How to submit a Component Best Practice

AIA national is working towards creating a database of best practices that are sharable and replicable for components’ use. Best practice submissions should fall under one of the core service categories and should elevate that core service.

Programs should:

- **Innovate** – The program or best practice should demonstrate the ability of the chapter to serve members and the community. It should capture and interpret the needs of your current and future membership. The program should illustrate a comprehensive understanding of the topic and illustrate performance excellence and value.

- **High-quality** – The program or best practice should exemplify and promote relevant knowledge on a topic. Also, evidence should be provided to demonstrate that the program engages in ongoing knowledge and programmatic evaluation and enhancement. An added plus is that the program concept, development, content and implementation engaged the component in collaborative relationships with other allied organizations.

- **Replicable** – The program must be replicable with steps/processes for chapters to follow. The program should incorporate tangible, practical content that can be used by other components.

- **Relevant** – The objectives, design and content of the program should be consistent with the members’ needs and challenges. The program should be reviewed periodically to determine its continued relevance in meeting member needs. The program can engage members as well as nonmembers and expand the influence of architects in their communities and the profession.

- **Measurable** – The submission must have clear and specific measures/indicators of success. The program must have quantitative measures that demonstrate the overall impact or effect on the overall membership.

**Resources**

View previously submitted Best Practices [link to Component Connect]

All Best Practices should abide by the [AIA Content Style Guide]

**Contact**

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NAME OF COMPONENT: AIA Mississippi

CONTACT: Amber Lombardo

COMPONENT SIZE: Up-to 500 members

PROGRAM TITLE: District to DC

CORE SERVICE: Advocacy

PROVIDE A BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE PROGRAM:
AIA MS hosted a series of community visits to educate about the Federal Historic Tax Credit and other development incentives. While there, we engaged a local craftsman to teach a replicable skill to youth scout members. Participation in the workday was required to qualify for the opportunity to earn a trip to Washington, D.C.

HOW DOES YOUR PROGRAM ADDRESS THE CORE MEMBER SERVICE?
Advocacy is a key component of the work of AIA. By effectively delivering voting constituents to Washington, D.C., we were able to attract youth and adults who otherwise would not be aware of the work of AIA and its members.

WHO IS THE INTENDED AUDIENCE (include size and demographic)
Youth and adults from the communities we visited.

WHAT IS THE BUDGET? (include all costs including sponsors, grants, and other outside funding)
- $0 - Accommodations were donated by a hotelier with a historic property. He also attended the Hill visits.
- $0 - Each family was responsible for their own transportation to DC
- $250 - Dinner to provide policy briefing and answer questions on the evening before the legislative visits
- $0 - Materials and supplies donated by construction project owner/beneficiary
- $100 - Refreshments provided on the workday
- Executive director travel expense was covered within the standard operational budget

HOW (list the steps or process to implement this program, be as specific as possible)
1) Enroll a property owner to allow a local craftsman to provide a one-day hands-on education event for youth and their parents.
2) Secure appropriate insurance coverage for the activity.
3) Develop a project supplies list and ask sponsors/supporters to donate.
4) Promote the workday. We chose to limit to scouting youth and their parents because it simplified the promotional effort, allowed for additional insurance protection through BSA
and GSUSA and was already geared towards directing youth into leadership roles.

5) Host the workday and photograph. Clean up the giant mess that results.

6) Build a flyer to show the kids doing the project and use it to ask for Hill Visits with legislators. Schedule meetings.

7) Host a dinner to provide training for the youth and parents, distribute an itinerary and coach on what to wear, how to behave, what to expect, etc.

8) Attend the meetings. Direct the youth to ask the legislator to visit their projects when next at home in the district. Take lots of photos.

9) Send personalized thank you notes to the Congressional members and their staff, along with photos.

10) Send press releases to papers along with photos of the youth.

11) Send thank you notes to the vendors who contributed and the property owner, expressing that without their help, the program would likely not occur.