



Association
of Registered
Interior Designers
of Ontario

Strategic Plan

2023-2025



Background

An annual strategic planning process has been a necessary governance practice for the Board and staff to identify a roadmap, and guide ARIDO to its future as a vibrant, rejuvenated, diverse, and inclusive professional organization.

It has also served to keep the strategic focus and momentum of the Board and staff moving forward from year to year.

In 2021, ARIDO centred its focus on advancing diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility within the organization, profession, and the broader interior design community.

The journey related to this work reflects a transformation within the organization to evolve beyond our history as a membership association pursuing a regulatory future; to one

that also thrives as a community which is diverse, inclusive, equitable, and accessible.

New for 2022, the organization held a leadership workshop intended to bring the Board of Management and Staff together to identify the next steps of our journey together.

The workshop focused on the continued need for the leadership to look inward, as needed, and identify where we can do better while also reflecting often and having meaningful discussions to increase our collective awareness and actions.

This will help us to continue to foster more thoughtful discussions and decisions that can positively impact the future of the organization, leadership, our members, and the broader community.





The leadership work was facilitated by **Matrix360**, and **KDPM Consulting**.

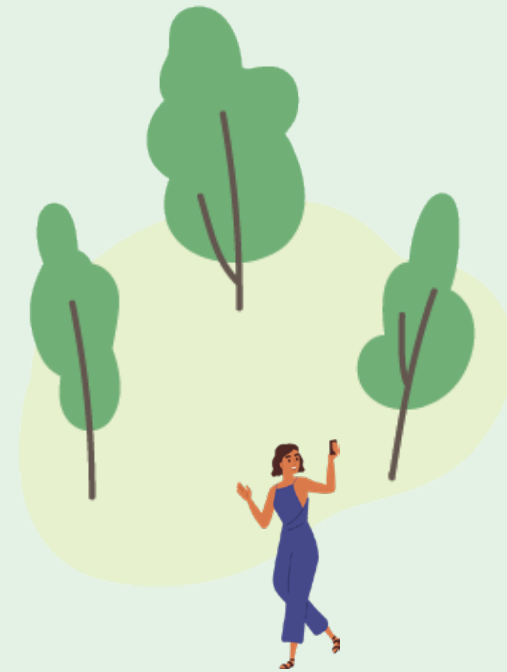
The 2023-2025 Strategic Plan focuses on the continuation of our commitment to advancing equity, diversity, inclusion, and accessibility. This strategic plan incorporates the recommendations stemming from **The Chandy Principle™ Diversity and Equity Workplace Audit (DEWA)** which is designed and executed by Matrix360, our partners on this journey.

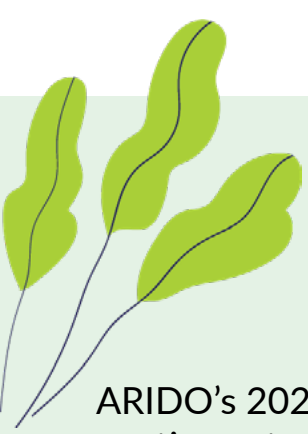
The DEWA audit was undertaken in Phase II of ARIDO's work and uncovers insights through an examination of the organization's culture, demographics, leadership teams, employee, and member perspectives, and policies and procedures.

The DEWA audit has revealed that ARIDO's current state is similar to many other organizations in relation to diversity, equity, and accessibility: improvements are needed to its existing infrastructure and culture, and these improvements must be a priority in order to truly advance the current state for the entire ARIDO community.

By moving to a multi-year Strategic Plan, ARIDO's Board, Staff, and Committees have greater runway to deeply engage with the tasks and initiatives outlined in this plan.

It underscores the importance of integrating these goals within ARIDO's daily work and provides space for careful, sustained work to be completed on these long term objectives.





ARIDO's 2023-2025 Strategic Plan continues to centre around the Bold Statement which confirms the organization's commitment to honouring its responsibility as an industry leader to forge a new pathway to advance equity and diverse representation through actionable programs and policies.

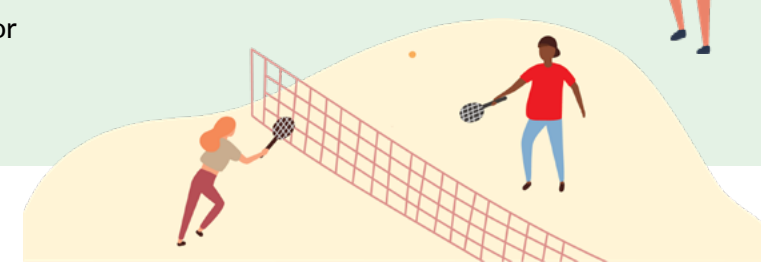
While ARIDO continues its journey and work, we recognize the audit results reflect that we are in the early stages of our work, but we remain committed and invested to reinforcing value, fostering community, and inclusive engagement.

We have much work ahead of us and are excited to continue our journey of growth and pave a pathway for others to join us.



Contributors to this strategic plan include:

- + Jennifer Warling, President
- + Sabrina Carinci, President-elect
- + Nadia Kuhni, Past-President
- + Darryl Balaski, VP, Finance
- + Robin Fraser, Director
- + Joanne Chan, Director
- + Karin Crawford, Director
- + Jude Kamal, Director
- + Golnar Raissi-Dehkordi (Director)
- + Bryan Wiens, Director
- + Neal Prabhu, Educator Director
- + Jennifer Suljak, Intern Director
- + David Gibbons, Board of Governors Chair
- + Sharon Portelli, Executive Director and Registrar
- + Irma Kemp, Executive Assistant
- + Maya Vnukovsky, Membership Coordinator
- + Ali Moenck, Communications Manager
- + Jose Tanabe, Regulatory Coordinator
- + Sandra Noble, Manager, Membership
- + Harrison Zhang, Manager, Accounting
- + Maia Stamatov, Communications Assistant
- + Clenton Afonso, Events Coordinator



Bold Statement

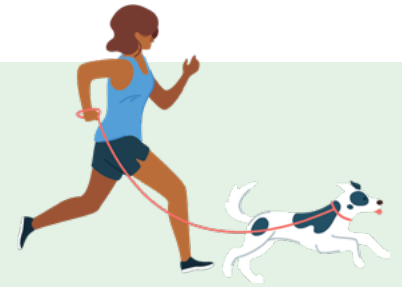
ARIDO is committed to creating a welcoming and respectful community that is dedicated to building meaningful, progressive change towards diversity and belonging.

We will boldly advocate and champion the growth of our members and stakeholders during various stages of their professional and personal journeys.

We will honour our responsibility as an industry leader to forge a new pathway to advance equity and diverse representation through actionable programs and policies.



The Three Strategic Priorities



Our Bold Statement continues to be supported by the following three priority areas which will be essential to our continued journey over the next several years:

- + Fostering Community
- + Reinforcing Value
- + Inclusive Engagement

It is important to note that all the above areas of focus are inter-related to each other and the Bold Statement. They are all considered to be critical to ARIDO's journey and future as a leader.

We also recognize that our genuine intent for progressive change requires a multi-year commitment and journey.



Lastly, ARIDO's mandate of regulating the interior design profession in Ontario for the betterment of the profession and in the best interest of the public continues, along with the goal of delivering value to its members and demonstrating the value of interior design to the public and stakeholders.

The Board of Management provides strategic direction, and the staff are responsible for operational execution. Committees are formed by the Board and work with staff towards executing our goals.

The strategic plan is developed to support our vision for the future of the organization. S.M.A.R.T.

Principles drive the direction in which we will execute our work so that each goal and associated actions are Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Results-based, and Time-based.





Fostering Community

Goal: The ARIDO Community is a diverse, inclusive, and safe space for all existing members, new members, staff, volunteers, industry partners, and stakeholders to participate authentically.

1. We will be leaders in the advancement of equity, diversity, accessibility, and inclusion, by clearly expressing our commitment for change by:

- a. Conducting annual reviews and updates to our:
 - i. published diversity statement connected to ARIDO's values and principles. This will be supported by the curation of specific goals focused on diversity, equity, and accessibility initiatives (internally and externally).
 - ii. values and goals for their connectivity to diversity, equity, and accessibility which reflects and is connected to our diversity statement.
 - iii. vision and mission statements to reflect broader sustainability and diversity goals.
- b. Expanding leadership knowledge and training by:
 - i. Holding quarterly lunch and learn educational series for leadership teams.

- ii. Implement educational workshops for ARIDO leadership teams to understand inclusive language and behaviour.
- iii. Conducting diversity policy training or information sessions for leaders' employees and members on an ongoing basis (quarterly or every six months)
- iv. Formalize employee and leadership training programs for policies and processes that foster diversity, equity, and accessibility education.
- c. Engaging Chapters in redesigning the current chapter model to align regional activities and focus to ARIDO's strategic direction, offer value-based programming, and create inclusive communities for local members.



Fostering Community



2. **We will prioritize centralizing diversity, equity, inclusion and accessibility by creating inclusive policies that embrace equity, diversity, and inclusion learning and accountability with ARIDO in our governance and frameworks by:**
 - a. Engaging Matrix360 to further evaluate and work with the Board and Committees to implement the connection of diversity and accessibility to the framework;
 - b. Expanding Employee Handbook policies to include coverage of diversity and equity related matters.
 - c. Hiring a third party partner to:
 - i. create and implement policies that encompass diversity, equity, and accessibility within ARIDO's framework.
 - ii. design and implement leadership performance management policies for diversity.
 - iii. Build formal policies to create and support equitable representation on the Board and Committees
 - d. Updating ARIDO By-Laws to reflect equity and accessibility focus.
 - e. Curating scorecards and measurement tools
 - i. Sponsors
 - ii. Members
 - iii. Supply chain (supplier diversity)
 - f. Setting targets to create points of reference and support goal creation for diversity, equity, and accessibility impact.
 - g. Streamlining an action plan with key targets based of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) that will showcase ARIDO's commitment to Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and building better communities.
 - h. Creating targets for milestones and goals, related to advancing diversity and equity within ARIDO and how it will be measured.
 - i. Maintaining the Matrix Affinity Groups for the organization that represent diverse voices and experiences, and contribute as leaders in ARIDO's work.
3. **As leaders within the organization, we will be champions by:**
 - a. Encouraging leadership teams to lead by example for championing changes to drive education, increased representation, and discussing diversity and equity issues openly.
 - b. Curating and implementing monthly spotlight on internal leadership team and its commitment to diversity, equity, and accessibility.
 - c. Advocating for:
 - i. accessibility and equity through the design industry: academia (school boards, institutions), government relations (provincial, federal); and
 - ii. accessibility and people with disabilities in the design industry.





Reinforcing Value

Goal: We will strive for cultural betterment of the interior design industry with the end goal of increased value within the community, and increased awareness by the public and end users of the value of interior designers.

1. **We will create a more welcoming and inclusive membership community where everyone belongs and is heard by:**

- a. Updating any ARIDO application to include and welcome diversity and accessibility.
- b. Implementing and committing to conducting annual engagement surveys that capture demographics, perspectives, and engagement for members, suppliers, and vendors.
- c. Updating the criteria for scholarships to include ARIDO's commitment to diverse and underrepresented students and newcomers.
- d. Working with a third-party partner to support accessibility requirements for all online and in-person events.





Reinforcing Value

- e. Increasing event frequency in regions outside of the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area (GTHA).
- 2. **We will develop value-added programs, education, and best practices tools by:**
 - a. Working with third parties as needed to curate educational curriculum and programs:
 - i. for diversity, equity, and accessibility learning for members and industry partners.
 - ii. on accessibility in design and spaces for all members to participate
 - b. Curating a formal online resource for members and industry partners that includes a resource library, education workshops, and lunch & learns focused on equity, diversity and inclusion learning, knowledge, and experiences for members and industry partners; and,
 - c. Hosting webinars and presentations on practice related matters, i.e., OBC, HR, financial management, succession planning, running a practice.
- d. Creating resources such as:
 - i. Building Code Reference Guide.
 - ii. Guide to ethics and practice standards related to the practice of interior design;
 - iii. Interior design master class training programs.
- e. Developing templates and best practices for inclusive policies for adoption by design firms and community organizations.

- 3. **We will focus on value-added programs and initiatives that enable thriving careers for interior designers and that prioritize the inclusion of underrepresented designers and companies, by:**
 - a. Reviewing and updating Intern membership requirements to ensure diversity and accessibility is represented in its framework.
 - b. Exploring the hiring a third party to manage the mentorship program to maintain the integrity of ARIDO's educational mandate.
 - c. Connecting students to co-op opportunities.
 - d. Updating and expanding the mentorship program to include:
 - i. opportunities for diverse and/or underrepresented individuals.
 - ii. connecting different generations with one another.
 - iii. Including Students.
 - iv. peer to peer practice support.



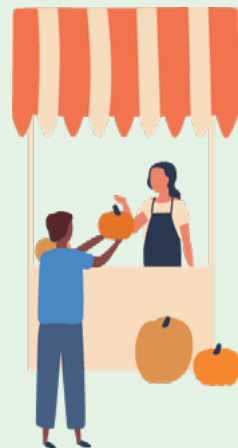


Reinforcing Value

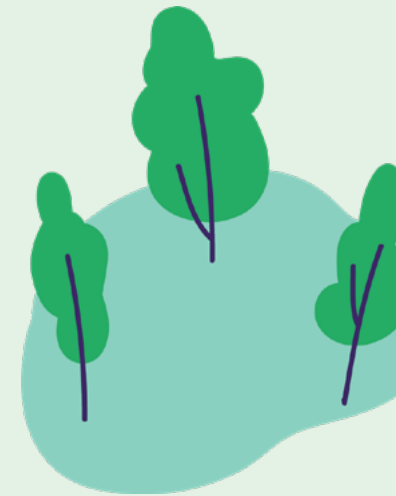
- v. importance of diversity and accessibility along with two-way learning, where the Mentee and Mentor are on learning journeys together.
- vi. Cross firm mentorship led and supported by principals/owners.
- vii. qualified sign off for their supervised experience requirement

4. Raising awareness on the value of design and Registered Interior Designers through:

- a. Education of interior designer's legal rights to submit for permit.
- b. Education of the benefits of businesses working with interior designers:
- c. Promotion of inclusive and fair procurement practices related to Requests for Proposals (RFPs):
- d. Educating industry stakeholders such as real estate brokers, facility managers, and project management groups.
- e. Showcasing what the profession does.
- f. Developing a marketing guide (elevator pitch) per sector.



- g. Advocating for the design of interior spaces that exceed minimum accessibility standards.
 - h. Expand the scope and reach of Interior Design Week by collaborating with the other provinces, and by developing a unified, collective voice for the profession in all jurisdictions.
5. **We will ensure that our partners, supporters, and sponsors feel valued for their support and financial contributions towards ARIDO Initiatives.**



Inclusive Engagement

Goal: Create safe and inclusive spaces where the community feels engaged and inspired to become an ARIDO Ambassador in this work by:

1. **Facilitating more inclusive communication methods that include:**
 - a. Two-way communication between ARIDO and the members, and the members with each other to connect and discuss issues together.
 - b. Gathering and obtaining feedback from members, in a transparent way, on their needs and how they wish to be engaged; and,
 - c. Members informing ARIDO of issues facing them both individually and the profession.
 - d. Enabling ARIDO to communicate directly and share valuable information to the membership.
 - e. Providing and formalize language options for member communication.
2. **We will increase engagement within our community by:**
 - a. Finding ways to further connect and engage with:
 - i. underrepresented and diverse members such as Black, Indigenous, people of colour, newcomers and LGBTQI2S+.
 - ii. students enrolled in an ARIDO-recognized education program.
 - iii. Career Xpress Committee Ambassadors within the interior design programs; and
 - iv. faculty and Educator members of ARIDO.
 - b. Holding ARIDO volunteer sessions for all members of our community to understand how they can contribute.
 - c. Empowering our community members to be advocates by holding:
 - i. Member story telling town halls; and
 - ii. Round table discussions with all levels of membership.



inclusive engagement

Create safe and inclusive spaces where the community feels engaged and inspired to become an ARIDO Ambassador in this work.



Inclusive Engagement



- iii. Collecting real life experiences and sharing client stories from an end user of space and human experience perspective.
 - iv. Sharing member knowledge and journeys with each other; and
 - v. Creating emotional story connections and facilitate discussion about real life experiences in the firms.
- d. Reporting on an annual basis any actions related to community outreach and employee volunteer involvement.
3. **We will develop and formalize a more inclusive outreach plan to attract and support diverse and underrepresented members, industry partners and collaborators by:**
 - a. Reviewing and changing verbiage to reflect gender-inclusive language.
 - b. Hiring and partnering with consultants who focus on inclusive language for marketing and communications.
 - c. Formalizing and publishing the diversity of the ARIDO internal team through online sources (website, social media), monthly newsletters, and events
 - d. Communicating ARIDO's involvement and progress on social media and with third-party partners.
 - e. Highlighting and being intentional with ARIDO's commitment to diversity, equity and accessibility on marketing brand collateral.
 - f. Showcasing diverse representation of internal and external leadership teams (Board of Directors, Committees) through monthly or bi-weekly spotlight series, on website).



Inclusive Engagement



- g. Hiring a third-party to assist in the re-brand of ARIDO's marketing and communications collateral. Emphasis needs to focus on diversity and accessibility through words, images, and style.
- h. Hiring a photographer to capture online and in-person events, programs and outreach that highlights and reinforces ARIDO's commitment to diversity, equity, and accessibility.
- i. Curating a marketing campaign to highlight the importance of ARIDO for the interior design industry to attract diverse and underrepresented professionals.
- j. Providing and formalizing language option choices for event participants (French, English and Braille).
- k. Including inclusive language that welcomes transgender members and industry partnerships.
- l. Hiring a third-party firm focused on accessibility to create policies and processes that support accessibility for events, programs, member communications, and online presence (website, social media).

- m. Curating a marketing campaign to attract diverse speakers to participate on panels and contribute to programs.
 - n. Creating formal policies and processes to foster outreach to diverse and underrepresented communities (through schools, community organizations, non-profits, newcomers, and youth groups)
- 4. We will increase design firm and industry partner commitments and engagement to support ARIDO's commitment to advancing equity, diversity, and inclusion by:**
- a. Encouraging design firms and industry partners to create scholarships for diverse and underrepresented students and newcomers.
 - b. Reviewing sponsorships and partnerships agreements and updating to include collaboration with diverse and underrepresented organizations and communities.



Inclusive Engagement

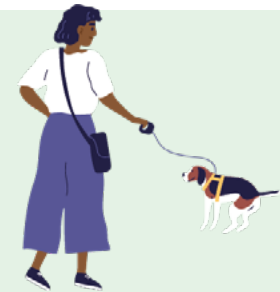
5. We will expand our commitments to increasing diverse representation in the Interior Design sector by:

- a. Joining Commercial Real Estate Equity and Diversity Council (CREED Council)
- b. Connecting with Interior Design organizations and market the importance of ARIDO to attract diverse professionals.
- c. Increasing supplier diversity by creating and developing an online portal for diverse businesses and support the advancement of diversity and accessibility in the design industry.
- d. Actively recruiting and building formal processes to attract the participation of a broader spectrum of diverse representation (Regional, Black, Indigenous, People with Disabilities, and youth) within external leadership positions.
- e. Actively encouraging and recruiting the participation of diverse representation on panels, programming, committees, and Board (i.e. creating a database of diverse leaders, outreach to diverse and underrepresented communities, schools across Ontario)
- f. Formalizing and increasing outreach and partnerships with diverse and underrepresented community groups and associations across Ontario.
- g. Creating and formalizing outreach programs to attract, recruit, and retain diverse and underrepresented professionals into leadership positions.
- h. Hiring a third-party partner to assess and curate formal processes for advocacy and outreach which are regionally focused and mindful of diversity and accessibility.
- i. Formalizing outreach processes for member participation with community outreach.
- j. Creating and implementing a recruitment strategy to attract and retain the participation of diverse and underrepresented professionals through outreach and marketing initiatives.



Inclusive Engagement

- k. Increasing ARIDO's presence with diverse and underrepresented community groups and associations across Ontario through partnerships and educational promotional opportunities by:
 - i. Promoting the design profession and industry to:
 - 1. underrepresented communities, newcomers, and diverse professionals; and
 - 2. high school student populations.
 - ii. Reaching out to past and prospective members of ARIDO to engage their input into how to best bring about the recognition and professionalization of interior design in Ontario.
 - iii. Launching a community outreach campaign focused on building relationships with diverse and underrepresented groups, specifically Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour communities, professionals, and associations across Ontario.
- iv. Strengthening stakeholder relations and collaborating with other organizations to build awareness of the value of design.
- g. Keeping relevant stakeholders informed and garner their support for regulation.
- 6. **Collaborate with the Ontario Association of Architects to develop a series of resources to assist in educating and engaging ARIDO members, provincial government, and stakeholders on the future of regulation.**



2025 and Beyond

In addition to this plan, the ARIDO Board and staff remain committed to ensuring the following recommendations identified below remain a priority and are carried through into ARIDO's Strategic Plan for 2025 and beyond.

- + Dedicate educational learning on accessibility in design and spaces for all members to participate.
- + Create and implement a recruitment strategy to attract and retain the participation of diverse and underrepresented professionals through outreach and marketing initiatives.
- + Curate a formal online learning library for members and industry partners.
- + Increase ARIDO's presence with diverse and underrepresented community groups and associations across Ontario through partnerships and educational promotional opportunities.

- + Review sponsorships and partnerships agreements and update to include collaboration with diverse and underrepresented organizations and communities.
- + Hire third-party partner to assess and curate formal processes for advocacy and outreach that are regionally focused and mindful of diversity and accessibility.
- + Invest in, curate, and formalize a supplier diversity program for members and industry partners.
- + Curate a database of diverse organizations that focus on community and professional outreach for diverse and underrepresented groups (region-focused) to expand member pools, diversity and equity partnerships, and community impact.
- + Update and include opportunities for current partnerships and sponsorships to participate in collaborating and partnering with diverse and underrepresented communities through outreach, programs and events.

- + Create policies and processes to formalize ARIDO's corporate social responsibility commitments.
- + Create a measurement and reporting tool for the mentorship program.
- + Hire third-party to curate and implement wellness programs.
- + Provide and formalize language options for member communication.
- + Curate and implement formal policies focused on professional development that supports and fosters diversity, equity and accessibility education.
- + Work with academic institutions to create formal educational curriculums that supports and fosters non-Eurocentric design.





reinforcing value

Cultural betterment of the interior design industry with the end goal of increased value within the community, and increased awareness by the public and end users of the value of interior designers.

Bold Statement

ARIDO is committed to creating a welcoming and respectful community that is dedicated to building meaningful, progressive change towards diversity and belonging.

We will boldly advocate and champion the growth of our members and stakeholders during various stages of their professional and personal journeys.

We will honour our responsibility as an industry leader to forge a new pathway to advance equity and diverse representation through actionable programs and policies.

fostering community

The ARIDO Community is a diverse, inclusive and safe space for all existing members, new members, industry partners and stakeholders to participate authentically.

inclusive engagement

Create safe and inclusive spaces where the community feels engaged and inspired to become an ARIDO Ambassador in this work.





ARIDO Strategic Plan

2023 - 2025

Association of Registered Interior
Designers of Ontario

43 Hanna Ave | Suite C536

Toronto, ON

M6K 1X1

arido.ca

[@aridontario](#) | [@blogarido](#)

