

BCSLA ADVANCING EQUITY AND DIVERSITY IN LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE (AEDLA) WORKING GROUP

TERMS OF REFERENCE - Adopted: September 26. 2023

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Background:

The BCSLA is interested in developing a new working group focused on Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion. This Terms of Reference (TOR) outlines the mission, structure, and roles of the proposed working group. Given that Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion is a quickly evolving societal focus, we propose that this TOR be a living document that will be reviewed, revised, and resubmitted to the Board in 6-12 months from now if desired. Additional revisions may occur on an annual or other basis in an effort to implement learnings and align with ongoing CSLA efforts.

See Appendix A for Detailed Background.

Inclusion statement:

When people feel included and valued, they can be more innovative, creative, and healthier. We will strive to advance equity and diversity in the BCSLA and landscape architecture in BC.

The BCSLA offices are located on unceded Coast Salish territories of the xʷməθkʷəyəm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), and səliwətaʔt (Tsleil-Waututh) First Nations. We recognize and respect the history, languages, and cultures of the First Nations, Métis, Inuit, and all First Peoples of Canada, whose presence continues to enrich our organization, our lives and our country.

Mission & Commitment:

The mission of the Advancing Equity and Diversity in Landscape Architecture (AEDLA) working group of the BCSLA is to champion justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion within the landscape architecture profession in BC and in the systems, environments, and spaces we design. With a community-based approach, we will support membership to action justice, equity, diversity and inclusion for the diverse peoples and communities we serve now and for future generations.

BCSLA Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion goals, priorities, and actions will align with the transition to the PGA and the CSLA Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion action plan and reconciliation principles. The working group will develop a living Values Statements and Guiding Principles document and a living Action List.

Commitment to Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

Our design community wants to understand where systemic racism exists in design, and how we can all work towards a more equitable future for everyone. The BCSLA is committed to take action to support the membership. Between the BCSLA, CSLA, the academic community, public and private practice, and advocacy networks, we all have an important part to play in dismantling racism, colonialism, and discrimination within the field of landscape architecture and by extension the design community. The AEDLA working group will work with the BCSLA Board, members, and the CSLA to advance Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion.

Structure & Communications:

The AEDLA working group reports directly to the BCSLA Board of Directors through the co-chairs, as per current Bylaw requirements (see Section 3.71(a)2). The working group will submit monthly synopses or meeting minutes and be in regular communication with the BCSLA President and Executive Director. The co-chairs will attend Board of Directors meetings when required; meetings are held on the last Tuesday of each month. Meeting minutes will include a living action plan/list. The action list will be reviewed and revised regularly to reflect the status of completed, ongoing, and newly identified actions. The list will be categorized by Education, Training, and Communications, in alignment with the CSLA Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan. Note that advocacy, including things that make practice easier for the membership or benefit them financially, is not allowed when the BCSLA is under the PGA. Therefore, advocacy initiatives may be identified and supported by this committee but will be left for implementation by the CSLA or others. Further clarification is required as BCSLA moves under the PGA.

To action justice, equity, diversity and inclusion, the working group will strive to decolonize standard committee structure and develop a more equitable and inclusive structure. The structure will be based on a co-operative/community approach, where members of the sub-committee are all equally responsible for the sub-committee, with minimal hierarchical structure except those required for BCSLA administrative purposes.

Roles & Responsibilities:

The working group roles and responsibilities are as follows:

1. Co-chairs

The working group will have co-chairs (two positions). Co-chair positions will be rotating on a biannual basis, or as the committee decides. Co-chairs have the option to continue in the role. Term one will be until the 2023 AGM (Apr/May) and term two will be the following six months. Having flexibility of roles and responsibilities is important to balance time commitment. The purpose of having co-chairs is for working group members to share this opportunity and responsibility. To ensure consistency between chairs, an email account may be set up that all members have access to but only the current co-chairs will monitor. The President and Board can email this email address.

The co-chairs are responsible for:

- Chairing BCSLA AEDLA meetings.
- Updates to the President and Executive Director.
- Attending Board Meetings and executive meetings as needed.
- Writing AGM report; or a committee shared effort.
- Regular check-ins between co-chairs.

Recommending Mickella Sjoquist as co-chair, and TBD.

2. Co-CSLA Representatives

The working group will have CSLA co-reps (two positions). CSLA co-reps may both attend the monthly CSLA meetings, similar to other component associations. The purpose of having co-chairs is for working group members to share this opportunity and responsibility. A benefit of having co-chairs is that each chair may takeaway different learnings from CSLA meetings. The CSLA co-reps are responsible for making sure the BCSLA AEDLA priorities and actions are aligned with the CSLA Action Plan and ensuring that no efforts are duplicated at the national and provincial level. Co-reps will be selected in a biannual basis similar to the co-chairs.

The CSLA co-reps are responsible for:

- Attending CSLA Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Virtual Meetings.
- Attending BCSLA AEDLA Meetings.
- Reciprocal sharing/learning between BCSLA AEDLA and CSLA Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion meetings.
- Updates (1-2 paragraph summary) to the President and Executive Director.
- Regular check-ins between CSLA co-reps, and with the BCSLA CSLA Rep.

Recommending Jeryn Mackey and Teena Aujla.

3. Action group & Advisory Group

There are two components within the working group, an action group and an advisory group. Action group members will brainstorm and perform actions, and the advisory group may review and share feedback on the actions.

Action Group

The action group is made up of approximately five members. Members are committed to implementing actions per AEDLA goals. The co-chairs and CSLA co-reps may assist with implementing these actions. At this time, and without a set action list, it is difficult to determine what time commitment of action group members. Time commitments can be determined individually, and the action group is committed to ensuring all members availability and time commitments are valued and respected.

The action group members are responsible for:

- Attending monthly BCSLA AEDLA working group meetings.
- Minute taking.
- Establishing and reviewing Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion goals, priorities, and actions, to be reviewed and approved by the Board annually. This includes goals, priorities, and actions aligned with the CSLA Action Plan as well as specific to the BCSLA. List of actions to be maintained and reviewed throughout the year, noting statuses. Ensure alignment with the BCSLA Strategic Plan.
- Liaising with other BCSLA Committees and ensuring actions are in alignment with their work.

Advisory Group

The Advisory Group is made up of approximately three to five members. Members are to provide insight and critical review of the actions spearheaded by the action group. There is no set requirement for advisory members involvement, as we greatly appreciate any time commitment and effort they can offer. One option is that each member attend one BCSLA AEDLA meeting per quarter or biannually. Advisory group members are not expected to assist with tasks/actions outside of these meetings, which will be done by the action group members. This limited and flexible involvement is an effort to reduce the burden often placed on peoples who are facing inequity and injustice. Advisory group members can be BIPOC+ (Black, Indigenous, Peoples of Colour, etc) or from marginalized groups, etc. They can be community representatives, or reps from institutions. They can be different ages and from different communities. They can be from outside or within the profession of Landscape Architecture. The purpose of these dedicated advisory seats is to create space and elevate voices and perspectives that aren't currently elevated in the profession. An action group member will act as liaison to the Advisory Group.

4. BCSLA Board

The BCSLA Board will be responsible for reviewing and approving goals, priorities and actions as outlined by the working group to ensure there are no issues or conflicts, and to ensure alignment with the Board's objectives and work being done by the other subcommittees. All new initiatives will be brought to the Board for approval. BCSLA Staff will assist in coordinating meetings, providing support with membership engagement, and disseminating information to the Board and membership.

Administration:

- Meetings will largely be virtual as group members are located throughout the province. Occasionally meetings may be hybrid virtual and in-person.
- The working group will prepare draft recommendations to the Board for official motions when required.
- Meeting minutes will be taken and group members will save and manage digital files in Dropbox.

Budget:

The budget will be contingent on actions to be undertaken by the working group on behalf of the BCSLA and CSLA. The working group suggests a base budget of \$2,500 for meeting expenses and administration. Upon development of annual action list, the working group will request additional budget from the BCSLA Board with the appropriate rationale. A call for budget requests from Committees/Subcommittees occurs in October and the Board reviews the first draft budget at their November meeting. The budget will evolve as the year-end financial statements are received. The proposed budget will be put forward for final review and input at the January BCSLA Board of Directors meeting. Other funding requests are reviewed by the Board of Directors on a case-by-case basis.

Contacts:

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Appendix A Detailed Background

In 2020, the CSLA, AALA, BCSLA, MALA and OALA collaborated on the profession's first Diversity Survey in Canada; see [results](#). In Fall 2021, the BCSLA hired a consulting team and training sessions took place to educate the Board and core standing committee members with a focus on BC-specific decolonization and reconciliation.

CSLA's ask to the BCSLA

In October of 2021, the Canadian Society of Landscape Architects (CSLA), in collaboration with the provincial, territorial and regional component associations, hired Capillary Consulting with the objective of crafting a national, provincial and territorial action plan for Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion. In 2022, the CSLA Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan was completed after a one-year collaborative and consultative process with a working group including CSLA, LACF, component associations, a task force, staff and volunteers. Pearl Yip was the BCSLA's rep on the 2022 CSLA JEDI Task Force. The purpose of the Action Plan is to address Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion in the Landscape Architecture profession and component associations. The Action Plan is overarching for every component association in Canada and the profession as a whole. Actions will be led and executed by the CSLA's National Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Committee, LACF, and the component associations. The Action Plan is a living document, and the National Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Committee will review and refine it further. CSLA has set aside some budget, is hiring a full-time senior staff person, and is prepared to take the lead on some actions.

In late 2022, the Action Plan was submitted to component associations for review, suggestions and feedback. The component association's boards were asked to endorse it as a living plan, express interest in participating, nominate a representative for the National Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Committee and agree to making it a corporate priority and contribute to national Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion efforts. It is up to each component association to make it their own Action Plan and: a) draw from the Action Plan elements which are a priority in their jurisdiction; b) determine what they can take on; and c) determine what they can resource (human and financial capacities).

Component organizations are taking different approaches with varied commitment. All component associations are indicating they will send a rep to the national Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion committee, but some medium component associations are developing a small committee, and some large component associations are developing a large committee. Budgetary asks to component associations will be determined after the national Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion committee is formed.

BCSLA Board of Directors & Ad-hoc Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Committee

The BCSLA Ad-Hoc Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Committee was established in February 2023. The BCSLA Board of Directors and the Ad-hoc Committee commit to the CSLA to make Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion an organizational priority and participate in national efforts and specific commitments. They agreed to conditionally endorse the Action Plan (a living document). The Ad-hoc Committee assisted with Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion efforts at the May 2023 Conference, participated in the Strategic Plan working group, and are leading the setup of the BCSLA AEDLA action group. Once established, the BCSLA AEDLA working group will further review the CSLA Action Plan and make recommendations for BCSLA priorities when there is further clarity on what actions the BCSLA can undertake within the Professional Governance Act.