# RESOURCES FOR SMALL FIRMS

**AIA Trust**

Insurance & Financial Programs for AIA Members & Components

The AIA Trust is a *free risk management resource* for AIA members!  Under the "Member Resources" button located at the top of the AIA Trust website, you'll find a host of member & firm resources and tools. New resources and updates are continually added for members on the AIA Trust website, www.TheAIATrust.com (NB: a *separate web site* from the AIA web site). Here are some AIA Trust and other AIA resources that may be helpful to a small firm – and especially to those just starting out:

## AIA TRUST RESOURCES FREE TO AIA MEMBERS

### AIA TRUST: New Starter Firm Incentives for AIA Members

New Starter Firm Incentives for AIA Members is a webinar that takes less than 8 minutes to review—and offers an array of special benefits to AIA members starting brand new firms! Included in the presentation is a detailed instruction page so that AIA members with eligible new firms may apply for various freebies, including publications and free insurance coverage.

### AIA TRUST: Making the Transition to Running Your Own Firm

Making the Transition to Running Your Own Firm: Insurance Coverage Issues for Professional Practices is a report developed by the Victor O. Schinnerer and the CNA companies in conjunction with AIA Trust to assist licensed design professionals in operating a professional practice which presents so many risks. Click here for solutions for managing those risks by transferring them appropriately.

### AIA TRUST: Small Firm Programs

The summary, What Does AIA Trust Offer Small Firms? covers the AIA Trust programs aimed at the small firm—to help provide for the negotiating power of a large firm. Find out what programs are best suited for small firms and sole proprietors (PDF download). All programs referenced on located on the Trust website. Also, find out how a Professional Employer Organization (PEO) may be able to help your firm outsource cost-effectively the management of payroll, workers' compensation, human resources and employee benefits—to allow you to lower expenses and increase profits by focusing on your core business of architecture. Click here for more information.

### AIA TRUST: Professional Liability Insurance Database

This brand new member resource is now available on the Trust website, launched in a beta testing phase. An excellent tool for the small or new firm, you can visit the database and explore the information on major insurers to determine which might best suit your practice needs, along with in-depth explanations about how to go about selecting brokers and insurance, tips on completing application forms, and a glossary of insurance terms.

<u>**Annual Survey of the Professional Liability Insurance Industry**</u>

Each year, the AIA Trust with its NSPE and ACEC counterparts surveys the professional liability insurance industry to identify trends and offerings, and share insights about members' needs. The AIA Trust Professional Liability Insurance Program offered by Victor O. Schinnerer (VOSCO) and CNA still checks out as one of the best. Click here to access the actual survey results.

# AIA RESOURCES

## <u>AIA Small Firm Interest Groups</u>

The Small Firm Round Table focuses on the needs of small firms and is review the existing benefits and services offered by the AIA. Their mission is to further the special and unique interests of architects practicing in small firms and architects as sole practitioners by working with and through the American Institute of Architects. Secondly, it is to act as a central body to promote the creation, and to facilitate and coordinate the efforts of additional Small Firm Round Tables at the component level.

In addition, the Small Project Practitioners (SPP) Knowledge Community generates, collects and disseminates knowledge and wisdom on how to profitably run a small firm and how to carry out small projects that do not fit into the model of departmental production that characterizes many larger firms.

## <u>Free AIA resources of interest:</u>

AIA Best Practices represent the collective wisdom of AIA members and related professionals. These white papers address all aspects of architectural practice, serving as a compendium of relevant knowledge gained from *experience* – and are accessible by topic. There are also links to related resources included.

## <u>Other AIA Publications for New & Small Firms</u>

The AIA sells numerous books, many written by AIA members, on how to successfully run a professional practice and focused on specific management topics, which may be helpful. Here's the link to the listing.

A useful book on starting a practice, written by a former AIA Board member and former chair of the AIA Trust, Al Rubeling, FAIA, who teaches architecture in addition to a full-time practice in Baltimore is: How to Start and Operate Your Own Design Firm.

The Architect's Handbook of Professional Practice 14th Edition contains in-depth new coverage of topics on sustainable design, managing multiple offices, lifelong learning, mentoring, and team building. The new edition has major revised content on programming, project management, construction contract administration, risk management, and ethics – also coverage of small-firm considerations as well as emerging issues such as integrated practice. Useful appendices with lists of related organizations are provided, along with copies of the 2007 versions of the A201 general conditions and the B101 owner-architect agreement, and a useful expanded glossary.

An excerpt from the Handbook address risk and focusing on professional liability and other business insurance may be found on the AIA Trust's website along with the new professional liability database.

The 14th edition of The Architect's Handbook is available in a convenient book/CD package, with two accompanying CD-ROMs: one on the complete book's content, allowing easy searching of the entire book, and CD Two provides samples of all AIA Contract Documents in PDF format for Mac and PC computers. By the American Institute of Architects, published by John Wiley & Sons, 2008; ISBN: 9780470009574