



18 August 2021

Distinguished Colleagues and Our Friends in Allied Organizations,

I am excited to inform you all of the many new undertakings and initiatives currently occurring in our organization in my second letter to you as the President of the Council of Educators in Landscape Architecture (CELA).

Conference Theme

The CELA Standing Committee on Conferences and Events has been working tirelessly to ensure that the 2022 CELA Conference, which is returning to a (mostly) in-person format, is both efficiently organized and exciting. The CELA 'Evolving Norms' Conference will be held from March 16-19, 2022 at the Hyatt Regency Tamaya Resort and Spa in Santa Ana Pueblo, New Mexico. Nestled on 550 acres of land between the Sandia Mountains and the Rio Grande River, this venue was selected for its Native American cultural heritage, inspirational landscape and unique environment. Tamaya is steeped in over 1000 years of rich history and culture.

The call for abstracts opened last week! You can [read our official announcement here](#). There will be a limited number of virtual options for presenters for a portion of conference submissions. CELA will release a statement further detailing this partially hybrid approach in the upcoming weeks.

The theme for the 2022 CELA Conference is '**Evolving Norms: Adapting Scholarship to Disruptive Phenomena.**' The theme track welcomes papers, panels, posters, or films related to past landscape architecture norms and how they have altered in response to societal change, how recent crises and technological advancements have created the necessity for rapid pedagogical and scholarly innovations, and/or how current situations may lead to projected future variations. The track will provide a forum and platform for scholarly and creative discourse for topics including but not limited to documentation of various changes, disruptions, alternatives, adjustments, trajectory projections and speculations that have affected and will continue to affect the academy and the practice. We also hope to see scholarly reflections on the past to build the Landscape Architecture theory and the discourse for the future.

New Research Track

The CELA will also be introducing an additional conference track for the 2022 Conference, outside of the theme track, entitled '**Resilience and Climate Action.**' This new track solicits research examining issues related to climate change and resilience across various physical (urban, rural, coastal, etc.) and thematic settings (social, ecological, economic, etc.). The track concentrates on assessment, evaluation, critical reflection, or action research and scholarship, both in practice and in principle, which contribute to our understanding of system interventions and their implications on our changing socio-ecological environments. Specifically, this track seeks original research and creative scholarship that encompasses a broad range of design and planning topics centered on increasing resilience or measuring, assessing, projecting, or developing intervention strategies for climate action.

200 Years of Olmsted

In the 200 years since Olmsted helped initiate the profession of landscape architecture in North America, it has been steadily shaped by our collective history, theory, and scholarly and professional discourse. This being the 200th celebration of Olmsted's legacy, one of the CELA Conference keynote addresses will focus on Olmsted's contributions to landscape architecture, the good, the bad and the ugly.

The CELA Global Investiture Fund

The CELA leadership is launching The CELA Global Investiture Fund in our efforts to develop policies and practices for a lasting positive global impact. With this funding, CELA members will be able to fund projects that positively impact global conditions and align with the CELA's mission. Particular consideration will be given for those who can apply their proposal specifically toward CELA organization actions, policies, and procedures. The CELA will be accepting grant proposals through September 15, 2021. [You can read more about the Global Investiture Fund here.](#)

DEI Initiatives

I would also like to update the members on several initiatives involving increasing Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI).

1. We have developed a new committee entitled the CELA Standing Committee on Nominations and Professional Relations (NPR). Working with the CELA Standing Committee on Diversity and Recruitment, the NPR committee's purpose is to increase awareness of CELA positions openings and ensure a diverse and broad pool of nominations for said openings, as well as foster and enhance linkages between the CELA and landscape architecture professionals.

2. The CELA has been having bi-monthly meetings alongside members of the LAF, LAAB, CLARB, landscape architecture professionals, and other outstanding members and organizations to help identify DEI-based issues within educational and professional procedures and develop strategies to overcome existing DEI barriers within these processes.
3. The CELA is proud to announce that, for the first time, we are developing a partnership with Dumbarton Oaks to help support the Mellon Initiative in Urban Landscape Studies. The initiative seeks to support an interdisciplinary program in urban landscape studies with a focus on “Democracy and the Urban Landscape: Race, Identity, and Difference.”
4. We are also pursuing fundraising efforts to enlarge the annual CELA Fountain Scholarship for BIPOC landscape architecture students, a new student CELA award initiated at last year’s conference which shows tremendous success.

CELA Surveys Program

The CELA is also launching a new undertaking to assist researchers in conducting national surveys. **The ‘CELA Surveys’ Program** allows CELA members to post links to academic-related surveys, for research purposes, which are distributed to other CELA members via the organization’s membership list. With a small fee, researchers can utilize the CELA to distribute surveys to other landscape architecture faculty. The program is being piloted currently and hopes to be launched sometime in the next few months.

Landscape Journal Updates

The new, full-time editor of *Landscape Journal*, James LaGro, Jr., is exploring new ways to update and adjust *Landscape Journal* submission types. While original research articles as well as conference and book reviews are common, new submission types such as integrative reviews, policy briefs, critiques, reports, and broader options for letters to the editor are being explored. Further, “in practice reviews” are also being considered, enabling more submissions from practitioners or from those more closely linked to professional planning, design, or management practice and trends. Word limits and ranges, descriptions, and peer review practices for each possible submission type are currently under exploration and will be reported on as further research and engagement is undertaken.

CLARB Uniform Standard

As notified, CLARB is seeking to develop a uniform standard for professional licensure for landscape architects. CELA has been participating in that discussion through a series of meetings and helping to shape the outcomes of such an undertaking. As part of this participation, the CELA distributed a survey to its members seeking input on the education requirement under this proposed standard in an effort to help address CLARB’s current initiative to create a uniform licensure standard for landscape architecture in the United States. Thank you all for your responses.

The CELA survey asked landscape architecture program administrators for feedback/suggestions on:

- Whether they support a uniform education standard;
- Which alternative educational pathways are acceptable for LA licensure;
- How many years of professional practice experience should be required for alternative educational pathways;
- Any anticipated impacts to LAAB-accredited programs should alternative education pathways be part of a standard.

The survey was administered to 86 program leaders, and we received a 27.5% response rate to the survey. Representation across program types is as follows:

- 91.6% offer LAAB- accredited programs
- 8.3% offer non-accredited landscape architecture programs
- 16.6% offer a PhD in LA
- 20.8% offer other landscape programs, such as a certificate or extension program

On the question of a uniform education requirement in a licensure standard:

- 62.5% of respondents favor having a uniform education requirement,
- 4.1% do not support a uniform education requirement, and
- 33.3% are unsure.

In summary, there is strong support for a uniform standard (e.g., to maintain integrity of licensure, clarify pathways), but there are also significant reservations about it. Respondents appear to not want to reduce the standard of education by opening up the standards extremely broadly, yet they also hope that flexibility remains where state by state variation is merited. These results and a more detailed set of findings were shared with CLARB.

On a separate note, the CELA also conducted a separate survey of its members on professional licensure in academia and these results were shared with members previously.

Upcoming CELA Board Openings and Calls

I would like to announce that we have one current opening now and will have the following posts open on the CELA board in the upcoming call for nominations, so please keep these openings in mind:

Current Openings:

- [Region 7 Director](#) (filling unexpired term, exp. March 2022)

Upcoming Openings:

- President Elect
- 2nd VP/Awards
- VP of Research & Creative Scholarship
- Region 3 Director
- Region 7 Director
- Region 9 Director
- Student Director Elect

Call for Awards:

- Late October

We have achieved much already this year and will continue to strive to accomplish more. I am confident that, with a continued spirit of synergy, the CELA will move forward its vision of a world shaped by landscape architects, and that we will continue with our mission to support educators to advance the profession.

I would like to acknowledge and thank all of the members within and outside of the CELA Board who have worked so hard to get us to this point. There are too many to name, but you know who you are. Your service is truly invaluable.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions and/or suggestions.

Respectfully,



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and

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