



THE AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF ARCHITECTS

Custom Residential Architects Network



STARTING A LOCAL CRAN GROUP

A Toolkit to Get You Organized

CRAN has created a unique Toolkit to help you develop a local AIA CRAN group. CRAN members are establishing regional and individual city components across the country, as CRAN expands membership and provides a platform to fulfill its mission of supporting, advocating and educating its members.

SUPPORT:

CRAN supports all architects whose practices focus on custom residential work. We address the unique issues related to custom residential practice. We provide a forum for an exchange of ideas and resources that affect the residential practitioner.

ADVOCATE:

CRAN is finding new avenues to advocate for the residential practitioner through increased media exposure, publication of position papers, and by working closely with AIA, CEDIA, NARI and NAHB. We have established relationships with media outlets such as Hanley Wood and web-based platforms such as Houzz. We also have solid relationships with industry leaders who sponsor our events.

EDUCATE: CRAN hosts many programs and events on both the local and national levels. We support vital ongoing discussions and provide resources at AIA.org/CRAN. CRAN provides continuing educational opportunities for its members, the general public and our allied team members for all aspects of residential architecture.



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Introduction

If you practice residential architecture for individual homeowners - whether you work on bathroom or kitchen remodeling projects, additions to existing residences, or ground-up new homes - you are doing “custom” work and are part of CRAN.

Inclusivity is key to CRAN and its future growth. We are a style- neutral group that recognizes members who are engaged in all types of residential architecture design idioms and practice models.

Creating and being involved in a local CRAN chapter is one of the best ways to tap into what CRAN has to offer and to build momentum for the AIA’s most active and fastest-growing Knowledge Community. Local chapter meetings can be as simple as several members getting together, in round-table fashion, to discuss issues that concern the residential architect, from marketing and management to detailing and spec writing. As the chapter evolves, activities may include homes tours, public outreach and education, academic and professional advocacy, and continuing education seminars.

We created this guide to assist members in creating local CRAN Groups.





How to Start and Sustain a Successful Local CRAN Group

Step 1 Commit to organizing an initial meeting.

A successful local CRAN group typically begins with one interested individual taking ownership of the idea. While the ways to begin any endeavor are numerous, experience shows that two actions produce the best results:

1) **Planning regularly scheduled meetings** and 2) **Broadly and consistently publicizing meeting time and location.**

Step 2 Select a chairperson or co-chairs.

The local CRAN chair or co-chair is the **central point of the network** connecting residential practitioners nationwide. They organize chapter meetings to provide collegial support and knowledge-sharing for residential practitioners. The initial chair may serve temporarily until another member is appointed.

Step 3 Contact the leadership of your state and local AIA components.

These components are **vital resources** for obtaining a current list of members and for help in publicizing meetings. State and local leadership may also include individuals who want to take a role in organizing a local CRAN group. They may also be able to provide funding, meeting rooms, or assist you in securing sponsorships.

Step 4 Form an interest group.

Assemble a core group of members who can give the process a good start. **The core group is a source for ideas and resources** for your local CRAN group and provides great motivation to move forward.

Step 5 Plan the initial (organizational) meeting.

Using your core group as a sounding board, pick a date, time, and place for the first meeting. **The two most popular times are during an extended lunch and right after work.** Common meeting places are the local AIA office (if available), a member architect's office, or a conveniently located library or coffee shop.

Step 6 Publicize the initial meeting.

Announce the meeting at a state or local AIA chapter meeting, in the state or local AIA chapter newsletter and through e-mail notifications to local AIA members. **Include useful documents such as "CRAN...a Short History" and "Who is CRAN?" (in the Toolkit).** Consider making phone calls to potential attendees. Send weekly reminder notices, with a final notice distributed the day before the meeting.

Step 7 Host the initial meeting.

Just as every building needs a plan, **every meeting needs an agenda.** Regardless of how simple it may be, an agenda lets attendees know that the group is organized, has a purpose and objective, and it keeps everyone focused. A sample agenda for the first meeting is included in the Toolkit.

Discuss who will act as chair/co-chair, and how long the term should be; however, these positions may be loosely defined until the group gets better established.

A chair/co-chairs selected from the core planning group typically conducts the initial meeting. After welcoming the attendees and introducing themselves, ask attendees to introduce themselves while passing around a sign-in sheet.

State the group's purpose. This can often be summed up in one or two sentences, such as "This CRAN group addresses the unique issues related to custom residential practice. As a forum, it provides for the exchange of ideas and resources that affect residential practice." Incorporate this statement into a formal group mission statement. The "CRAN...a Short History" and "Who is CRAN?" documents can facilitate this presentation. Also, state what you

Using nametags is a good way to foster communication.

A sign-in sheet is a great way to obtain member information.



perceive to be the goals and outcomes of the meetings, and ask the attendees about their interests and expectations. This may actually occur at several meetings as new members join and enthusiasm builds.

Some Suggested Meeting Topics

Educating clients and the larger community about the benefits of using an architect

Public and Professional promotion and advocacy of residential architecture

Academic advocacy and awareness of residential architecture

Public outreach programs, speaker bureaus, public events, home shows and tours

Governmental code requirements, regulations, zoning and design reviews

Professional liability insurance and alternatives

Contracts, documents and support materials targeted for the residential practitioner

Design-build as an alternative

Office management models and profitability

Custom residential awards programs

Continuing education programs

Next, develop meeting norms. Discuss the frequency, format, date, time, and location of future meetings. Additional norms may relate to participation (e.g., AIA members are free, but other pay a small fee to attend), leadership, confidentiality, and the inclusion of allied professionals. Still others may address amenities, like the provision of snacks and drinks.

It is critical at this first meeting to have a brainstorming session on the topics group members want to discuss. The list may be extensive enough to require that some time be spent prioritizing it.

The group can decide if the topics are for discussion only – pulling expertise from its members – or if it wants to solicit an outside expert to present and discuss the issue. Consider developing an outline schedule for the entire year. If enough members attend the initial meeting, consider delegating organization of future meetings between them.

Before the meeting ends, recap the norms and set the schedule and topics for the next few meetings. This will help members save the dates, and a published schedule is a great public relations tool!

Step 8 Present the results of the initial meeting.

Soon after the initial meeting, send minutes to the attendees as well as to people who were invited but unable to attend, and to others who might be interested.

Also send the minutes to your state and local AIA components and ask them to include this information in their newsletters, meeting announcements and on their websites. Be sure to include the local CRAN mission statement so state and local members understand the group's objectives.

Step 9 Affiliate your group with AIA National CRAN.

After your organizational meeting, affiliate your group with the AIA National CRAN by calling AIA Member Services at 800-242-3837. Individual group members may designate CRAN as one of their Knowledge Communities by calling the same number. Affiliating with AIA National CRAN provides resources, learning opportunities, and the ability to participate in the CRAN forum on a national level

Step 10 Keep it going!

Once you get the ball rolling, momentum and interest will keep it moving, but energy and focus are still key. Delegating duties and sharing responsibilities help to increase leadership capacity, organizational learning, camaraderie, and the chances for success. Keep the core group members involved throughout the year, and plan an annual or bi-annual organizational retreat or meeting that allows the leadership to analyze, brainstorm and establish long range goals for the group.

Record the “who, what, when, where, how, and why” of your group so as new leaders take the helm, a history is in place of where the group has been, how it got there, and where it's headed.



Frequently Asked Questions

Q. What are AIA Knowledge Communities?

A. Knowledge Communities are groups of people who share a common interest in a given area and who collaborate to deepen their understanding of that area through ongoing learning and knowledge-sharing.

Q. What is the CRAN Knowledge Community and what does it do?

A. The CRAN Knowledge Community develops knowledge and information to benefit architects who are engaged in, or who are interested in learning more about, custom residential practice. CRAN presents information and facilitates the exchange of knowledge and expertise to promote the professional development of its members via discussion forums (www.cran.groupsites.com), national symposia and conventions, publications, and local activities.

Q. Can I be an individual member of the CRAN Knowledge Community?

A. As a member of the AIA, you are entitled to become a member of any Knowledge Community at no extra charge (learn about AIA Knowledge Communities at www.aia.org). Simply send an e-mail to Membership Services at memberservices@aia.org stating you would like your AIA membership to include membership in CRAN.

Q. Why should I join the CRAN Knowledge Community?

A. CRAN offers a unique opportunity to improve your own practice while contributing to a knowledge base for custom residential practices in general. Registering with the AIA as a member of CRAN ensures that you'll receive all the mailings and notices sent only to members, like announcements and invitations for exclusive CRAN events, including CRAN meetings at the AIA National Conference.

Q. What is a local CRAN Group?

A. A local CRAN Group is a dynamic, interactive group that facilitates knowledge sharing between custom residential practitioners in its geographic area.

Q. Why host a local CRAN Group?

A. Hosting a local CRAN group facilitates dialogue between custom residential practitioners, improving the quality of custom residential architecture. The local group can serve to educate its members, the general public and other constituencies about the value of custom residential architecture.

Q. How often should the local CRAN Group meet?

A. Monthly meetings are recommended, but a group may elect to meet more or less often, depending on the interest and availability of its members.

Q. How will local CRAN Group expenses be managed and paid?

A. Each local group is responsible for managing its own expenses. Expenses may be covered by the local or state component, group members, vendor sponsorships, or a combination of these.

Q. Our local component has a committee that functions with a similar purpose and format, but under a different name. Can our group affiliate?

A. Absolutely. The overarching goal is to create a knowledge network for AIA members with custom residential practices.



Q. Why should we affiliate our local group with the AIA National CRAN?

A. By affiliating and communicating with CRAN, you have a direct line to the AIA, helping it work toward better serving its members' needs. CRAN does not dictate content to local groups. Think of CRAN as a peer-to-peer network. Each local group maintains its own integrity and the much-needed freedom to respond to the ideas and issues of its membership. By linking to the AIA National Knowledge CRAN, you share your voice with groups across the country.

Q. What resources are available to a local CRAN Group?

A. Resources include the AIA CRAN Web (www.aia.org/cran), the CRAN discussion group www.cran.groupsites.com, CRAN online journals, other Knowledge Communities' online journals, and other local allied professional groups.

Q. How can local CRAN group members participate with the CRAN National Community?

A. Individuals can author articles and practice tips for the CRAN Website or the CRAN discussion group or suggest topics. They can also submit comments to CRAN National committee members, attend CRAN events at the AIA National Convention, attend National CRAN symposia, volunteer to serve on a CRAN committee, or as a member of the national committee.

Q. What if I have questions about CRAN or about starting a local CRAN Group?

A. Contact AIA National CRAN at www.aia.org/cran or by calling Member Services at 800-242-3837.



CRAN Organizational Meeting – Sample Agenda

[date, time, place]

Call to order and welcome with introductions while passing around sign-in sheet.

- Sign-in sheet with phone numbers, e-mail addresses and sample questions.
- Suggested sample questions: “Why did you decide to attend this meeting?”; “What kind of content/ support for residential architects would you like to see CRAN provide?” “What do you hope to get out of this group?”
- Nametags (optional)

Discussion of meeting norms:

- Frequency; Date, Time and Locations of Regular Meetings
- Format
- Confidentiality
- Host/coordinator
- Cost and refreshments (optional)
- Participation and Volunteers

Brainstorm future topics

Schedule recap, appoint volunteers for the next few meetings

Adjournment

CRAN Meeting – Sample Agenda

[date, time, place]

Call to order/welcome [3 minutes]

- Sign-in sheet with phone numbers and e-mail addresses ; consider Nametags
- Sign-in on AIA Continuing Education Form B (if applicable)
Note: If the program is qualified for continuing education credits, AIA Form A should be completed before the meeting and submitted to the local or state component at least two weeks before the event.

Introductions/ice breaker [5–10 minutes]

Knowledge Community sponsor promotion [3 minutes]

Round table on selected topic [30 minutes or more]

“What do you need?” [10 minutes or more, plus time remaining after topic]

Announcements/reminder of next meeting and topic [2 minutes]

Adjournment



CRAN Talking Points – *Suggestions*

- Educating clients and the larger community about the benefits of using an architect
- Public and Professional promotion and advocacy of residential architecture
- Academic advocacy and awareness of residential architecture
- Public outreach programs, speaker bureaus, public events, home shows and tours
- Governmental code requirements, regulations, zoning and design reviews
- Affordable professional liability insurance and alternatives
- Contracts, documents, and support materials targeted for the residential practitioner
- Design-build as an alternative
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- Continuing education programs

CRAN Annual Report and Planning Questions – *Suggestions*

1. List (or attach) the calendar of activities for the upcoming year:

<u>Date</u>	<u>Activity Planned</u>
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2. What were the best round-table programs/discussions held in the past?
3. What are the top issues, topics, and concerns for your committee or round table?
4. What areas would your CRAN like to see addressed during an AIA convention, grassroots, local or national symposiums or other workshop?
5. What articles or practice tips were submitted to CRAN by your members during the past year(s)?



Who is CRAN?

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How can I join CRAN?

Join the CRAN Knowledge Community by updating your AIA.org Account.

Once you join the CRAN Knowledge Community, you can log in to find the latest discussion postings, announcements and upcoming events as well as get access to the current member list.

We look forward to having you join our community, listening to how we can support your individual residential practice and most importantly, engaging with you in robust dialogue to promote and strengthen our chosen architectural path.



CRAN...A Short History

Over the past 5 years, a small group of residential architects has worked to build the [AIA Custom Residential Architects Network](#) (CRAN), which began as a subgroup of the [AIA Residential Knowledge Community](#). CRAN's primary focus is to make the AIA relevant to residential architects by providing information, course content, and leadership to our members. In a very short time we have become one of the most active, vibrant, and relevant groups within the AIA Knowledge Communities. But that was just the beginning...

CRAN is a New and Rapidly-Growing AIA Knowledge Community

CRAN has recently become an independent AIA Knowledge Community (KC). This is ground-breaking because it is the first time a group of architects approached the AIA requesting to form a KC. Our KC status is the culmination of years of work and will allow us to unite and represent all residential architects within the AIA. Further, it opens the door for more residential architects to join the AIA. Given the number of non-AIA residential architects, the potential for inclusion is monumental! In fact, during a meeting of all KCs in New Orleans, our growth was heralded as a role model for other KCs to build upon.

CRAN Contributions and Events

CRAN was responsible for five courses about residential architecture at the AIA 2011 National convention in New Orleans. CRAN also contributed to several courses developed by the AIA Small Project Practitioners KC. Our steering committee has organized several national events for residential practitioners over the last four years, including symposiums in Minneapolis, Chicago, Austin and Indianapolis. In addition, we have participated in Hanley Wood's annual Reinvention conference. We are currently working on plans for our next annual symposium, which will take place September 6-9 in Newport, RI. This event will include several house tours and features Allan Shope, AIA, as keynote speaker.



National CRAN Contact Information

Website: www.aia.org/cran

2012 Chair:	Mark Demerly, AIA	mark@demerlyarchitets.com
2012 Vice Chair:	John Isch, AIA	jisch@rwaarchitects.com
2012 Past Chair:	Luis Jauregui, AIA	luis@jaureguiarchitect.com
2012 Committee Members:	David Andreozzi, AIA	dsra@andreozi.com
	Frank Bain	fhbain@gmail.com
	Mary Cerrone, AIA	mc@marycerrone.com
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	James Walbridge, AIA	jwalbridge@tektionarchitecture.com
	Dawn Zuber, AIA	dzuber@studiozarch.com

Local CRAN and Residential Committee Information

AIA Austin	CRAN Committee www.aiaaustin.org
AIA Buffalo	Residential Committee aiabuffalowny.org/Education/Residential_Committee/index.php
AIA Charleston	CRAN Charleston www.crancharleston.org
AIA Chicago	Residential Design Committee www.aiachicago.org
AIA Cincinnati	CORA Committee www.aiacincinnati.org
AIA Houston	Residential Committee www.aiahouston.org/residential/
AIA Indianapolis	CRAN Committee www.aiaindiana.org
AIA Minnesota	Residential Architects Committee www.aia-mn.org
AIA New York	Housing Committee



www.aiany.org/committees/Housing/

AIA Pittsburgh CRAN Committee
www.aiapgh.org

AIA San Mateo County CRAN Committee
www.aiasmc.org

AIA Seattle CRAN Committee
www.aiaseattle.org/committee-custom-residential-architects-network

AIA Tampa Bay CRAN Committee
www.aiatampabay.com



2010 AIA/CES Program Completion (Provider Form B)

Registered Providers are responsible for reporting to the AIA/CES the names of ALL AIA members. Use this form to report the names of AIA members who have earned credit. Do not alter the format of this form. This document must be kept on file for six (6) years with the Provider Point of Contact.

Program Title (same as on Form A)

Provider Number Program Number (same as on Form A) Provider Name

Name of Person submitting this report:

Phone number:

Date of Program Completion: City/State:

Participants at this program: (Please print or type)

Table with 4 columns: AIA Member Yes or No, AIA Membership Number (required), Name of Participant, Certificate* Request. Rows 1-12.

Return this form within two weeks of program completion to: The University of Oklahoma, AIA/CES Records, Room B-1, 1700 Asp Avenue, Norman, Oklahoma 73072 or fax to (405) 325-6965. For additional information, call (800) 605-8229.

*It is the responsibility of the Provider to send out certificates of completion to all participants that request them.