



American Institute of Architects - Arkansas Chapter

Emerging Professionals + Young Architects Committee

Emerging Professionals + Young Architects Friendly Firm Initiative

Updated August 31, 2023

Overview & Goals

The *AIA Arkansas Emerging Professional + Young Architect Friendly Firm Initiative* (EPYAFFI) is an awards-based program organized to celebrate Arkansas firms that foster *Emerging Professional & Young Architect* value, retention, equity, professional development & leadership both within the firm and the community. By highlighting firms that create nurturing environments and opportunities for development, we showcase Arkansas as an amazing place to be an *Emerging Professional* or *Young Architect*. Interested firms will submit one application, completed by both an Emerging Professional/Young Architect and a Principal. The application will include survey questions designed to facilitate conversation throughout the process, and to provide a framework for future discussions between leaders and employees regarding the work environment. The initiative will also promote involvement in the AIA and other community organizations.

AIA Arkansas expects that Emerging Professionals and Young Architects will consider firms that have earned the *Friendly Firm* status to assist them as they look match their skills with firms' values as they seek employment.

Definitions

Emerging Professionals (EP) are Associate AIA members who are in good standing who have completed their academic studies up to the point of licensure or up to 10 years after completion of their academic studies (*Definition determined by AIA National*)

Young Architects (YA) are AIA members who are in good standing and have been licensed to practice architecture for 10 years or less, regardless of age (*Definition determined by AIA Arkansas*)

Program Guidelines & Rules

This award is organized by the AIA Arkansas Emerging Professionals+Young Architects Committee. The committee reviews survey point totals and awards *Emerging Professional+Young Architect Friendly Firm* status to firms that display an outstanding commitment to the development of their staff. Firms qualifying for this status may use the *AIA Arkansas Emerging Professionals+Young Architect Friendly Firm* logo on promotional materials to display their commitment to EPs and YAs.

All architecture firms that have an office in Arkansas and meet the requirements outlined below are eligible to apply:

- Firms with more than one Arkansas location shall apply for each office location separately.
- A majority (more than 50%) of the principals in the firm or local office submitting are members of the AIA.
- A percentage (more than 33%) of the Emerging Professionals & Young Architects, as defined above, in the firm or local office submitting are members of the AIA.
- If no individual meeting the Emerging Professional or Young Architect definition is currently employed the firm is still allowed to apply.

The *Friendly Firm* status recipients are recognized at the annual AIA Arkansas State Convention and on the AIA Arkansas webpage

The *Friendly Firm* status is imparted for the span of 2 years, after which the firm will be required to reapply to maintain the status. Firms can apply for the *Friendly Firm* status only once each year.

There is no charge to apply, only each firm's pledge of dedication toward this effort

Evaluation & Scoring

Applicant firms will be scored based on responses to survey questions. Affirmative responses to survey questions will result in points added to the total score. The scoring threshold for awarding "Friendly Firm" status to an applicant firm is outlined in the information below.

EP/YA Friendly Firm Status Scoring Rubric

<u>Firm Size</u>	<u>EP/YA Friendly Firm</u>	<u>Outstanding EP/YA Friendly Firm</u>
Small (5 & Under)	min. 65% of Available Points	min. 75% of Available Points
Medium (6-15)	min. 70% of Available Points	min. 80% of Available Points
Large (16-35)	min. 75% of Available Points	min. 85% of Available Points
Extra Large (36+)	min. 80% of Available Points	min. 90% of Available Points