



The Council of Educators in Landscape Architecture (CELA)

Strategic Plan | 2012-2015 (Updated and Extended to 2018)

Updated by the Standing Committee on (Strategic) Planning in Spring 2016

Mission Statement

The mission of The CELA is to encourage, support and further education in the field of landscape architecture specifically related to teaching, research, scholarship, and public service. CELA's six strategic directions include:

1. To encourage and support scholarship and scholarly activities among faculty and students concerned with landscape architecture education;
2. To enhance opportunities for the improvement of existing and the development of new curricula in the teaching of landscape architecture;
3. To encourage, support and conduct research related to the improvement of teaching, public service, and the advancement of knowledge of landscape architecture;
4. To foster communication and the exchange of knowledge, information and experience relevant to landscape architecture education through an annual conference and other educational meetings, the publication and the dissemination of scholarly writings, data and creative endeavors, and through liaison with related organizations;
5. To facilitate significant interaction among those involved in landscape architecture education; and
6. To encourage and facilitate the involvement of the institutions, individuals and other members in the growth and improvement of landscape architecture education.

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The Council of Educators in Landscape Architecture (CELA) set out to create a strategic plan providing a blueprint for CELA leaders, members and staff that outlines how the organization wishes to carry out its mission over a three to five year period. The CELA Board committed itself to the following principles in preparation for implementing the strategic plan:

- To anticipate tomorrow's issues and trends
- To develop and adjust strategy and action plans to incorporate the changing world and prepare for the future
- To earn a reputation for relevance
- To encourage the development and dissemination of knowledge to further landscape architecture education.

As a first step in the 2012 Strategic Plan an in-depth member survey was used to determine perceptions and opinions on the following:

- Changes and trends in landscape architecture education over the past decade
- Current pressing issues in landscape architecture education
- Where CELA should focus its efforts.

Respondents were asked to rank the degree to which they agreed or disagreed with a series of statements. These statements were either a prediction or opinion about the current and future state of landscape architecture education. Respondents were then asked to comment on what they believed each statement meant to the future of landscape architecture education.

Responding members identified issues, opportunities, challenges and trends that were then reviewed, categorized and prioritized by the CELA Board of Directors, resulting in four key goals that make up the foundation of the new strategic plan.

2015 Update: Members of the Standing Committee on Planning reviewed this plan in Fall 2015 and provided feedback. The standing committee deems this strategic plan remains relevant. Therefore, updates were added to the current plan. Subsequently the current plan was extended to 2018.

Key Goals from the Strategic Planning Process

I. Research

CELA will serve as a leading resource for emerging knowledge in the field of landscape architecture.

II. Faculty Support

CELA will serve as a resource for members to become better educators and help advance careers.

III. Curriculum

CELA will provide tools and support to help administrators and faculty keep up to date with student and industry needs a rapidly changing world.

IV. Community Outreach/Stakeholder Relationships

CELA will continue to build strong relationships with organizations and individuals in an effort to work together to advance the field of landscape architecture and landscape architecture education.

It should be noted the 2012 strategic plan specifically does not address operational issues. It addresses member identified trends, challenges and opportunities. Any operational changes should be a result of carrying out these issue-driven goals.

2015 Update: The CELA Board further identified three priorities following these member-identified key goals in 2012. They include **1) communications, 2) academic data reporting and 3) international expansion**. The CELA Board further identified two additional priorities in 2015, including: awards and development/fund raising.

The CELA will form four new committees, each charged with realizing a goal. The Board of Directors suggested strategies and tactics for each goal to provide each committee a starting point for discussion. Specifically, the committees will:

- Evaluate the Board-suggested strategies and/or develop new ones.
- Create specific tactics to carry out those strategies.
- Present chosen strategies and tactics for Board approval along with a list of resources (such as associated expenses, estimated volunteer hours and staff time, and so on) needed for implementation.
- Assist CELA staff and Board of Directors with implementation of approved strategies and tactics.

Strategies and tactics may overlap committees. Committee chairs should be aware of these overlaps and be sure to communicate and collaborate with each other.

I. Research

Position CELA as a leading resource for emerging knowledge in the field of landscape architecture.

This will be done by providing tools and support to help members:

- Add to the body of knowledge
- Disseminate that knowledge to students, researchers, educators and practitioners within and across relevant disciplines

Notes from the Member Survey

Most members believe the need for measurable outcomes will increase performance demands in the next decade. Possible implications include an increased emphasis on research and an increase in the interdisciplinary nature of the field

Board Suggested Strategies and Tactics

- Identify and communicate new revenue research funding sources for members.
 - Offer grant writing workshop(s)
 - Create (or find and direct members to) database of available grants
 - Advocacy and lobbying efforts to increase government funding
 - Build relationships with practitioners and other university departments to learn what research is needed and to bring that research to interested stakeholders.
- Encourage members and students to share new research with CELA. Position CELA as a mechanism for directing needed research to practitioners.
- Utilize cost-effective methods of communication to disseminate research and establish CELA as a resource.
 - Identify free or inexpensive web tools such as Google Scholar
 - Increase traffic to the CELA website (search engine optimization)
 - Communicate the available resources on CELA website to interested stakeholders
 - Build relationships with associations representing Landscape Architecture practitioners including ASLA and CLARB.

2018 Update: The Standing Committee on Research and Creative Scholarship was formed in 2012. The committee focused on reconfiguring three topical areas: Building Research Capacity, Building Research Relationships and Building Research Communications. Specific accomplishments include:

- *Landscape Research Record* (LRR) is now the official peer-reviewed conference proceedings, approved in 2013. LRR No. 1 - No. 6 have been published since the approval.
- The “Film Track” was approved as a CELA standard track in 2014.
- The CLASS Fund inaugural call for proposals was announced in 2014 - 2016. A winning proposal was selected for funding each year (\$25,000). The call for proposals was suspended in 2017, but hopes to be back on track for Fall 2018.
- *Research Problem Statement* submission portal has been approved by the CELA Board, and will be added to the CELA webpage. This proposed searchable database is modeled after a similar database offered by the National Transportation Board, Here landscape architecture practitioners will be able to upload research questions that in turn may be searched and chosen by faculty and students of CELA member schools.

Actions CELA needs to take in the near term includes:

- Provide for the web maintenance of the *Research Problem Statement* portal.
- Provide a database of available grants.
- Continue to seek grant sponsors that are willing to support landscape architecture research

II. Faculty Support

CELA will serve as a resource for members to become better educators and to help advance careers.

Notes from the 2012 Member Survey

The following issues were frequently identified by members as the most pressing issue in Landscape Architecture Education:

- Time demands – increasing interdisciplinary nature of the field is requiring educators to expand scope of knowledge while student demands are decreasing time to degree.
- Lack of adequate funding
- Attrition – recruiting qualified educators
- Adapt to constantly evolving issues and research

Board Suggested Strategies and Tactics

- Mentoring and Training
 - Create a CELA mentor matching service
 - Provide best practices in faculty and administrator training and/or mentoring
 - Post videos of training workshops online (Possible CELA revenue source?)
- Provide support in the scholarship of teaching and learning (SOTL)
 - Reach out to associations dedicated to SOTL to speak at CELA conference and/or post information to CELA website.
 - Reach out to universities for content.

- Career Support and Advancement
 - Promotion and tenure best practices and success stories - provide information to make the strongest case within the standards of each candidate's respective institution.
Note: Should include strategies for making the case for partnership and team contributions. This could be a workshop topic at an upcoming conference. Would members be willing to share promotion and tenure "failure" stories?
 - Provide data in areas such as student enrollment, salary, amount of support each university provides to Landscape Architecture departments.
 - Peer review and grant writing assistance

Will there be a shortage of faculty due to attrition over the next 5-10 years?

2015 Update: A committee on faculty support was formed in 2012. The committee focused on strategies and tactics for mentoring, support in the scholarship of teaching and learning, and career advancement. Full details are in the committee report. Specific accomplishments include:

- Writing and publishing pre-conference workshops have been held regularly.
- CELA Fellow Mentoring Program launched in Fall 2015.
- The best poster award sponsored by CELA fellows was implemented in CELA2016.

Actions CELA needs to take in the near term includes:

- Provide a forum (blog or similar to ASLA PPN) where faculty can interact by posting questions and comments.

III. Curriculum (Curricular Adaptability)

CELA will provide tools and support to help administrators and faculty keep up to date with student and industry needs a rapidly changing world. Specifically:

- Continually update curriculum with emerging knowledge, environmental issues and interdisciplinary needs.
- Prepare students for work overseas.
- Prepare faculty for an increased international student population.
- Address challenges and opportunities that may arise from the increasing popularity of online courses and accelerated degree programs. Many members expressed concern that both online and accelerated degree programs will reduce the quality of education, but at the same time will make Landscape Architecture education accessible to a larger audience.

Notes from the 2012 Member Survey

The following statements were ranked "strongly agree" by respondents:

- Performance demands upon landscapes as evidenced by measurable outcomes will increase in the next decade.
- The popularity of online education in Landscape Architecture is likely to increase over the next decade.
- Landscape Architecture programs that reduce the time required for students to graduate (accelerated degree programs) will increase in popularity over the next decade.

Board Suggested Strategies:

- Utilize CELA's Academic Information System as a source to provide rich information on academic practice.
- Create and publish best practices
- Use Universities as a resource
- Create online discussion forums for members to ask questions and share information with peers.

2015 Update: Specific accomplishments include:

- On-going information exchange with LAF allows CELA to disseminate curriculum examples, such as LAF's recourses for educators (<http://landscapeperformance.org/resources-for-educators>) that focused on landscape performance curricula.

IV. Community Outreach/Stakeholder Relationships

Stakeholders are interested parties outside the CELA "umbrella" such as practitioners, the public, government agencies, non-CELA member faculty and administrators, prospective Landscape Architecture students, organizations promoting the scholarship of teaching & learning and other Landscape Architecture related organizations.

CELA will continue to build strong relationships with organizations and individuals in an effort to work together to advance the field of landscape architecture and landscape architecture education

Notes from Member Survey

The following statements were ranked "strongly agree" by respondents

- Licensure continues to be important to landscape architecture.
- There will be a shortage of landscape architecture graduates over the next decade. (Member perception, not confirmed by data)
- Individuals without Landscape Architecture degrees are competing in the profession.

Board Suggested Strategies:

- Promote Landscape Architecture to young students (K-12) a college major and career choice.
 - Educate and create an interest in Landscape Architecture among students at the middle school level.
 - Promote the teaching of environmental ethics at the grade school level
 - Help young students become environmental stewards.
- Establish better working relationships with allied organizations
 - Work together to identify trends to spot opportunities and overcome challenges
 - Ensure CELA has a voice on industry issues such as licensure
 - Become a steward for the development and enforcement of practice laws
- Promote Landscape Architecture education as a means of growing the body of knowledge
 - Create a task force to discuss the role of CELA in practitioner continuing education
 - Allow the media access CELA online directories/databases to use as a resource
 - Establish CELA as a resource for practitioners to identify needed research

2015 Update: Specific accomplishments include:

- Allied organizations (ASLA, CSLA, CLARB, LAAB and LAF) have annual President's Council meetings.
- Presidents of these allied organizations have been invited to attend each other's annual meetings to provide updates.

2015 Updates on Three CELA Board Identified Priorities:

- **Communications:** CELA established the standing committee structure since 2013. The Standing Committee on Communications, Outreach and Publications chaired by the Secretary is in charge of the communications priorities. Publication of the Forum will resume in Fall 2018. The CELA Facebook page was created in April 2015, and is maintained by the Secretary. An overhaul to the organization's website was done in 2016, however, there is still more work to be done to streamline member school information and provide performance metrics. In 2015, the President and Executive Director began publishing quarterly reports to inform members of the updates from the CELA Board, These reports have not been kept up, and are a necessary line of communication to the membership.
- **Academic Data Reporting:** AIS is now integrated with CiviCore. The first reporting using CiviCore began in 2015. AIS needs to be assessed and CELA needs to determine if collecting additional data from member school (i.e. in addition to the Annual report required by the Landscape Architecture Accreditation Board (LAAB) is truly viable and/or necessary. LAAB shares its data with CELA and all accredited schools.
- **International Expansion:** Due to the efforts in reaching out to international educators, CELA 2017 was co-hosted by Tsinghua U., Beijing Forestry U. and Peking U. Kyung Hee Univ., Seoul, South Korea, has expressed their interest to join CELA and host the 2021 conference. New international membership is expected to grow.

2018 Updates on Awards and Development/Fundraising Priorities:

- **CELA Lifetime Achievement Award:** This new award was approved by the board in fall 2015. The description of the award is "*The CELA Lifetime Achievement Award is the highest level of recognition made to an individual by the Council of Educators in Landscape Architecture. This award honors an individual's lifetime achievements and dedication to the discipline of landscape architecture. The award recognizes the individual's profound and long-lasting impacts on the field through his or her extraordinary works in research, instruction, practice, leadership, service or advocacy for landscape architecture.*"
- A procedure and process for the Lifetime Achievement Award needs to be finalized by the Standing Committee on Awards & Recognitions, and approved by the CELA Board.
- The Board has approved the hiring of a Development Officer to assist in fundraising. It is expected that this position will be filled in 2019.

2018 Updates on Strategic Plan

- **CELA is search for a new Executive Director in 2018. Updates will be differed until a new Executive Director is hired.**