding distribution model come from?** *(new entry)*

The portfolio of funding sources will still include Contract Documents and Career Center revenues described above, and it will expand to include revenues

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from sales of AIAU courses, ARE/Black Spectacles online courses, AIA Convention registration, and potentially other products to be introduced in the future.

- **If National has more or less funding available in future years, what will that do to my chapter's funding distribution?** *(new entry)*

AIA is working to ensure a relatively stable supply of revenues that National can share with components. The funding will be frozen at current levels through 2017, at the request of CACE members. Beginning in 2018, there is the possibility that this pool could grow if the products succeed in the marketplace, which could offer some flexibility to increase the total amount of revenue distributed among all components.

- **If my component can't send people to the CACE Annual Meeting or Grassroots, do we still get that funding?**

The funding is intended to support leadership and operational training, and we encourage components to take advantage of it. Components must send an executive director to the CACE Annual Meeting in order to receive the \$1000 stipend to defray their expenses. Components that do not send staff or leaders to Grassroots will not benefit from receiving the complimentary conference registration.

- **May voluntary section leadership and executives still attend Grassroots? Will they get free registration?** *(new entry)*

Yes, they are welcome to attend. However, they are not required to do so. Free registration is available to chapter executive directors and up to two chapter leaders, but voluntary sections do not receive free registration.

- **May unstaffed component leaders attend and receive funding for the CACE Annual Meeting?** *(new entry)*

No. This is because the CACE Annual Meeting is specifically designed to serve the training needs for AIA component staff.

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- **Are the CACE Annual Meeting training funds set aside or does the Institute reimburse the component?** *(new entry)*

Components that send an Executive Director to the CACE Annual Meeting will receive up to \$1000 to reimburse their travel and lodging expenses for that purpose.

- **When are Member Services Agreements due to AIA National?**

December 31, 2015.

- **What happens to components that do not sign the Member Services Agreement?**

In such cases, support will be available to assist components in coming to a statewide agreement. Only after all of a state's components sign a statewide agreement can funds be disbursed.

- **Some components have fewer than 100 members. What happens to them?** *(edited entry)*

The AIA Board has agreed that no new domestic components will be created unless there are at least 100 members, during 2014-2015. However, existing components with fewer than 100 members that do fulfill Core Member Services may continue as they are.

- **Where did the 100 member threshold come from?**

The number was developed to ensure components are large enough to deliver meaningful and consistent service to their members. It was also chosen because it is rare for any state to have fewer than 100 members, and access to a statewide component should be guaranteed to every member.

- **If a chapter becomes a voluntary section, may they keep their Board and bylaws?** *(new entry)*

Yes, you can continue to have a Board and bylaws, but you are not required to have them, and your governance can be handled by the state or local chapter that is delivering services to your members.

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- **If a chapter becomes a voluntary section, what activities can they keep doing?** *(new entry)*

You can continue to run activities for your members as before, including continuing education, networking, advocacy, communications, and others. However, you are not required to do so. Sections do not have to do these things, but they may.

- **What happens to a chapter's visual identity if it becomes a section?** *(new entry)*

You still get to keep the name and logo that identifies your component. Under the new AIA Identity Guidelines, the words “chapter” and “section” are not stated, so sections may continue using their logo if they wish.

- **What happens to the Convention delegates if a chapter becomes a voluntary section?** *(new entry)*

Voluntary sections do not send delegates to the AIA Convention; rather, they are represented by the delegates from the AIA chapter of which they are a part. Chapters should discuss with their sections how to assure that this representation occurs.

- **May voluntary sections keep their Board and bylaws?** *(new entry)*

Voluntary sections are not required to have a Board or to have bylaws, but they may do so if they wish. Voluntary sections come under the governance of the AIA chapter of which they are a part, so chapters taking responsibility for sections may need to adjust their bylaws.