AIA Upjohn Research Initiative 2021
Call for submissions

Submit an entry >

The AIA Upjohn Research Initiative supports applied research projects that enhance the value of design and professional practice knowledge.

This AIA program funds up to six research grants of $15,000–$30,000 annually for projects completed in a 6-to 18-month period. The funds must be fully matched with hard dollars, with a maximum of 10% allocated for overhead. Grant recipients' research findings and outcomes are published online by AIA.

Grants are eligible to academic institutions, practice, and other research organizations.

2021 grants

Research should be relevant and applicable to practicing architects. Upjohn Research grant funding will be allocated to projects related to the priorities outlined in AIA's Climate Action Plan. These include a drive toward sustainable design that helps mitigate or adapt to climate change. More specifically, research projects must address one or more of these areas:

- distributed energy and grid-integrated buildings
- regenerative design (i.e., projects that lead to the improvement of the ecosystem, creating resilient and equitable systems)
- circular building economy (e.g., materials market)
- temporary and transitional housing models
- improving equity through adaptation of spaces/ neighborhoods
- water resilience & equity (e.g., equitable access to water systems, water system resilience, carbon impacts of water systems)

Submission dates

Submission deadline:
September 1, 2021 by 5pm Pacific

Notifications to applicants:
by November 1, 2021

Verification of matching funds and agreement: by November 22, 2021

Submission fee: None

Submission details

Project submissions are completed online.

- Project title
- Abstract (include project concept and brief description of methodology)
- Budget
- Summary of projected outcomes (include brief description of how the project would help mitigate or adapt to climate change)
- Clients and knowledge communities served
- Approach to collaboration/partnership
- Images (optional)
- Principal investigator(s) with institutional affiliation(s) and contact information
- Contact information for three references

Omit any identifying information from the title, descriptive text, budget, and the optional images before submitting for the blind review process.

Criteria and selection

Given their role in helping establish the program, the jury panel is comprised of seven professionals from the AIA Board Knowledge Committee and the AIA College of Fellows.

The jury evaluates each submission and selects the grant awardees based on:

- Demonstration that the research enhances the value of design and/or professional practice knowledge (30%)
- Innovation (25%)
- Evidence of collaboration/partnership (20%)
- Validity of research method (15%)
- Strength of projected outcomes related to alignment with theme (10%)