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**DIVERSITY
EQUITY
INCLUSION
REPORT**

SOM



2024 ANNUAL DEI REPORT

Dear colleagues, clients,
and collaborators,

We are pleased to share our annual Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) report. As the fourth survey of initiatives and projects to achieve the goals defined in our [2020 DEI Action Plan](#), this report continues our commitment to maintaining an open dialogue about equity at our firm, in our industry, and in the built environment that we shape through our work.

This report comes at the conclusion of a year that saw significant conversation and debate around DEI nationally. Against this shifting backdrop, we have remained steadfast in our commitment to promoting an inclusive workplace where all are valued, and to foregrounding equity and inclusion in our design work.

For the second year in a row, SOM has been included on the Human Rights Campaign Foundation's Corporate Equality Index (CEI), the foremost benchmarking survey measuring corporate policies and practices related to LGBTQ+ workplace equality. We have once again earned a perfect score of 100—an achievement that we are extremely proud to share.

Mentorship is a core value of our practice and one of the key ways in which we advance our goals for DEI. By connecting early- and mid-career staff with mentors in every one of our offices, we have continued to promote equitable opportunities for career growth and advancement. The same values underpin our recruitment strategy. Through targeted outreach to institutions whose graduates are historically underrepresented at SOM we have continued to broaden our talent pipeline.

The past year has brought remarkable opportunities to pursue equitable outcomes in our project work. For a public library, student housing, and a citywide network of bus shelters, among other civic projects, we have engaged in dialogue with diverse clients and communities to define goals for an inclusive and uplifting built environment.

The work of building greater equity is a collective effort; it involves colleagues across our global firm acting in both formal and informal networks, with the support and collaboration of senior leadership. Since the creation of the Equity Design Lab in 2020 and the Equity Action Committee in 2021, together with growth in the number of Employee Resource Groups, a focus on equity has been more deeply embedded in the firm's management structure, governance, and culture. We celebrate our colleagues and the dedication of resources that make this work possible, while also recognizing that there is still much work to be done. As the new year begins, we are energized and committed to building upon our progress.

**SOM Equity Action Committee
+ Equity Design Lab**

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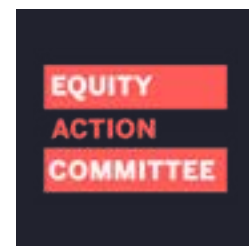
WHO WE ARE

As a global network of design, engineering, and urban planning professionals, we are building a better future and fostering a culture where all voices are heard.

Our Platforms for Equity

Fostering greater diversity, equity, and inclusion at SOM is a mission shared by our staff and leadership.

Over the years, numerous equity-driven groups have emerged at SOM, each with a different area of focus and varying strategies. These groups work hand in hand to build greater equity within our internal culture, as well as in our project work.



EQUITY ACTION COMMITTEE (EAC)

Subcommittees:
 Recruitment + Training
 Mentorship
 External Engagement + Dialogue

Each of these groups has the full support of SOM leadership, and together, they represent our collective commitment to making SOM an equity leader in our industry. Our Employee Resource Groups, Equity Action Committee, and Equity Design Lab all work together to advance our ongoing work of building a more equitable and inclusive workplace and industry.

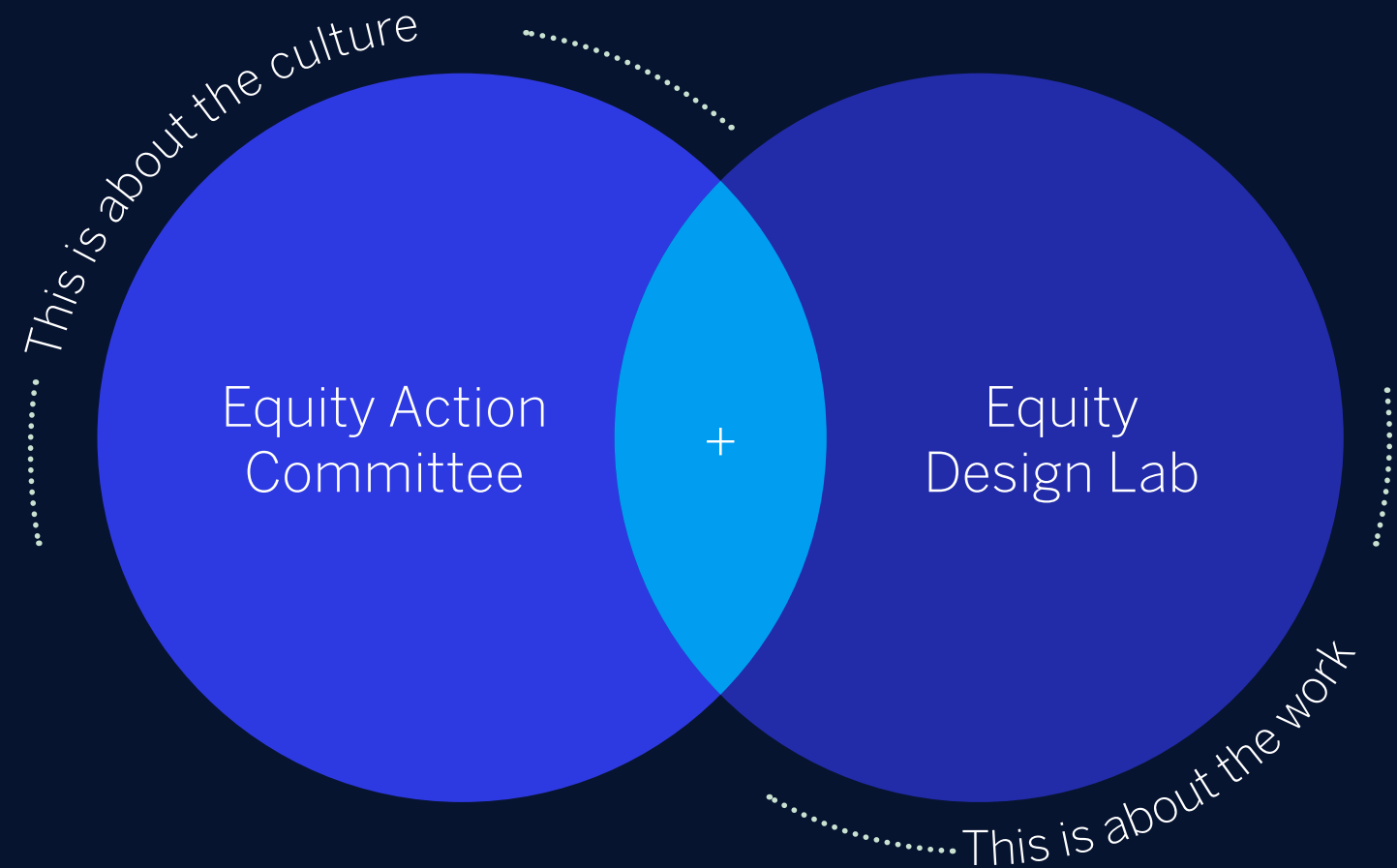
EQUITY DESIGN LAB (EQL)

Priorities:
 Collaborative Partnerships
 Project Assessment
 Driving Impact
 Design Strategies



EMPLOYEE RESOURCE GROUPS (ERG)

Arquitectos
 Asian Alliance
 NOMA
 Pride
 Women's Initiative



The Equity Action Committee is focused on effecting change within SOM's operations and culture. The Equity Design Lab seeks to cultivate and expand opportunities to make an impact through our project work and in our communities. Both groups work together to pursue the goals of SOM's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Action Plan.

EQUITY ACTION COMMITTEE

Recruitment and Training

The Recruitment and Training Subcommittee promotes equitable, inclusive, and transparent hiring practices and promotion strategies to increase diversity and retention. We address recruitment strategies across offices, support a framework that nurtures and supports careers, and ensure an equitable staff review process that provides equal growth opportunities.

This year, 44 SOM staff serving as university champions focused their recruitment efforts on 23 HBCUs and under-represented universities.

UNIVERSITY CHAMPIONS: BROADENING SOM'S TALENT PIPELINE

SOM is committed to recruiting talent that reflects the diversity of the communities we serve. In support of this goal, in 2022, we launched our University Outreach Champion Initiative—a multifaceted program designed to strengthen our relationships with historically underrepresented academic institutions. Building connections with talented students and graduates from a broad range of backgrounds is a key component of our equitable recruitment strategy.

Our team attended career fairs, hosted portfolio workshops, and offered tours of our U.S. offices. We were successful in recruiting students from these schools into programs at SOM including Winter Shadowship, Summer Internship, and Year One. We are working to expand our University Outreach program to our London office in 2025.

LOOKING AHEAD

In 2025, we plan to:

- Consolidate our list of schools to create a streamlined effort between all the target schools based on developed relationships formed over the past years
- Collect and analyze data from past hiring activity to see which schools we could be fostering relationships with
- Kick off the program in the London office
- Develop an accessible hiring pipeline to help identify talent from participating schools
- Establish a new hire buddy system firmwide
- Work with HR & leadership to restructure SOM's onboarding system

“Having attended more than a few career fairs, I think one of the biggest benefits is the opportunity to show students who we are at SOM. As we describe our work and culture, I think many students are surprised to find that it is more closely related to their future career goals than they thought a large firm would be.”

Schneider Elliassaint
Intermediate Designer
Los Angeles



“Our University Champions program has given us exposure to outstanding students. It has also changed perceptions of SOM in the minds of both students and professors at the institutions we've targeted. This benefits both the students and profession as a whole and can establish future pipelines that align with our firmwide goals.”

Eliezer Lee
Associate
Washington, DC

Mentorship

The Mentorship Subcommittee creates, fosters, and celebrates a culture of excellence in mentoring that is accessible to all SOM staff, with participation at all levels of leadership.

"Mentorship is such an important part of our careers as architects and designers. Throughout my career, I've had a number of different mentors who have helped me grow over the years. If sharing my experiences helps someone grow in a small way or learn something new, I'm happy to do so. And it's always a two-way street—I always learn something new through conversations with mentees, so it helps me to keep growing."

Kevin Conway
Senior Associate Principal
Los Angeles

In 2024, the Mentorship Subcommittee conducted one firm wide mentorship session, successfully pairing 78 participants throughout nine offices, nine practice groups, and seven organizational levels.

In addition to an average of three hours a month of one-on-one mentor/mentee sessions, two virtual group events further enriched this year's experience.

PROGRAM GOALS

- Encourage a continuous, open, firmwide dialogue to help promote inclusion in our workplace.
- Provide an accessible resource for professional development to build

skills and enable greater effectiveness in our roles, job satisfaction, and engagement.

- Provide support to help to "unlock" the true potential of professionals while also benefiting from creating connections and the sharing of knowledge.

LOOKING AHEAD

In 2025, we plan to:

- Continue to increase participation in mentorship
- Celebrate the importance of mentorship throughout the firm
- Encourage more cross office connections and knowledge sharing

"The Mentorship program has been a great way for me to build relationships with people across different offices and disciplines in SOM. I think the program is invaluable, and I appreciate all the mentors who put in the time to participate. I find that conversations with mentors stick with me and resonate in different ways as my career develops."

JinJin Chiu
Architect
San Francisco



2024 MENTORSHIP GROUP EVENTS



Career Conversations with SOM Leadership

In a "speed mentoring" format, participants engaged in one-on-one conversations with partners and principles on topics that have inspired them in their careers.



Workshop: Speaking with Clarity and Confidence

Led by invited experts, this workshop guided participants in strategies for more effective communication within and outside of the office.

EQUITY ACTION COMMITTEE

External Engagement + Dialogue

We continue to deepen our relationships with professional organizations and civic and nonprofit groups, as well as our peers and collaborators. The strength of these relationships is exemplified by the work our colleagues do with these numerous organizations beyond our doors.

2024 was a year to regroup and reflect, to identify areas of progress, evaluate our methods, and reshape the ways in which we engage with our people, both internally and in the broader architecture community.

One of our initiatives was to create channels for members of the EAC and our Employee Resource Groups to specify and prioritize organizations that we should engage with and to cultivate deeper relationships. Getting buy-in and crowd-sourcing ideas allows us to more effectively organize events and to have meaningful dialogue.

Another way that we have improved our processes was to rethink the format and logistics of our Equity Roundtables series, which bring together professionals from disciplines across the firm to discuss topics related to equity in our work. We've revised our methods of outreach to potential speakers, our criteria for a balanced speaker panel, and the cadence of the events. We are putting out general calls for speakers based on their interest, allowing more space for junior SOM staff and colleagues who are new to the firm. We are increasing the number of speakers involved and moving away from presentations to focus on open discourse. This has a twofold benefit of decoupling the content from focusing just on built projects and also opening up a more organic conversational style to the events.

Overall, we have strived to increase access and participation in discursive programming and explore modes of presentation and knowledge sharing that work for all SOM offices and disciplines.

LOOKING AHEAD

In 2025, we plan to:

- Engage industry professionals, outside of SOM, in the Equity Roundtables in order to bring more diverse perspectives and experiences into the mix.
- Seek to promote news and discussion of the independent activities of SOM colleagues, celebrating individual DEI accomplishments in SOM project work or personal endeavors.
- Intend to encourage or organize attendance to relevant events organized by affiliated organizations in our industry and among other leading equity groups.
- Seek to expand participation organizing discursive programs for each office, reaching out to broader parts of the company and accommodating event types that are flexible and low-lift.

2024 EQUITY ROUNDTABLES

Organized by members of the Equity Action Committee and open to the entire SOM community, this quarterly event series convenes conversations around topics related to equity in design practice.



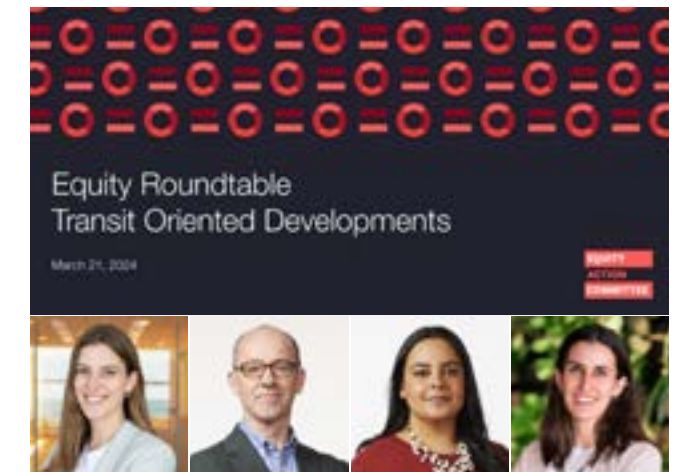
Inclusive Planning & Design

This roundtable explored inclusive design and planning, focusing on defining inclusivity in the built environment, learning from global perspectives, and incorporating lived experiences in project teams and stakeholder engagement. Speakers discussed best practices, challenges, and the impact of advancing inclusivity in the AEC industry. Case studies include neurodiversity in workplace design, transportation accessibility, suburban yard uses, public engagement through podcasts, and flexible space use in education. The event featured Zoe Xu, Adede Amenyah, Monica Mendoza, Mark Meiklejohn, and Julia Grabazs, moderated by And Emmet and Alice Fang.



Transit-Oriented Development

This roundtable examined equity within transit-oriented development (TOD) scenarios, focusing on fostering local economic opportunities, creating accessible multi-modal transit systems, and addressing displacement and inequity. Speakers discussed strategies for safe and walkable streets, inclusive design, and stakeholder collaboration. They also explored the pandemic's impact on TOD, hybrid work models, and opportunities to link communities and promote sustainable, equitable urban growth. The discussion brought together professionals who are addressing this topic across SOM's practice: Bridget Barnes, Christopher Hall, Jannat Nain, and Ines Llopart, moderated by Jon Baltycki.



"In a deadline-driven profession, it can be challenging to carve out time for reflection on important social issues that surround our work but fall outside its conventional scope. That's why I value structured opportunities, like the Equity Roundtables, to share broad perspectives on inclusivity in the built environment and strategize around incorporating these principles in everyday workflows."

And Emmet

Senior Marketing Specialist
Equity Action Committee Member
New York

Equity Design Lab

The Equity Design Lab is a group within SOM founded in 2020 that seeks to help SOM deliver equitable, healthy and resilient built environments where communities thrive.

OUR GOALS

- To develop standards and best practices to build equity and inclusion in our design process
- To design the built environment that enriches human needs in an equitable manner
- To prioritize bottom up, community driven design process in our projects
- To prioritize equitable design solutions through:
 - **Social Equity** Celebrating and Amplifying Local Cultural Heritage
 - **Environmental Equity** Health and Wellness At Heart
 - **Economic Equity** Creation of Locally Sustained Economic Opportunities



[↑]
The Equity Dashboard allows SOM design teams and stakeholders to track the progress and equity outcomes of projects by providing dynamic data visualization.

SOM EQUITY DESIGN LAB TOOLKIT: 5 BEST PRACTICES IN DESIGNING FOR EQUITY

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| <p>1</p> <p>Guiding design professionals</p> <p>The SOM Equity Design Lab toolkit provides a framework for designing built environments that prioritize social, environmental, and economic equity. The toolkit provides guidance on strategies to involve community members in co-developing solutions. Quantitative and qualitative benchmarks allow for continuous evaluation of impact of design decisions.</p> | <p>2</p> <p>Seeking opportunities for cross-sector collaboration</p> <p>The Equity Design Lab focuses on building and extending partnerships with consultants, suppliers, companies that align with our goals to promote broader equity. This is especially critical in tackling issues of social equity and environmental justice related to the impact of rapid urbanization and climate change.</p> | <p>3</p> <p>Co-creating with communities we seek to serve</p> <p>A just approach considers all aspects of the human dimension—ensuring that all members of the community benefit from the design. The Equity Design Lab toolkit guides the team to co-create and engage in dialogue with local communities.</p> | <p>4</p> <p>Providing both a qualitative and quantitative approach</p> <p>The toolkit enables design teams to apply a consistent, measurable process across project phases and throughout design development. Success metrics can be shared with clients and tenants to highlight opportunities and strategies to advance shared values for equity and social impact.</p> | <p>5</p> <p>Creating an iterative and collaborative process</p> <p>A collaborative and iterative process requires the engagement and perspectives of multiple stakeholders along different phases of the project and across multiple aspects of the business. The Equity Design Lab toolkit helps to facilitate this process.</p> |
|--|---|--|--|--|

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THIS YEAR



Campus Planning as Community Catalyst

Partner Doug Voigt presented alongside representatives from Clark Atlanta University in a panel titled "Learning From the HBCU Legacy of Inclusion to Enhance the Student Experience" at The Society for College and University Planning (SCUP) Southern Regional Conference. Building on SOM's design and planning work at the CAU campus, the panel examined how campus frameworks can provide community-building opportunities, attract diverse students, and support alumni. More broadly, the session illustrated how HBCUs are attracting students, fostering inclusion, and supporting local community and industry through living-learning communities, green and social spaces, new teaching modalities, and external partnerships.



SOM Featured in Building Inclusion Book

Published in August 2024 by Routledge, Building Inclusion: A Practical Guide to Equity, Diversity and Inclusion in Architecture and the Built Environment is a manual to support and provide essential guidance to the profession on these key issues. Author Marsha Ramroop, the former inaugural EDI Director at the RIBA and award-winning strategist, cites SOM's Equity Design Lab Toolkit in the book as an example of how to integrate a data-driven approach to equity into the design process.



Engaging at UN Habitat's World Urban Forum

SOM designer Sushmita Shekar attended the World Urban Forum, which brought together 37,000 participants from 183 countries—including 60 ministries and 96 mayors—in Cairo to tackle solutions to pressing issues of rapid urbanization. Shekar spoke on three panels focused on how professionals in architecture and urban design can integrate the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals into projects for the built environment. She shared strategies for creating more equitable cities by synthesizing global agendas with local solutions and fostering stronger partnerships to empower communities to take an active role in shaping their neighborhoods.

Employee Resource Groups (ERGs)

Employee resource groups—Arquitectos, Asian Alliance, SOM NOMA, SOM Pride, and Women’s Initiative—continue to advance equity and inclusion across our workplaces and throughout the industry.

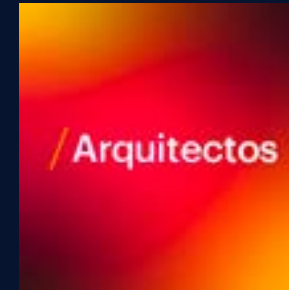
We celebrate the unique stories, contributions, and cultures of our people.



ERG CELEBRATION CALENDAR

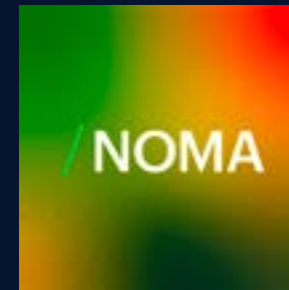
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| February | US Black History Month |
| March | Women's History Month |
| May | AAPI Heritage Month |
| June | Pride Month |
| Sept 15– Oct 15 | Hispanic Heritage Month |
| October | UK Black History Month |

OUR ERGS



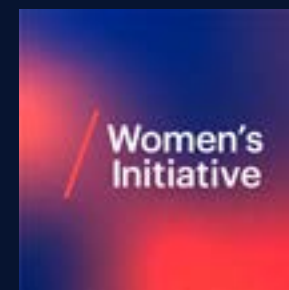
Arquitectos continues to support SOM professionals of Latinx and Hispanic heritage by providing professional development, facilitating mentorship, and fostering community connections. We are an inclusive community that welcomes all individuals—regardless of nationality, background, or language—who share a deep appreciation for the rich and diverse Hispanic and Latinx cultures.

The Asian Alliance advocates for fostering community, leadership, and amplifying the presence and shared identities of all Asians at SOM. We are a collective of individuals from diverse backgrounds, languages, and cultures united in the shared endeavor to empower Asians not just within SOM but throughout the AEC industry.



SOM NOMA is dedicated to increasing minority representation at all levels in the firm, strengthening SOM’s connection with the local and national NOMA chapters, supporting our members by assisting with their career pipeline, and engaging in local and national efforts to build a stronger and more diverse firm.

SOM Pride elevates and celebrates the LGBTQIA+ voices of our community and our industry. We’re focused on building an open, inclusive, and equitable environment together. We affirm the importance of a safe space that is inclusive of gender, sexuality, race, and many intersecting identities in the architecture, design, engineering, and construction industries.



Women's Initiative positions SOM as a leader in the design community by challenging barriers to gender equity and by fostering retention and growth of women to create an excellent, innovative, and sustainable workplace that reflects and enhances our built environment.

EMPLOYEE RESOURCE GROUPS

Arquitectos

Arquitectos is an inclusive community that welcomes all individuals—regardless of nationality, background, or language—who share an affinity for the rich and diverse Hispanic and Latinx cultures.

We acknowledge that our cultural influence and legacy extend beyond geographical frontiers to the multiplicity of individuals across SOM.

- Strengthen SOM's connections with other Latinx and Hispanic professionals, community leaders, universities, and student chapters

events to connect with colleagues and mentors within and beyond SOM

- Recruitment and community outreach remain central to our mission. We are focused on building strong relationships with local schools, universities, and organizations to attract Hispanic and Latinx talent to the firm, ensuring a robust pipeline for future growth.

- Through partnerships with professionals, community leaders, universities, and student chapters, we aim to foster a more inclusive environment and empower the next generation of Latinx and Hispanic leaders. Together, these efforts strengthen our collective impact and promote a thriving, connected community within and outside of SOM.

OUR MISSION

- Amplify our Latinx and Hispanic voices by celebrating our contributions, our culture, and our stories
- Increase our representation and retention at all organizational levels of the firm and in all communities of practice
- Act as a support network to our members and SOM employees, facilitate mentorship, assist with the path to licensure, and share knowledge and experiences
- Develop and empower leaders and influencers within SOM and the industry as a whole

GOALS FOR 2025

- Increasing representation and retention across all levels of the firm and communities of practice
- Ensuring members are empowered throughout their careers.
- We aim to expand mentorship opportunities, assist with licensure, and share knowledge to strengthen our network.
- Engaging SOM Latinx and Hispanic leadership is a key priority to inspire members to pursue leadership roles, alongside facilitating networking

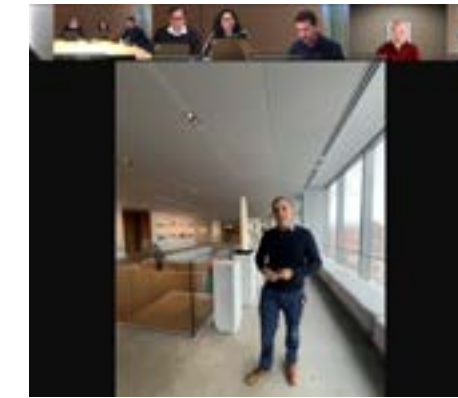
GLOBAL EFFORTS

National Hispanic American Heritage Month, September 15–October 15, celebrates Hispanic/Latinx contributions to our firm and profession. SOM's Arquitectos group leads events highlighting diverse voices, fostering mentorship, and professional growth. We honor the community's influence on U.S. culture and history, while showcasing the next generation of architects, engineers, and creatives.



**Joint Presentation
SOM x Esrawe**

Design Principal José Luis Palacios and Mexico City-based Héctor Esrawe presented to SOM staff around the world about their collaboration on the Legend project in Guadalajara. They shared ways the team is integrating local craft, materials, and culture into a world-class, large-scale project, examining how we express cultural identity and sense of place authentically on a project of significant scale and caliber.



Meet SOM Tour

SOM offered a tour to the Arquitectos Colectivos community as part of the Hispanic Heritage Month programming for the Arquitectos Colectivos Symposium. This is part of our efforts to strengthen relationships with the Latinx/Hispanic designers in the community in order to diversify the SOM pipeline.

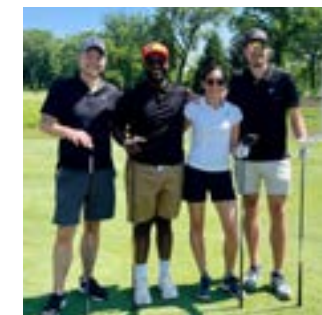


Leadership Perspectives

For Hispanic Heritage Month, the Arquitectos team hosted a panel discussion with SOM leaders across different offices that offered personal perspectives, inspiration and mentoring advice. The panel included Angel Rodriguez from the New York studio, Javier Arizmendi in San Francisco, Natalia Quintanilla in our Chicago studio, and Flavio Medeiros from London, moderated by Eliezer Lee from our Washington, D.C. studio.

LOCAL EVENTS

Among our global studios, Arquitectos developed rich and diverse in-person local events in an effort to share and celebrate our heritage at SOM and across our local AEC communities.



**Arquitectos in the Fairways
Scholarship Fundraiser**
Chicago



**Employee Resource
Group Summer Picnic**
New York



**Hispanic Heritage Month
Happy Hour**
Chicago



**Hispanic Heritage Month
Piñata Party**
London

EMPLOYEE RESOURCE GROUPS

Asian Alliance

The Asian Alliance cultivates leadership, fosters community, and elevates the visibility of the Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) community within SOM and the broader AEC industry. Established amid rising anti-Asian hate crimes, we provide a platform for cultural dialogue, mentorship, and professional growth.

With more than 200 members across our global firm, we are a diverse collective united by a shared commitment to empower and inspire the Asian community at SOM and beyond.

This year, we focused on advancing professional opportunities for AAPI members, partnering with firm leadership to champion their growth and recognition.

Collaborating with other SOM employee resource groups, we strive to build a more inclusive workplace. Initiatives included celebrating cultural heritage, highlighting SOM's contributions in Asian markets and local communities—such as the [Light Up Chinatown](#) effort—and hosting events to navigate workplace challenges and promote self-advocacy.

Through these efforts, the Asian Alliance remains a vital resource for connection, support, and professional development, shaping a future where the AAPI community thrives.

LOOKING AHEAD

Asian Alliance was founded during the global pandemic to address the challenges facing the AAPI community. Four years later, as the world evolves, we are adapting to better serve SOM's AAPI community.

We aim to equip our leaders with the tools for success, recruit new talent to amplify representation, and expand our network beyond SOM to foster learning and drive future design projects. Collaboration remains at our core—we will continue working with other ERGs, leveraging collective expertise to inspire meaningful change.

By investing in leadership development and cultivating partnerships, we strive to empower the AAPI community while creating a more inclusive and impactful design practice.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM AAPI HERITAGE MONTH

AAPI Heritage Month at SOM celebrates the contributions of Asians past and present to our global design practice. This year's theme, CONFLUENCE, explores what unites us as a collective while honoring the diversity of cultures, traditions, and perspectives that make our community vibrant and inspiring.



Mentorship Minute
During their time in SOM's San Francisco studio, AAPI firm leaders Partner Leo Chow, Associate Principal Gayle Tsern Strang, and Senior Associate Principal Michael Leung shared their stories and experiences, discussing how representation for AAPI colleagues has evolved.



SOM Leadership in Regional Practice—South Asia
As leaders in the SOM community, New York Design Principal Peter Lefkovits and Structural Engineering Principal Preetam Biswas have been collaborating on many notable projects in the Southeast Asia region. In this insightful dialogue, they shared their experiences in leading and expanding SOM's regional practice.



Turkey-Syria Earthquake Update
As a follow up to SOM Asian Alliance's fundraising efforts in 2023 for the Turkiye-Syria earthquake, SOM structural engineers Rupa Garai and Ricardo Henoch shared their experiences and findings during a reconnaissance trip to affected cities in Turkiye in 2023.

CELEBRATING OUR CULTURES

From the pro bono project Light Up Chinatown to Mid-Autumn Festival and mentorship, Asian Alliance has been active across our studios in creating awareness and engaging the community.



Eid
Enjoy Lebanese cuisine in our New York studio



Lunar New Year
New takes on traditions in our Los Angeles and London studios



Diwali
Introducing food and activities from different regions of India across our Washington, D.C., London, and New York studios



Halo-HaloWeen
Filipino American History Month Celebration

EMPLOYEE RESOURCE GROUPS

SOM National Organization of Minority Architects (NOMA)

The National Organization of Minority Architects (NOMA), rooted in a rich legacy of activism, aims to empower local chapters and membership to foster justice and equity in communities of color through outreach, community advocacy, professional development, and design excellence. Internally, SOM's NOMA members have collaborated with firm leadership to bring pivotal change within our firm and the industry.

“NOMA is a space to connect with colleagues who understand similar experiences and challenges, and it's a place where we can work together to break down barriers in the profession. Being a part of NOMA has not only helped me grow professionally, but also strengthened my belief that diverse teams lead to more creative, impactful design solutions.”

Sheriff Olumide
Intermediate Designer
New York

This year, SOM NOMA collaborated with other ERGs and also with the EAC in organizing firm-wide events, planning cultural outings for employees, ensuring representation during the NOMA National Conference, and hosting NOMA's Project Pipeline events across SOM studios.

Many offices collaborated with local NOMA chapters to build and promote events for those within and outside of the profession.

LOOKING AHEAD

In 2025, SOM NOMA plans to:

- Engage with all communities within and outside of SOM to promote the exchange of backgrounds, information, knowledge, and talent
- Empower our offices to volunteer and develop a stronger relationship with our local chapters and Project Pipeline, a NOMA initiative that guides kids K-12
- Uplift current and future generations in their pursuit of design, architecture, and allied professions through representation mentorship and collaboration

US BLACK HISTORY MONTH

In February, through initiatives like the Education Exchange, Artist Exchange, and SOM Voices Exchange, we celebrated diverse perspectives and fostered important conversations. From art and museum tours to community engagement opportunities and creative events, we witnessed a wide range of collaboration and representation, reflecting the strength and unity of our NOMA community.



UK BLACK HISTORY MONTH

We recognized UK Black History Month in October with multiple events organized around the theme “Reclaiming the Narrative.” A talk on Black Cultural Archives showcased how the journal has tackled transnational issues and served as a critical platform for conversations about both British and global conflicts. We also invited guest speaker Renee Kemp Rotan to present on the history and future of Africatown, Alabama.

NOMA CONFERENCE

The annual NOMA Conference is a great opportunity for our group to meet with industry colleagues and learn about the progress being made in DEI efforts throughout the profession.

From October 24 to 27, our group participated in an array of keynotes, workshops and presentations. The conference theme, “The Exchange,” conveys the sharing of ideas, partnerships and collaborations—how our communities grow in knowledge, spirit and connection.



EMPLOYEE RESOURCE GROUPS

SOM Pride

Launched in 2018, SOM Pride is focused on building an open, inclusive, and equitable culture while bringing visibility to our community and allies. We affirm the importance of a safe space inclusive of gender, sexuality, race, and the many intersecting identities in the architecture, design, engineering, and construction industries.

“Seeing our members create an inclusive and meaningful and equitable culture for not only our ERG—but our entire community at SOM—has made me proud to be a part of Pride. I look forward to the more in-person collaboration we’ll create in the years to come.”

Richard Kelly
Senior Interior Architect
Los Angeles

The LGBTQIA+ rights movement has consistently demonstrated extraordinary strength throughout its history—persistently confronting and overcoming challenges. From the impactful uprising at Stonewall to the ongoing fight for transgender rights, our community’s progress is driven by resilience.

However, we continue to face legal battles, political opposition, and heartbreaking setbacks. Over the past several years, we have witnessed legislative conflicts surrounding access to healthcare, sports participation, and restroom rights, which undermine the dignity of transgender individuals. LGBTQIA+ rights and safety are under attack.

In 2024, our programming embodied a duality: a time to celebrate LGBTQIA+ existence and a time to unite in visibility and invigorate our momentum for LGBTQIA+ rights.

In doing so, we’ve organized programming that bolstered our spirits, connected allies and LGBTQIA+ colleagues, and fostered a greater emphasis on intersectionality across our resource groups to promote solidarity and fellowship.

LOOKING AHEAD

In 2025, SOM Pride aims for the following:

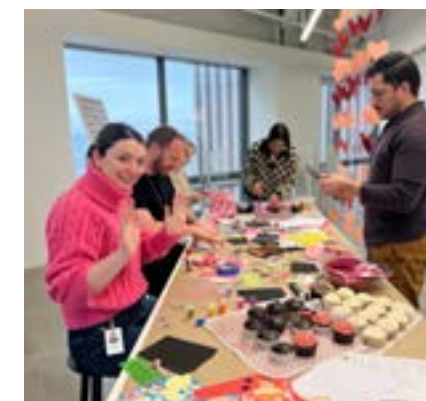
- Increase awareness, inclusivity, and visibility of SOM Pride across the firm.
- Work closely with all ERG groups to unify in inclusion, visibility, and support.
- Plan more frequent in-person programming outside of Pride Month
- Host smaller-scale listening sessions to better understand issues LGBTQIA+ staff are facing at the firm and in their lives.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE YEAR

Celebrating Pride Month

SOM Pride celebrated 2024 Pride Month with a special emphasis on our community’s legacy of activism and appreciation for the extraordinary efforts that we take as individuals and as a broader movement to protect one another’s rights and dignity.

Our Pride Month programming helped to bolster our spirits and connect LGBTQIA+ colleagues, allies, and the broader SOM ecosystem. We also illuminated the ongoing challenges our community faces while acknowledging the work of our elders and ancestors that brought us this far.



Making Valentines with Pride

To affirm love and support for all, SOM Pride invited all for a festive event of crafting inclusive Valentine’s Day cards. The handmade cards crafted during this event will be collected by the Pride group and shared with local charitable organizations.



National Coming Out Day—Build Out Alliance

Pride members from our Los Angeles and New York office attended the Build Out Alliance (BOA)’s annual National Coming Out Day fundraiser. SOM continues to support BOA as they expand their presence.



Pride / WI Presents: L(GBTQIA+)eadership Breakfast

Co-organized with SOM Pride, The Women’s Initiative June Leadership Breakfast will spotlight LGBTQIA+ SOM leadership (and emerging leaders) to focus on joint ideas and issues that affect our communities.

EMPLOYEE RESOURCE GROUPS

Women's Initiative (WI)

The longest-running ERG at SOM, Women's Initiative (WI) is making a positive impact in the AEC industry by advancing women at all levels at SOM. We challenge institutional barriers to gender equity, bias, and systemic discrimination by promoting intersectionality and awareness, fostering mentorship and retention, and providing professional growth and development opportunities.

Goals for the past year included striving for more women in leadership positions, talent retention, gender pay gap transparency, tenure-linked paid holidays, flexible and hybrid working policies, more professional development programs, 360 reviews, and cross-pollinating with AEC firms and organizations.

We hosted professional development sessions on managing conflict and powerful performance reviews, and the "Disruptors" exhibition at the Chicago Architecture Center and AIA National Women's Leadership Summit in Chicago were highlights, as well.

We published an article celebrating the history of women partners at SOM in honor of Women's History Month, "Charting the Path: Three Generations of Women on Their Careers in Architecture," featuring a conversation led by Global SOM WI Chair Marti Gottsch, Partner Julia Murphy, SOM's first partner Diane Legge, and Marilyn Jordan Taylor.

WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

Women's History Month is a time to reflect on the often-overlooked contributions of women to the

AEC industry. The 2024 theme for the month of March was "Inspire Inclusion" and recognized women who understand the need to eliminate bias and discrimination.

We celebrated the immense talent and achievements of our designers, architects, engineers, and planners, discussing varying career paths, goals, and mentorship histories, and shared their stories externally.

LOOKING AHEAD

In 2025, we will continue to advocate for women's rights, freedoms, and equity. We want to stay united, speak out, provide competitive benefits, and increase mentorship. This next year will be essential for outreach and unity. We will continue to build on professional development for our growing population and strive for more women leaders, more visibility, and a more diverse and equitable workplace.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH



Global Toast

Connecting our global community for a toast to kick off Women's History Month and Celebrate International Women's Day. Each office gathered to enjoy refreshments and hear from leaders in different offices as we toast to the many Women's movements worldwide.



Carbonella: Women Leaders in Sustainability

In collaboration with our Climate Action Group, the New York office hosted a conversation with Ada Tolla (LOT-EK), Lindsey Wikstrom (Mattaforma), and SOM's Yasemin Kologlu and Sigal Shemesh. Ada Tolla, founding partner of LOT-EK, has earned recognition for her sustainable and innovative approach to construction. Lindsey Wikstrom, founding partner of Mattaforma, is shaping the next generation of low-carbon buildings.



WI NY Women's Forum at Steelcase

In New York we had a gathering of DEI groups across the AEC sector. There was a panel discussion between SOM Women's Initiative, Studio Gang's Equity Action Task Force, and Steelcase's Equity group. We discussed our own internal initiatives, pay equity, and parental leave.



"At the Women's Leadership Summit in Chicago, I participated in an improv-based presentation skills workshop, which greatly enhanced my confidence and communication abilities. The summit provided valuable insights and connections, supporting women's leadership in architecture."

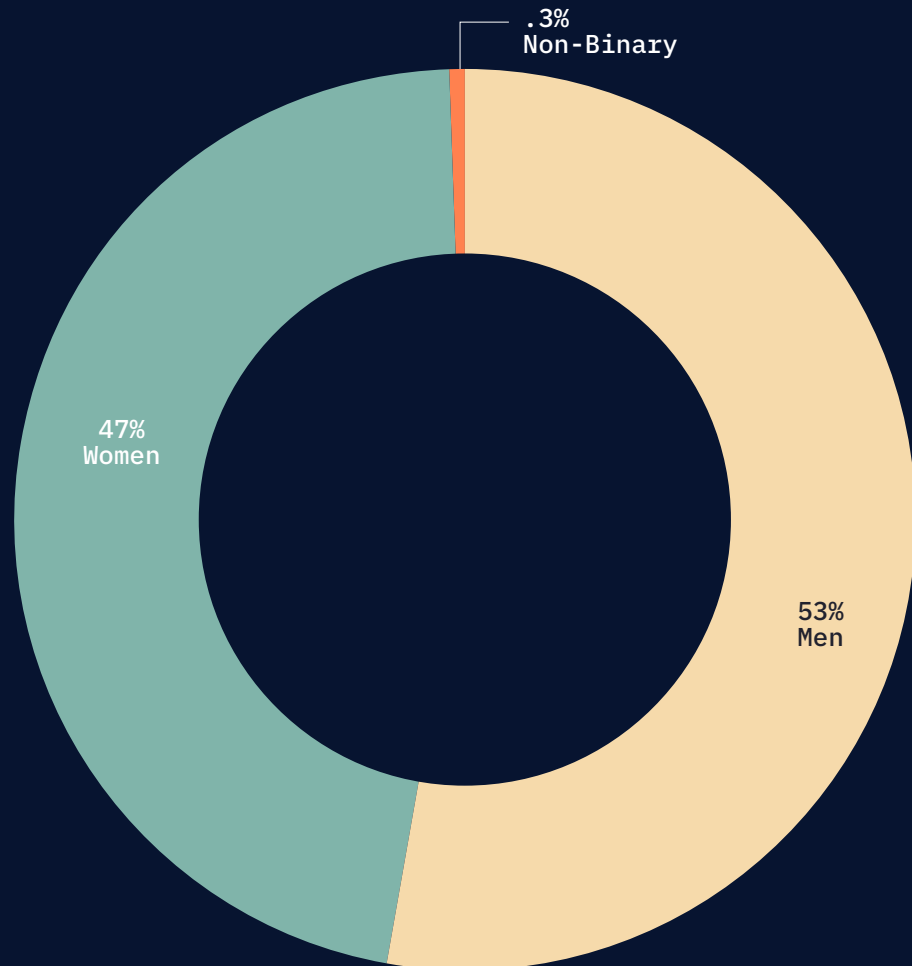
Asiye Yukselen

Junior Designer
Chicago

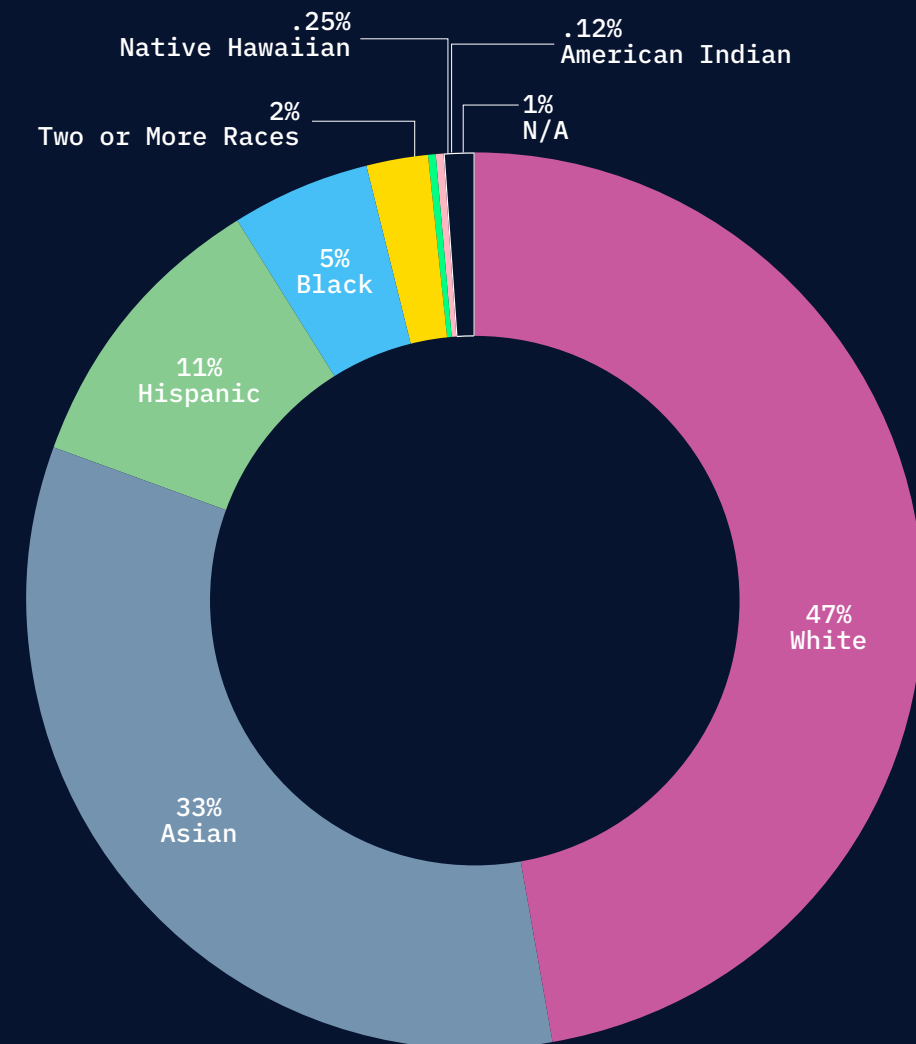
Diversity + Demographics

We continue our commitment to providing an inclusive workplace that is stronger through attracting and retaining diverse teams that feel a strong sense of belonging at SOM. Our goal is to build teams that represent the diversity of the communities in which we work.

GENDER FIRMWIDE 2024 OVERVIEW



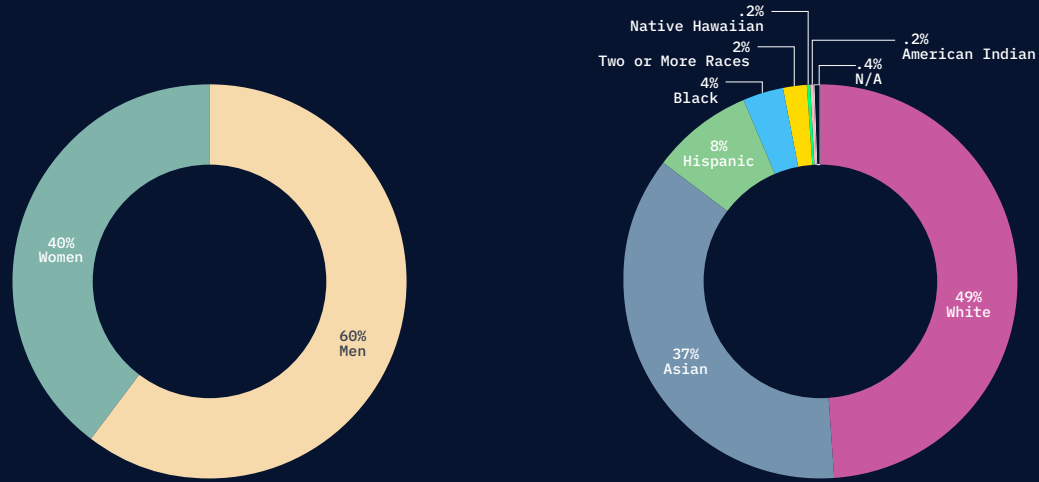
RACE + ETHNICITY FIRMWIDE (US OFFICES) 2024 OVERVIEW



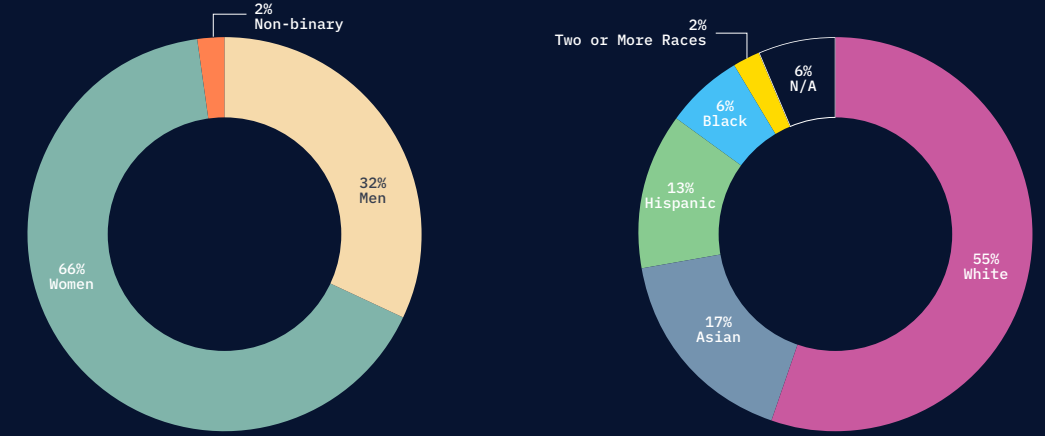
DIVERSITY + DEMOGRAPHICS

GENDER FIRMWIDE AND RACE + ETHNICITY (US OFFICES)
2024 COMMUNITIES OF PRACTICE

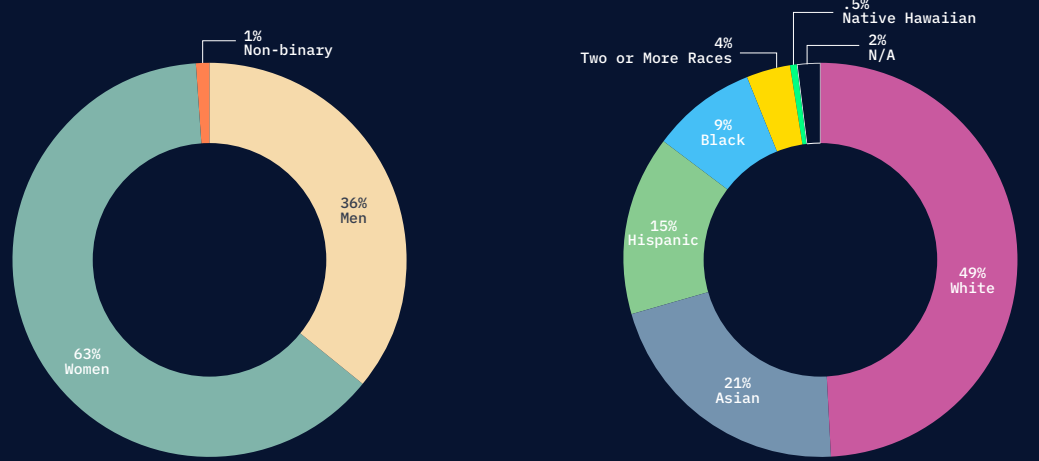
Architecture



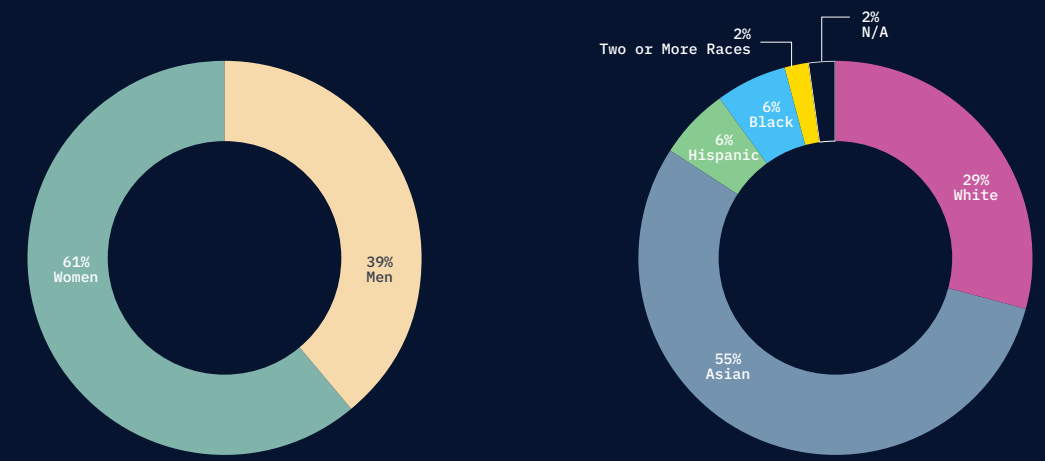
Interiors



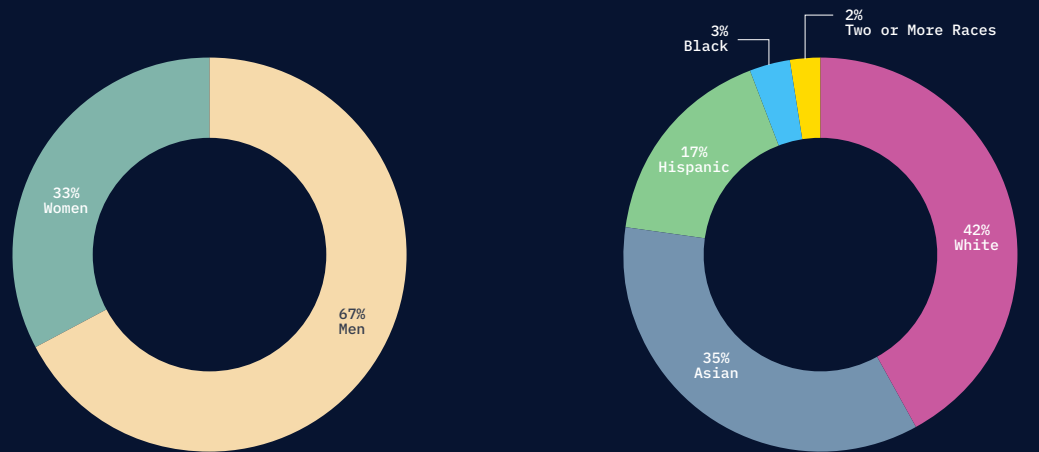
Business Operations



Urban Design



Engineering



DIVERSITY + DEMOGRAPHICS

Yearly Comparison

We remain focused on our DEI plan, shared in 2020, and continue to evolve our efforts. Tracking and reporting on our demographics each year is an important part of our strategy.

Taking a transparent approach to our demographic data is critical to our continued commitment to cultivating an inclusive and diverse workplace that focuses on opportunities for development and success for our team.

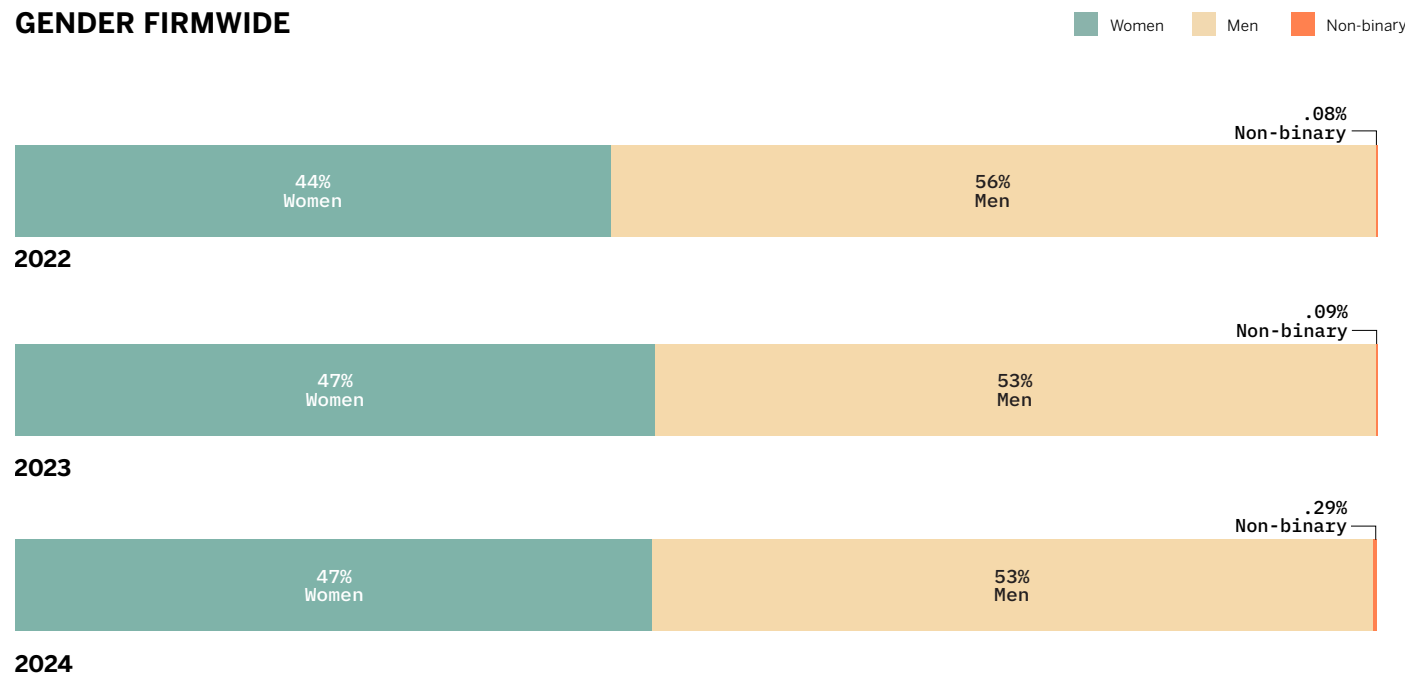
We monitor and share our demographic data annually so we may review our progress and address our areas of opportunity. Increasing the number of women and minorities at all levels of the organization is a continued goal for SOM. This is not a once-a-year exercise but an ongoing review as we strive to attract and retain individuals who represent and reflect our values of inclusiveness and belonging.

In the ability to review our year-over-year demographic data, we are able to observe that although our overall global firmwide gender representation has not changed from last year, we are

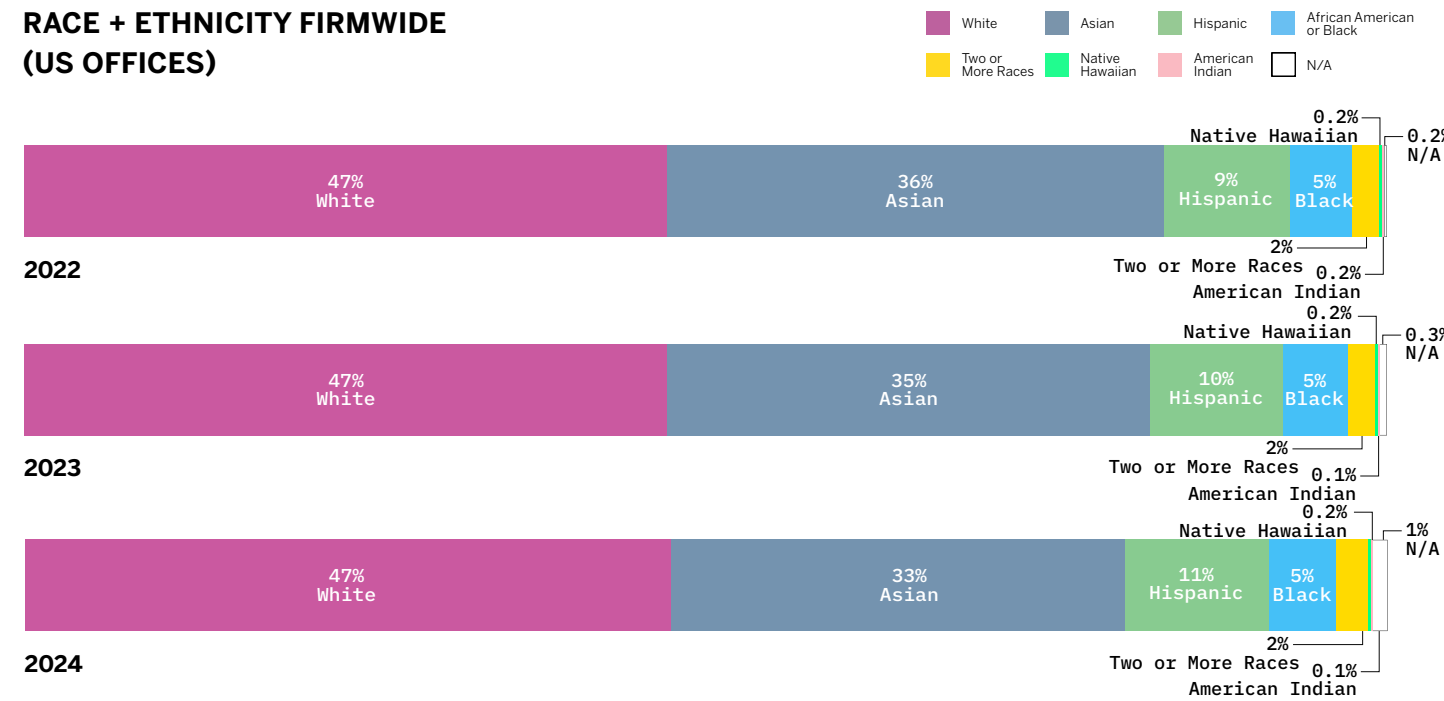
seeing some progress for women in engineering, interiors, urban design, and business operations. Architecture is an area that continues to require additional focus as we have seen a small decline in women representation. In our review of race and ethnicity in our U.S. offices, we have seen good progress in increasing overall Hispanic representation at the firm and within engineering and interiors. We have seen no movement at this year with Black or African American representation at the firm and some decrease of Asian representation.

While we recognize that improvement in diverse representation takes time, we remain committed to providing development and pathways to leadership through a consistent and thoughtful process of advancement, steeped in our competency-based model.

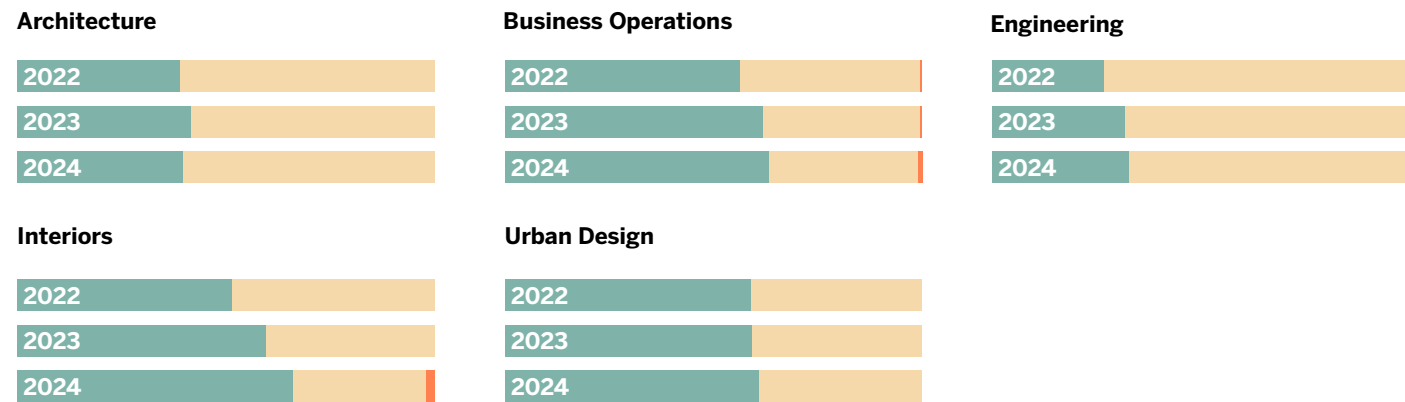
GENDER FIRMWIDE



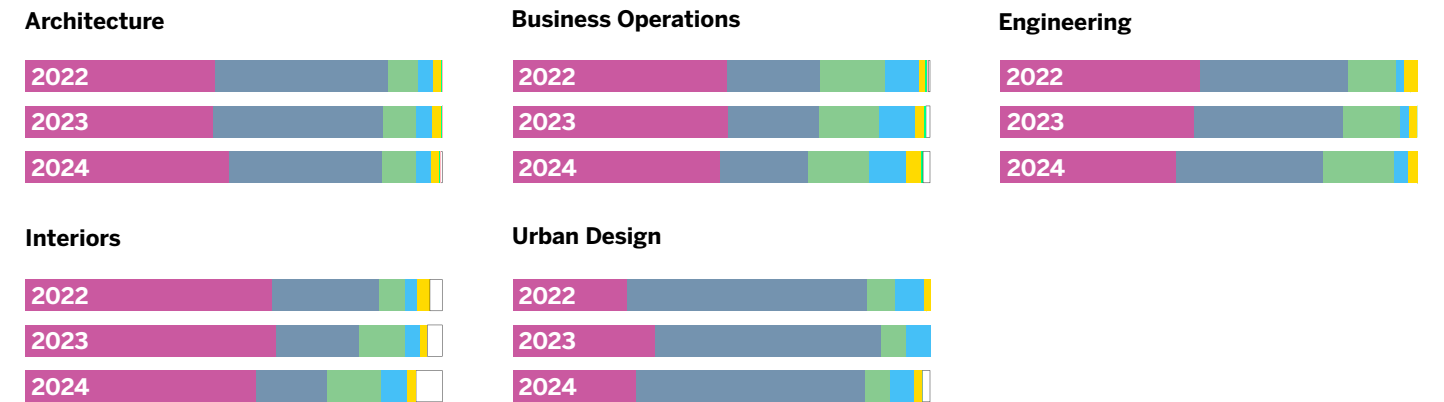
RACE + ETHNICITY FIRMWIDE (US OFFICES)



COMMUNITIES OF PRACTICE



COMMUNITIES OF PRACTICE



DIVERSITY + DEMOGRAPHICS

Reviewing by Level

We remain focused on creating opportunities for growth for all and continue a rigorous process of promotions based on merit. We appreciate that development and promotion to the senior organization levels will take time and often improvement in representation of gender and race/ethnicity will be incremental year over year.

GENDER FIRMWIDE



Design Disciplines by Grade

| | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 |
|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Administrator | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| Jr Professional | 55% Women, 45% Men | 66% Women, 34% Men | 61% Women, 39% Men |
| Int Professional | 48% Women, 52% Men | 52% Women, 48% Men | 56% Women, 44% Men |
| Professional | 48% Women, 52% Men | 47% Women, 53% Men | 39% Women, 60% Men |
| Sr Professional | 34% Women, 66% Men | 38% Women, 62% Men | 43% Women, 57% Men |
| Associate | 43% Women, 57% Men | 46% Women, 54% Men | 42% Women, 58% Men |
| Assoc Principal | 28% Women, 72% Men | 31% Women, 69% Men | 35% Women, 65% Men |
| Sr Assoc Principal | 32% Women, 68% Men | 29% Women, 71% Men | 24% Women, 76% Men |
| Principal | 20% Women, 80% Men | 20% Women, 80% Men | 21% Women, 79% Men |
| Partner | 23% Women, 77% Men | 23% Women, 77% Men | 25% Women, 75% Men |

Business Operations by Grade

| | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 |
|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Administrator | 86% Women, 14% Men | 87% Women, 13% Men | 83% Women, 17% Men |
| Jr Professional | 68% Women, 32% Men | 77% Women, 23% Men | 79% Women, 21% Men |
| Int Professional | 46% Women, 54% Men | 57% Women, 43% Men | 55% Women, 45% Men |
| Professional | 60% Women, 38% Men | 66% Women, 32% Men | 65% Women, 30% Men |
| Sr Professional | 41% Women, 59% Men | 45% Women, 55% Men | 52% Women, 48% Men |
| Associate | 45% Women, 55% Men | 50% Women, 50% Men | 60% Women, 40% Men |
| Assoc Principal | 53% Women, 47% Men | 53% Women, 47% Men | 60% Women, 40% Men |
| Sr Assoc Principal | 80% Women, 20% Men | 80% Women, 20% Men | 75% Women, 25% Men |
| Officer | 50% Women, 50% Men | 50% Women, 50% Men | 67% Women, 33% Men |

In reviewing representation by organization levels, we see a slight increase in women representation at the most senior levels in our design disciplines, while there is strong women representation at the most senior levels of business operations. We continue to have an Executive Committee led by three women partners and a global leadership team in business operations comprised of 57 percent women. We continue to strive for equitable gender representation through all levels, but most importantly at the leadership levels.

In our design disciplines, we are proud to see that our outreach efforts are attracting a diverse group joining at junior levels. This speaks to a commitment from our hiring committees to reach a broader network of schools and industry organizations. We see positive movement in Hispanic representation in our design disciplines. While there were some increases in Black

or African American staff at the junior levels, we need to address retention efforts at the mid- and senior levels. While we see some decrease in Asian representation in our design disciplines, we continue to see Asian representation at the most senior levels. We must also address the lack of race/ethnic diversity in the senior levels of business operations. Although we see representation throughout the junior to mid-levels, we are not seeing progress at the senior levels.

We continue our efforts to broaden our outreach to recruit a more diverse group of professionals and to create opportunities for more gender, racial, and ethnic diversity in leadership. By maintaining our focus on development, paths to licensure and certifications, and retention, we seek to ensure that all groups see representation and paths for advancement.

RACE + ETHNICITY FIRMWIDE (US OFFICES)



Design Disciplines by Grade

| | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 |
|--------------------|---|---|---|
| Administrator | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| Jr Professional | Stacked bar chart showing White, Asian, Hispanic, African American or Black, Two or More Races, Native Hawaiian, American Indian, N/A | Stacked bar chart showing White, Asian, Hispanic, African American or Black, Two or More Races, Native Hawaiian, American Indian, N/A | Stacked bar chart showing White, Asian, Hispanic, African American or Black, Two or More Races, Native Hawaiian, American Indian, N/A |
| Int Professional | Stacked bar chart showing White, Asian, Hispanic, African American or Black, Two or More Races, Native Hawaiian, American Indian, N/A | Stacked bar chart showing White, Asian, Hispanic, African American or Black, Two or More Races, Native Hawaiian, American Indian, N/A | Stacked bar chart showing White, Asian, Hispanic, African American or Black, Two or More Races, Native Hawaiian, American Indian, N/A |
| Professional | Stacked bar chart showing White, Asian, Hispanic, African American or Black, Two or More Races, Native Hawaiian, American Indian, N/A | Stacked bar chart showing White, Asian, Hispanic, African American or Black, Two or More Races, Native Hawaiian, American Indian, N/A | Stacked bar chart showing White, Asian, Hispanic, African American or Black, Two or More Races, Native Hawaiian, American Indian, N/A |
| Sr Professional | Stacked bar chart showing White, Asian, Hispanic, African American or Black, Two or More Races, Native Hawaiian, American Indian, N/A | Stacked bar chart showing White, Asian, Hispanic, African American or Black, Two or More Races, Native Hawaiian, American Indian, N/A | Stacked bar chart showing White, Asian, Hispanic, African American or Black, Two or More Races, Native Hawaiian, American Indian, N/A |
| Associate | Stacked bar chart showing White, Asian, Hispanic, African American or Black, Two or More Races, Native Hawaiian, American Indian, N/A | Stacked bar chart showing White, Asian, Hispanic, African American or Black, Two or More Races, Native Hawaiian, American Indian, N/A | Stacked bar chart showing White, Asian, Hispanic, African American or Black, Two or More Races, Native Hawaiian, American Indian, N/A |
| Assoc Principal | Stacked bar chart showing White, Asian, Hispanic, African American or Black, Two or More Races, Native Hawaiian, American Indian, N/A | Stacked bar chart showing White, Asian, Hispanic, African American or Black, Two or More Races, Native Hawaiian, American Indian, N/A | Stacked bar chart showing White, Asian, Hispanic, African American or Black, Two or More Races, Native Hawaiian, American Indian, N/A |
| Sr Assoc Principal | Stacked bar chart showing White, Asian, Hispanic, African American or Black, Two or More Races, Native Hawaiian, American Indian, N/A | Stacked bar chart showing White, Asian, Hispanic, African American or Black, Two or More Races, Native Hawaiian, American Indian, N/A | Stacked bar chart showing White, Asian, Hispanic, African American or Black, Two or More Races, Native Hawaiian, American Indian, N/A |
| Principal | Stacked bar chart showing White, Asian, Hispanic, African American or Black, Two or More Races, Native Hawaiian, American Indian, N/A | Stacked bar chart showing White, Asian, Hispanic, African American or Black, Two or More Races, Native Hawaiian, American Indian, N/A | Stacked bar chart showing White, Asian, Hispanic, African American or Black, Two or More Races, Native Hawaiian, American Indian, N/A |
| Partner | Stacked bar chart showing White, Asian, Hispanic, African American or Black, Two or More Races, Native Hawaiian, American Indian, N/A | Stacked bar chart showing White, Asian, Hispanic, African American or Black, Two or More Races, Native Hawaiian, American Indian, N/A | Stacked bar chart showing White, Asian, Hispanic, African American or Black, Two or More Races, Native Hawaiian, American Indian, N/A |

Business Operations by Grade

| | 2022 | 2023 | 2024 |
|--------------------|---|---|---|
| Administrator | Stacked bar chart showing White, Asian, Hispanic, African American or Black, Two or More Races, Native Hawaiian, American Indian, N/A | Stacked bar chart showing White, Asian, Hispanic, African American or Black, Two or More Races, Native Hawaiian, American Indian, N/A | Stacked bar chart showing White, Asian, Hispanic, African American or Black, Two or More Races, Native Hawaiian, American Indian, N/A |
| Jr Professional | Stacked bar chart showing White, Asian, Hispanic, African American or Black, Two or More Races, Native Hawaiian, American Indian, N/A | Stacked bar chart showing White, Asian, Hispanic, African American or Black, Two or More Races, Native Hawaiian, American Indian, N/A | Stacked bar chart showing White, Asian, Hispanic, African American or Black, Two or More Races, Native Hawaiian, American Indian, N/A |
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| Sr Professional | Stacked bar chart showing White, Asian, Hispanic, African American or Black, Two or More Races, Native Hawaiian, American Indian, N/A | Stacked bar chart showing White, Asian, Hispanic, African American or Black, Two or More Races, Native Hawaiian, American Indian, N/A | Stacked bar chart showing White, Asian, Hispanic, African American or Black, Two or More Races, Native Hawaiian, American Indian, N/A |
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| Officer | Stacked bar chart showing White, Asian, Hispanic, African American or Black, Two or More Races, Native Hawaiian, American Indian, N/A | Stacked bar chart showing White, Asian, Hispanic, African American or Black, Two or More Races, Native Hawaiian, American Indian, N/A | Stacked bar chart showing White, Asian, Hispanic, African American or Black, Two or More Races, Native Hawaiian, American Indian, N/A |



2

OUR PRACTICE + CULTURE

An inclusive environment improves our teams, our firm, and our community, while also enriching and challenging our thinking about design.

Featured Project: Success Academy



Opening Fall 2025, a State-of-the-Art School Expands Educational Opportunities in the South Bronx

For Success Academy's first ground-up building, SOM designed a K-12 school that embodies the charter network's "moonshot" mission—to ensure that 100 percent of its student body is fully prepared to graduate from a four-year college or university, equipped with the skills, knowledge, and habits of mind to excel.

Situated in the South Bronx, the new building will primarily serve low-income children of color, a historically underserved community. The school will offer a range of programming in the STEM disciplines, the arts, and sports rarely found together within a single facility in New York City.

Success Academy was founded on the idea that students from all backgrounds can achieve their goals when presented with the right opportunities, and our building design supports this mission. With collegiate-level facilities including sports venues, performance spaces, and art studios, Success Academy

students—known as "scholars"—are exposed to a wide spectrum of potential career paths.

Planned for 2,400 scholars, the school co-locates elementary, middle, and high schoolers together under one roof, creating opportunities for students to tackle rigorous subjects and experiences that will prepare them for life's challenges. A central corridor—the "scholar spine"—passes through the length of the building, connecting shared spaces and putting the breadth of available programs on display. The high school is housed on the lower floors, followed by the middle and elementary grades at the top, and a series of rooftop terraces provide each with private outdoor space.

Our design team also saw the school as a chance to bring new amenities to the surrounding community, leaving room to add new trees and landscape to a neighborhood in need of public space and shade.

SOM Tops Corporate Equality Index

We are proud to share that once again we have been named an “Equality 100 Award: Leader in LGBTQ+ Workplace Inclusion” awardee as part of the Human Rights Campaign Foundation's annual Corporate Equality Index. The Index continues to be the leading benchmarking tool in the U.S. on corporate policies, practices, and benefits pertinent to lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer employees.

The results are based on four sets of criteria: workforce protections, inclusive benefits, supporting an inclusive culture, and corporate social responsibility. We are honored to have received top scores in all four categories.

View the full Corporate Equality Index 2025 report online at www.hrc.org.

Criteria 1— Workforce Protections

Businesses' employment non-discrimination policy includes the terms “sexual orientation” and “gender identity or expression” (or “gender identity”)

Criteria 2— Inclusive Benefits

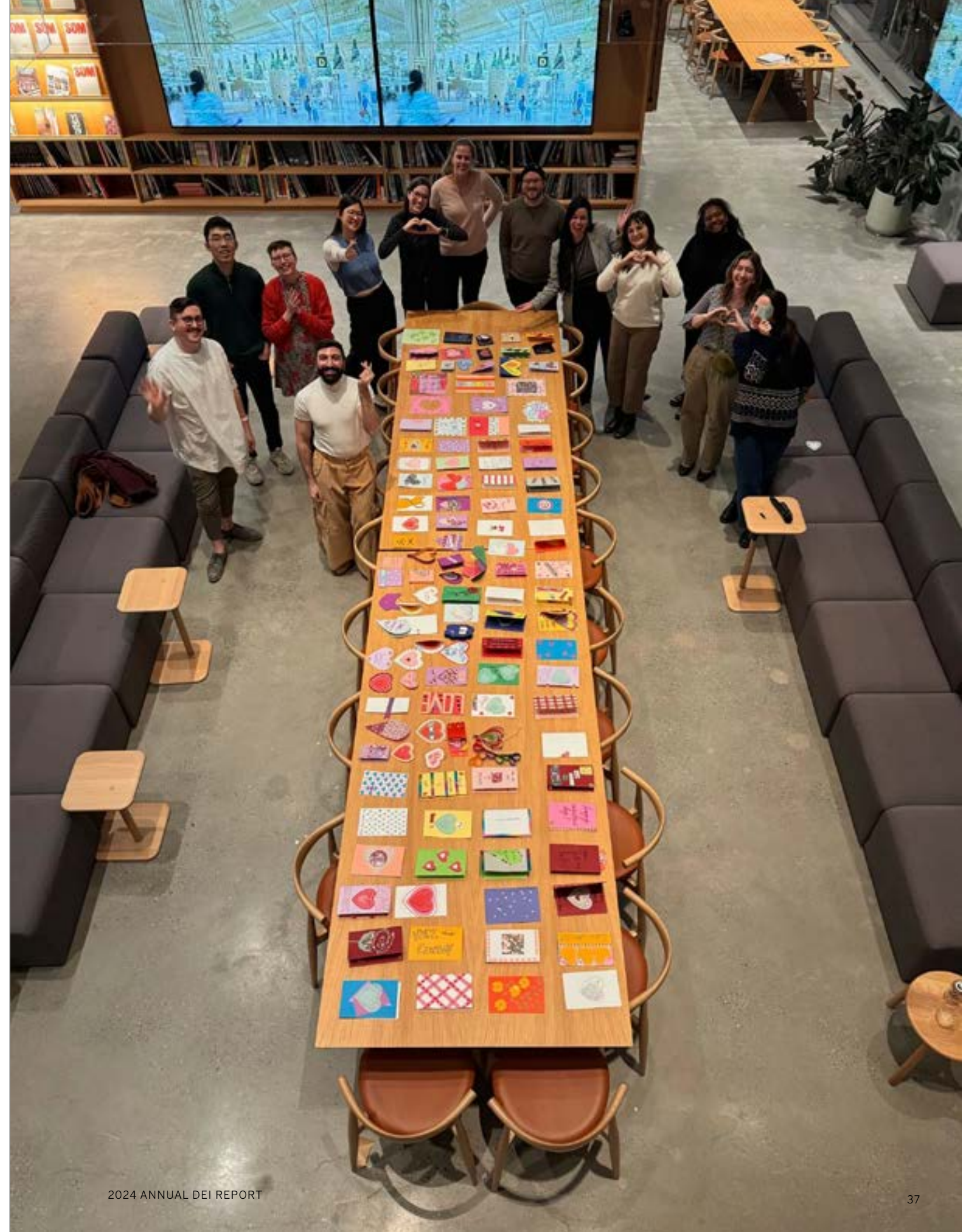
- Businesses have equivalency in same- and different-sex spousal and domestic partner benefits in medical and other health benefits
- Businesses have equivalency in family formation benefits
- Businesses have equal health coverage for transgender individuals
- Businesses provide an LGBTQ+ Health Benefits Guide for its employees

Criteria 3—Supporting an Inclusive Culture

- Businesses provide training and education that includes coverage about LGBTQ+ discrimination
- Businesses capture demographic data that includes LGBTQ+ individuals
- Businesses have transgender inclusive best practices
- Businesses have either an LGBTQ+ employee resource group or diversity council

Criteria 4—Corporate Social Responsibility

- Businesses have outreach or engagement efforts to the broader LGBTQ+ community
- Businesses include the LGBTQ+ community in corporate social responsibility (supplier standards and philanthropic giving guidelines).



Charting the Path: Three Generations of Women on Their Careers in Architecture

In honor of Women's History Month, current and former SOM partners gathered to discuss gender equity in the profession.

Women have played a pivotal role in leading SOM's projects and practice for several generations, starting in the 1950s. Their contributions are all the more notable in a profession that has continued to struggle with gender equity.

Much progress has been made since our firm rose to prominence in the mid-century era, when design leaders such as Natalie de Blois never received the recognition they deserved. Today, women make up nearly half of our global staff, and three women partners lead our all-female executive committee. But more work remains.

To learn about the challenges women in architecture have faced and how we can continue making progress toward gender equity, Marti Gottsch, chair of the SOM Women's Initiative, brought together three remarkable leaders from our firm's past and present: Diane Legge, who in 1982 was the first woman to become a partner; Marilyn Jordan Taylor, who in 1985 became lead partner for the urban design and transportation practices, as well as the firm's chairperson in the early 2000s; and Julia Murphy, a current partner who continues to champion equity at SOM and throughout the profession.

Read the full interview on [SOM.com](https://www.som.com).



"Architecture is a tough profession—you have to approach it with a sense of gratitude. Be joyful when you get a great project. Be happier still when it's successful and people love it. It doesn't matter whether you're a woman or not. What's important is to be the best architect you can possibly be."

Diane Legge
Former Partner



"Shortly after I became the firm's chairperson, I had the chance to meet Natalie de Blois, who designed some of SOM's most important projects in the 1950s and 1960s but was never made a partner. We were both invited to speak at Columbia University. I was nervous as could be. Here was this remarkable woman who never was allowed to advance herself, and yet she spoke with such a sense of fulfillment about her career. It was extraordinary. I was practically ready to cry. She told me, "Now it's your turn. You have to take the lead."

Marilyn Jordan Taylor
Former Partner + Chairperson

[↑]
New York partners in 2000.
Left to right: David Childs, Carl Galioto, Marilyn Taylor, Stephen Apking, Peter Magill, Anthony Vacchione, Mustafa Abadan, T.J. Gottesdiener, Gary Haney, Roger Duffy.

[↑]
Diane Legge in SOM's Chicago office, 1986



"I also think that when women have a voice, we can open the door for other underrepresented groups. The Women's Initiative became the blueprint for other employee resource groups. These groups have become so important, especially for our junior staff, to have a sounding board."

Julia Murphy
Partner

[↑]
Julia Murphy (right) with Angelica Baccon of SHoP (left), and Cynthia Kracauer of the Beverly Willis Architecture Foundation (center) at the exhibit "Pioneering Women of American Architecture."

Winter Shadowship

Sponsored by SOM's employee resource groups, this week-long program offers an immersive professional experience, mentorship, and guidance to students planning careers in architecture, engineering, or a related design field.

"Months of preparation went into selecting a top-tier cohort from schools across North America and putting together a program to show them all that SOM does in Chicago and across the globe. To see it all culminate into such a successful week was extremely gratifying."

Luke Edwards
Junior Designer
Chicago



SOM's annual Winter Shadowship is a week-long program that offers an immersive professional experience, mentorship, and guidance to students planning careers in the design professions and who share a passion for advancing equity, diversity, and inclusion in the industry. 48 students participated in this year's program across our global offices.

Throughout the week, these promising young designers shadowed professionals in architecture, interior design, urban planning, management, structural engineering, and communications and marketing. They also ventured out into their respective cities, joining architects and engineers on site visits and tours.

ACROSS OUR OFFICES

Chicago



London



Los Angeles



New York



San Francisco



Seattle



Washington, D.C.

FROM OUR SHADOWS



"I had the incredible opportunity to learn about SOM's vibrant culture, different studio projects, and inspiring conversations with different junior engineers, principals, and partners!"

Aya Ibrahim
Structural + Sustainable
Engineering
Chicago



"From being fully immersed in their day-to-day operations, receiving invaluable insights from architects, engineers, and designers, and seeing projects come to life in construction sites and the city's downtown area, I am grateful for all the people at SOM who have not only made this possible but have welcomed us with open arms."

Haniqa Rahardjo
Architecture
San Francisco



"Learning about the firm's culture, operations, and projects was incredible. I'm so grateful to the coordination team and to the rest of the Chicago office who all made it so easy to ask questions and engage."

Samira Mohamed
Architecture + Planning
Chicago

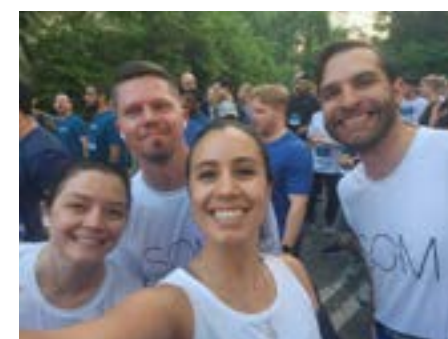
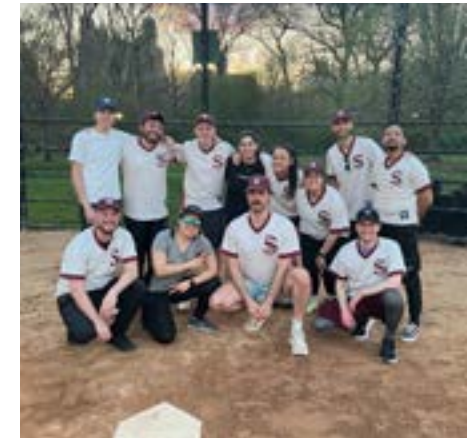
SOM Sports

From softball to soccer, cycling to hikes, and running clubs to corporate foot races, our staff from around the world came together outside the office to exercise and build camaraderie.



In New York, Chicago, and San Francisco, our softball teams continued to compete in long-standing leagues created by architects and engineers—hitting the field in the spring and summer in Central Park, Grant Park, and the Presidio. Throughout the year in Lower Manhattan, near our office at 7 World Trade Center, our New York soccer team played in a weekly corporate league.

Across our offices in London, New York, and Chicago, a large group of colleagues participated in the J.P. Morgan Corporate Challenge, the world's largest corporate foot race that brings both runners and walkers together from companies throughout each city. Staff in London organized a running club and a cycling day at Richmond Park, and in celebration of Earth Day and Climate Week NYC, our colleagues hiked the Arden Point and Glenclyffe Loop Trail and Breakneck Ridge.





3

DOING GOOD

Together our colleagues are effecting change that extends beyond our walls—into the communities in which we live and work. From local engagements to global initiatives, our people are coming together to support meaningful change within our industry and beyond.

Community Partnerships

Engaged in our local communities and contributing to initiatives farther afield, we are always seeking out opportunities to contribute to organizations focused on education, equity, and social good.

SOM Foundation

Established by SOM in 1979 to support emerging designers, the SOM Foundation is an independent nonprofit organization that has provided more than \$3.3 million in fellowships to support early career architects, engineers, and designers, as well as mentorship and networking opportunities. Today, the foundation administers six annual awards which support rigorous interdisciplinary research across the globe.

In its 2023–2024 cycle, the foundation defined “Adapting Housing Strategies to Respond to New Realities” as the overarching topic across its awards program. This topic was a prompt to explore affordable, equitable, and innovative modes of multifamily housing that respond to current and future needs. These housing strategies needed to consider changing demographics, collectivity, economy, work patterns, and the environment, through the exploration of design strategies, community engagement, economic models, and legal policies.



Partnering with an architectural NGO to rebuild Nepal’s leprosy treatment center

In 2020, SOM began a partnership with Article 25, the UK’s leading international development charity designing and managing the construction of essential buildings and infrastructure for disadvantaged communities. Our team recently supported the redesign, reconstruction, and expansion of Anandaban Hospital, Nepal’s main specialist center for leprosy treatment. The hospital was severely damaged in a 2015 earthquake and has since been operating in a temporary facility. Working with The Leprosy Mission, Article 25 redesigned and is overseeing the reconstruction of the hospital’s trauma center. Contributing our expertise in healthcare design, SOM worked with local architects to develop interior layouts for the laboratory spaces. Our team produced renderings of the new hospital which were used to raise capital for the rebuilding project. Once complete, the new facility will measurably expand the capacity of Anandaban Hospital to conduct research and provide life-changing treatment.



Regenerative Architecture Index: Envisioning the future of ecological design

The Regenerative Architecture Index—benchmarking progress in the move toward regenerative practice and projects—recently launched, naming SOM as “Ones to Watch.” The inaugural compendium, a partnership between Architecture Today and UK Architects Declare, tracks best practices and offers insight into the challenges and creativity of transitioning to a regenerative and more equitable future. Some 68 organizations—mostly architectural practices but also engineers, charities, and clients—participated in the Index, submitting responses in the following categories: being a good ancestor, co-evolving with nature, and creating a just space for people.

LEAP Sandcastle Classic

San Francisco, California

In partnership with our colleagues in the AEC industry, SOM participated in the 42nd annual LEAP Sandcastle Classic at Ocean Beach in Northern California. LEAP provides arts education to students throughout the Bay Area. This year’s theme was “Out of This World,” and the students from Clarendon Elementary received hands-on learning about architecture, structural engineering, and construction and brought their ideas to life in sand.

SOM has participated in the LEAP Sandcastle Classic for more than 25 years.



North Capitol Crossroads Vision Plan

Washington, DC

Guided by racial equity metrics, the North Capitol Crossroads Vision Plan transforms this car-centric 600-acre area into interconnected crossroads that promotes active and social transportation and attracts new and existing development while respecting the area’s rich history. This area, shared among three different wards, needed a clear vision and a cohesive identity. The Vision Plan proposes an interconnected neighborhood anchored by places to live, work, learn, and heal.

Introducing high school students to careers in design

The ACE Mentorship Program is a nonprofit initiative that introduces high school students to careers in architecture, construction, and engineering through hands-on projects, mentorship, and industry exposure. Its mission is to inspire and prepare the next generation of AEC professionals, with a focus on students from underrepresented communities.

SOM has actively supported the ACE Mentorship Program for more than a decade, providing students with internships and mentorship opportunities across its offices. This past year, SOM staff in Chicago, New York, and Los Angeles led student teams in design competitions, served as mentors, and held board positions on local ACE chapters to advance the program’s mission.



Light Up Chinatown

Building on a grassroots initiative to increase safety and community resilience during the pandemic, SOM's Asian Alliance has worked pro bono with New York's Chinatown's community to create a streetscape and placemaking plan that will invigorate commercial corridors and revitalize the neighborhood.

[↓]
Bold, colorful signage boards line the storefronts of East Broadway. We asked ourselves: how do we compliment this urban tapestry that gives East Broadway its unique character?



Manhattan's Chinatown is one of the few remaining neighborhoods of New York City that retains a strong sense of its historic cultural identity and community. Home to more than 140,000 residents, it is a bustling, dynamic place that piques all the senses. It is also an incredibly resilient neighborhood. It has withstood many disasters, from 9/11 to Hurricane Sandy, and most recently the COVID-19 pandemic.

But in the aftermath of the pandemic—facing a continued decline in its Asian population, a loss in foot traffic, and a rise in anti-Asian sentiment—it needs a new beacon of hope.



[↑]
East Broadway earned the nickname of "Little Fuzhou" in the 1980s when a new wave of Fujianese immigrants settled in the area. We noted elements from Fuzhou's cityscape and symbols rooted in Chinese culture, as well as elements found throughout the streets of Chinatown.

Light Up Chinatown is one of those beacons. This grassroots initiative brings much-needed illumination, safety and a sense of cultural identity for the Chinatown community. Working together with Arup Lighting Design, our design and planning team led a comprehensive feasibility study for the second phase of Light Up Chinatown—a community-driven investment in permanent lighting and streetscape improvements. Our testbed is East Broadway between Kimlau Square and the Manhattan Bridge underpass, a neglected commercial corridor in the eastern part of the neighborhood. Bolstered with New York State funding through Governor Hochul's Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI), we envision a new gateway into Chinatown that is well-illuminated, festive and safe.

The design team worked closely with neighborhood leaders and business owners to understand the community's needs, identify high impact opportunities, and guide the client group through local planning processes and requirements. The result is a placemaking and streetscape kit of parts that will allow the Chinatown community to revitalize strategic commercial corridors for a post-pandemic era.



In May 2024, a feature on SOM's design and public engagement with Manhattan's Chinatown residents was published in URBAN Magazine, the student-led publication of Columbia University GSAPP's Urban Planning Program.

“True transformation requires harmonious coordination between designers, planners, policymakers, city agencies, and the communities we serve.”

Lauren Sinclair
 Senior Designer
 New York

Donations + Financial Contributions

Every year, one of the ways SOM supports our industry and our local communities is through financial contributions.

The commitment to investing in the next generation and in our communities is core to our values and our approach to annual global giving efforts.

ACE Mentor Program of America
The American Institute of Architects (AIA)
AIA Large Firm Roundtable
Architectural League
Beverly Willis Architecture Foundation, Inc.
BNP MEDIA
British Architectural Library Trust
Build Out Alliance
Center for Architecture
Chicago Architecture Center
Core Marketing
Council on Tall Buildings and Urban Habitat (CTBUH)
Friends of Governors Island
Habitat for Humanity Chicago
Interior Design Media Group
International Code Council, Inc.
Lower Manhattan Cultural Council, Inc.
National Building Museum
National Organization of Minority Architects (NOMA)

New York Passive House, Inc.
Open House New York
Openlands
San Francisco Heritage
Structural Engineers Association of New York (SEaONY)
Seattle Architecture Foundation
Society of American Military Engineers (SAME)
SOM Foundation
Structural Engineers Association of Illinois (SEAoI)
Success Academy Charter Schools
The Metropolitan Museum of Art
The Skyscraper Museum
The Urban Land Institute (ULI)
University of Cambridge
University of Stuttgart
Urban Green Council
Washington Architectural Foundation (WAF)
World Green Building Council, Inc.



ACE Mentor Program, Chicago



Chicago Architecture Center
Wild Mile Tour



ACE Mentor Program, New York

Supporting NOMA

The National Organization of Minority Architects (NOMA) works to foster justice and equity in communities of color through outreach, advocacy, professional development, and design excellence.



SOM's own goals for advancing equity are closely aligned with those of NOMA, and our firm contributes to the national organization's activities in a number of ways.

Our staff participates in the annual NOMA conference, hosts networking and professional development events, and volunteers with the Project Pipeline summer camp program to provide students with opportunities to explore the architecture profession.

A PLEDGE OF SUPPORT

Building on our firm's ongoing involvement with NOMA, SOM this year signed a memorandum of understanding that reaffirms our support of the national organization's mission, values, and strategic goals. SOM and NOMA share a desire to foster equal opportunity, increase representation, and advance the architectural profession toward greater equity. The memorandum pledges SOM's continued support of NOMA's growth and operations.

STUDENT DESIGN COMPETITION AT NOMA CONFERENCE



SOM Partner Carrie Moore served on the jury of the Barbara G. Laurie Student Design Competition at the 2024 NOMA Conference, held in Baltimore, Maryland. The competition brought together more than 40 NOMA student chapters from across the country. Teams were tasked with proposing a master plan and architectural design for a new multi-modal transit center to service the West Baltimore community.

"This year's competition students brought bold design ideas to tackle head on the social injustices impacting the communities imbedded in Baltimore's "highway to nowhere"—reminding us as jurors the positive impact our future architects, designers and planners will have on society."

SOM Partner Carrie Moore

NOMA PROJECT PIPELINE

NOMA's local summer camps provide 6th-12th grade students of color with the opportunity to learn the fundamentals of architecture and design. Students that participate in the camps work closely with architects and designers to create the designs they would like to see in their communities. Not only do students create designs, but they are also connected with mentors in the architecture field to help guide their interests. SOM supports its members in volunteering and leading the various project pipeline efforts in collaboration with their local NOMA chapters.



FUTURE FACES SUMMIT: A COLLABORATIVE NETWORKING EVENT



In July 2024, the SOM NOMA group, in partnership with the New York Coalition of Black Architects, hosted the first Future Faces Summit. This event brought together interns at firms across New York City and industry professionals for an evening of connection and growth.

Aspiring architects and designers took part in portfolio reviews, professional development seminars, and networking sessions. It was a remarkable evening, offering participants the chance to make new relationships, seek valuable career advice, and expand their professional networks.

Defining Equity

After conducting research, holding meetings and workshops, and refining a matrix of values for equitable design practices, the Equity Design Lab has defined three key metrics for equity: social, environmental, and economic.

These metrics were the driving force behind the Equity Toolkit, which enables us to evaluate our work and its impact on the people it serves, creating a baseline across projects and geographies.

Social Equity

Supporting health and wellbeing in the context of population growth and urban migration, providing for the needs of an aging society, increasing employment, improving housing and education, and preventing infectious diseases

Environmental Equity

Decarbonization, energy efficiency, water management, renewable energy, resilience, food security, waste management, and climate change mitigation and adaptation

Economic Equity

Connectivity and transportation, local economies, responsible business practices, supply chains, resilient infrastructure, and circular and informal economies

EQUITY TOOLKIT

At the outset of each project, we pose a series of questions to frame our design approach with eight core values.

1

Sensitivity

How will we ensure an equitable design process, and who at SOM will oversee these efforts?

2

Access

How will the project welcome the community once it is built?

3

Safety

How will the project make people feel safe/protect the community?

4

Authenticity

How will the project reflect the spirit, cultural integrity, and beauty of the community?

5

Inclusion

How will we engage the community during the design process to help define project values?

6

Advocacy

How will the project advocate for the disenfranchised and underinvested?

7

Health + Wellbeing

How will the project promote better life outcomes for the community?

8

Prosperity

How will the project uplift the community economically?



"Development of equitable design is an active pursuit of quality work that embraces the character, diversity and needs of the people that our projects serve."

Laura Ettelman

Partner
New York



DESIGNING FOR EQUITY

A new district centered on environmental and social benefit

Charenton-Bercy Development

Paris, France

Located on the city's eastern edge, Charenton-Bercy is one of the key sites that make up the "Grand Paris" development plan for the metropolis. SOM led the winning design scheme in the master plan competition to transform this site from an underutilized, peripheral zone into a highly connected, mixed-use urban district. Following the adoption of the master plan, individual lots within the district are now being designed by multiple architects, all following the guidelines established in the overall district plan. By aligning goals shared by the municipality, the client, and the local community, the new architecture taking shape at Charenton-Bercy demonstrates the impact of a design process guided by goals for environmental and social benefit.



DESIGNING FOR EQUITY

Connecting communities on Chicago's Southwest Side

Stitching it Together

Chicago, Illinois

An initiative led by Chicago's Department of Planning and Development (DPD) with SOM, "Stitching it Together" represents a collaborative and inclusive approach to creating safer, more connected neighborhoods in Chicago's Southwest Side. The study focused on enhancing connections between the Brighton Park and Gage Park neighborhoods and improving access to a nearby Chicago Park District facility. SOM collaborated with UrbanWorks, SB Friedman, and Omni Ecosystems to provide collective expertise in community engagement, market research, and design and planning. Community engagement kicked off in March 2024.

The study addressed the unique needs of these diverse neighborhoods, identifying ways to activate vacant spaces, improve pedestrian and bike infrastructure, and increase workforce development opportunities. It emphasized supporting local businesses and entrepreneurs by addressing barriers to growth and identifying strategies to reduce the environmental and quality-of-life impacts of nearby industrial operations. The community expressed a desire for welcoming amenities including a revitalized Gage Park Library and new recreational facilities.

By the end of this foundational phase, the initiative had established a clear framework for addressing local concerns while preserving the neighborhoods' character and aspirations. These findings will guide future planning phases, with additional city announcements expected in 2025.

DESIGNING FOR EQUITY

Shaping the future of a downtown arts district

New Jersey Performing Arts Center Campus

Newark, New Jersey

The New Jersey Performing Arts Center (NJPAC)'s commitment to downtown Newark is central to its mission. Originally proposed in a 1988 master plan by SOM, the center was designed to create a hub of activity in the heart of the city. Today, we are driving that vision forward with an expanded campus that will bring affordable housing, new pedestrian paths, and inclusive cultural spaces to the streets surrounding the NJPAC—bringing new life to downtown Newark with the arts at its center.

To revitalize this neighborhood equitably, we are designing 17 residential buildings of several scales for people at all income levels, with 20 percent dedicated to affordable housing, as well as shared public spaces and a renovation of the performing arts center. The project will also restore pedestrian paths, with accessible spaces for outdoor performances and art installations, that connect to the Newark Light Rail system. Together these efforts expand NJPAC's cultural impact and embody a spirit of connectivity and inclusion.



DESIGNING FOR EQUITY

Enhancing the transit experience for Los Angeles bus riders

Los Angeles Bus Shelter Program

Los Angeles, California

Los Angeles has an extensive public transportation network with the third-highest ridership in the nation. However, only about a quarter of LA's 8,000 bus stops currently provide any shade or shelter—an urgent concern in a warming climate. A new initiative by StreetsLA, a division of the city's Department of Public Works, will dramatically improve the transit experience.

The Sidewalk and Transit Amenities Program, or STAP, will bring 3,000 new and upgraded shelters and 450 shade structures to neighborhoods across the city over the next decade. Led by the joint venture Transito-Vector, the program

is being rolled out in the communities that have the greatest need based on ridership data and the city's equity and heat indexes.

Designed by SOM in collaboration with Designworks, a BMW group company, and urban planner Studio One Eleven, the shelters and shade structures are conceived as a kit of parts—flexible, easily scaled, and adaptable to each site and its existing infrastructure. The new structures provide up to 35 percent more shade than LA's existing transit shelters.

The structures are equipped with an integrated suite of amenities to enhance the rider experience, including real-time bus tracking, public alert systems, a digital art program, and smart lighting technology. Shelter installation began in early 2024, and up to 250 total are anticipated to be installed by June 2025.



DESIGNING FOR EQUITY

Planning the future of a vibrant community hub

Glencoe Public Library

Glencoe, Illinois

In 2024, the Glencoe Public Library engaged SOM to develop a comprehensive master space plan to address its aging building and evolving community needs. The plan focuses on renovating the library's interior spaces, grounds, and infrastructure while preserving its historical integrity. Community involvement has been central to the process. During a public forum in October, SOM partner and Glencoe resident Adam Semel, Senior Associate Principal Jason Fisher, and library consultant Andrea Telli presented a vision for a modernized yet welcoming library.

Residents expressed a desire for enhanced meeting spaces, improved climate control, better accessibility, and updates to aging mechanical systems—all while maintaining the library's character, including its existing facade and distinctive interior vaulted ceiling. Following positive community feedback, discussions are underway to secure funding for the next phase of development, ensuring the library continues to serve as a vibrant community hub.



DESIGNING FOR EQUITY

Transforming an urban waterway into a community asset

Wild Mile Phase II

Chicago, Illinois

The Wild Mile is a long-range vision to transform an industrialized channel of the Chicago River into a habitat for wildlife, a public park, and an educational amenity. Urban Rivers, a volunteer-based nonprofit organization, has championed this initiative and sought out SOM's design and planning expertise to help make this concept a reality.

Beginning in 2014, SOM developed a design for a series of floating gardens, walkways, and docks to transform this stretch of the river into an accessible amenity. This compelling design vision led the city to issue an RFP for a Framework Plan for the Wild Mile; teaming up again with SOM, Urban Rivers was awarded the commission to

develop a comprehensive planning study for the river's ongoing transformation. SOM's compelling design vision has been crucial in fundraising efforts for the new park, and a broad coalition of community groups, corporations, and local businesses have come together in support of the project. In 2016, the team installed a 1,500-square-foot floating garden as a first step, and today, building on the Framework Plan, Urban Rivers is continuing to expand the Wild Mile in phases as funding and resources become available.

Already the environmental and social outcomes have been remarkable. The Wild Mile is now home to more than 60 native wetland species. The Wild Mile also incorporates rich educational and community programming including River Rangers, which recruits "citizen scientists" to document and report on reintroduced plants and wildlife.

**CELEBRATING
PROGRESS,
EMBRACING NEW
CHALLENGES**

Promoting greater equity is an ongoing and collective project: it requires clear goals and the dedicated efforts of many people. Five years since the launch of our DEI Action Plan, we are seeing the seeds of this work grow in every area of SOM's culture and practice—with the understanding that our commitment to this work continues. The progress we made in 2024 would not have been possible without the efforts of many individuals across our global practice. Going above and beyond the core responsibilities of project work, our community continues to rise to the challenge of building a more equitable and inclusive practice and industry.

Over the past year, members of the Equity Action Committee have convened engaging firmwide conversations around equity in design and are actively working to close the gaps in our profession through recruitment, mentorship, and training programs. Employee Resource Groups have cultivated a culture of belonging for employees of all backgrounds and identities. Mentors have provided career guidance and insight to younger members of our team. Volunteering their time, SOMers have worked to recruit the next generation of talent, building bridges with an ever-wider range of colleges and universities.

In parallel with these efforts, the Equity Design Lab has continued to foreground equity in our project work and, crucially, to seek out clients who share our commitment to fostering social, environmental, and economic equity. When values align, we find remarkable opportunities to put our principles into practice. As architects and engineers, we are always aware of the important role that we play in creating an inclusive built environment. Together with our clients, we are pursuing projects that we hope will make an impact for generations to come.

We begin 2025 inspired by the efforts of our colleagues and energized to take on new challenges. Celebrating progress while focused on the future, we remain as committed as ever to finding ways to expand equity in our work and our industry.

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