

AIGA

YEAR

in REVIEW

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AIGA Year in Review: 2019

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About AIGA

AIGA brings design to the world, and the world to designers.

AIGA advances design as a professional craft, strategic advantage, and vital cultural force. As the largest community of design advocates, we bring together practitioners, enthusiasts, and patrons to amplify the voice of design and create the vision for a collective future. We define professional standards and ethical practices, guide design education, inspire designers and the public, enhance professional development, and make powerful tools and resources accessible to all.

Our Chapters



Alaska	65	Indianapolis	244	Portland	214
Arizona	343	International	584	Raleigh	281
Asheville	67	Iowa	83	Reno-Tahoe	39
Atlanta	509	Jacksonville	129	Rhode Island	135
Austin	514	Kansas City	502	Richmond	144
Baltimore	231	Knoxville	19	Salt Lake City	13
Birmingham	82	Las Vegas	73	San Antonio	116
Blue Ridge	49	Los Angeles	793	San Diego	296
Boston	625	Louisville	146	San Francisco	933
Brand Central	10	Maine	64	Seattle	445
Central Coast	43	Memphis	72	South Carolina	91
Charlotte	221	Miami	173	South Dakota	31
Chicago	1069	Minnesota	776	St. Louis	252
Cincinnati	227	Mobile	63	Tallahassee	61
Cleveland	224	Nashville	155	Tampa Bay	132
Colorado	381	Nebraska	214	Toledo	65
Connecticut	179	New Mexico	42	Triad NC	86
Dallas-Ft. Worth	361	New Orleans	90	Upstate-NY	191
Detroit	285	New York	2267	Vermont	112
El Paso	40	NW Arkansas	197	Washington DC	1189
Gainesville	53	Oklahoma	82	West Michigan	283
Hampton Roads	86	Orange County	148	West-Texas	39
Honolulu	64	Orlando	178	Wichita	63
Houston	436	Philadelphia	538	Wisconsin	173
Idaho	24	Pittsburgh	309		

Board of Directors

AIGA National Board of Directors

Serving July 1, 2019 – June 30, 2020



Dana Arnett,
President



Ashleigh Axios,
President Elect



Terry Marks,
Treasurer



Helen Armstrong



Lisa Babb



Sarah Brooks



Antionette Carroll



Sara Frisk



Richard Hollant



Marty Maxwell Lane



Jamie Myrold



Christine Taylor



Richard Ting



Hugh Weber



Forest Young



Andy Rich,
Presidents Council Chair

Find more information about the role of the National Board
at <https://www.aiga.org/board-of-directors>

Financials

At a Glance

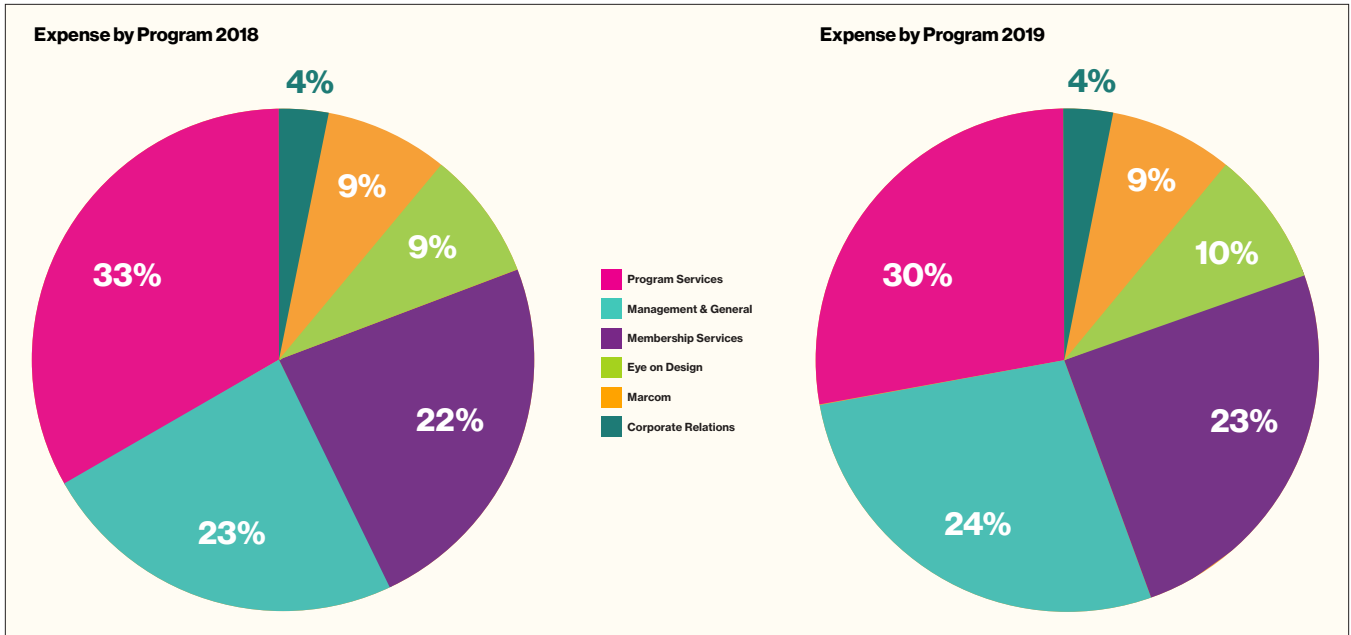
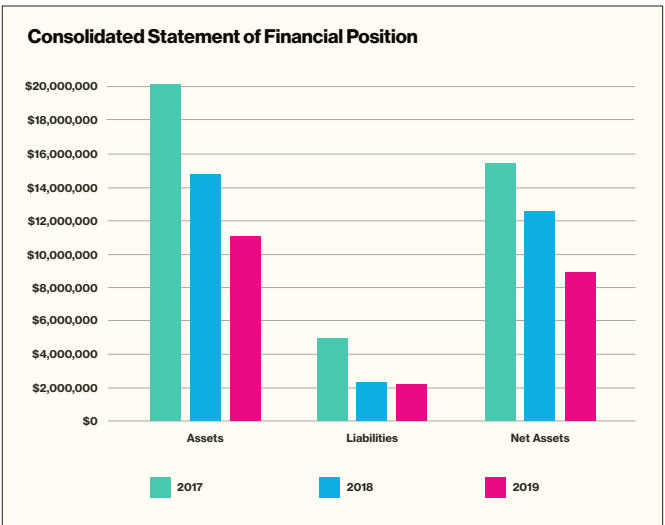
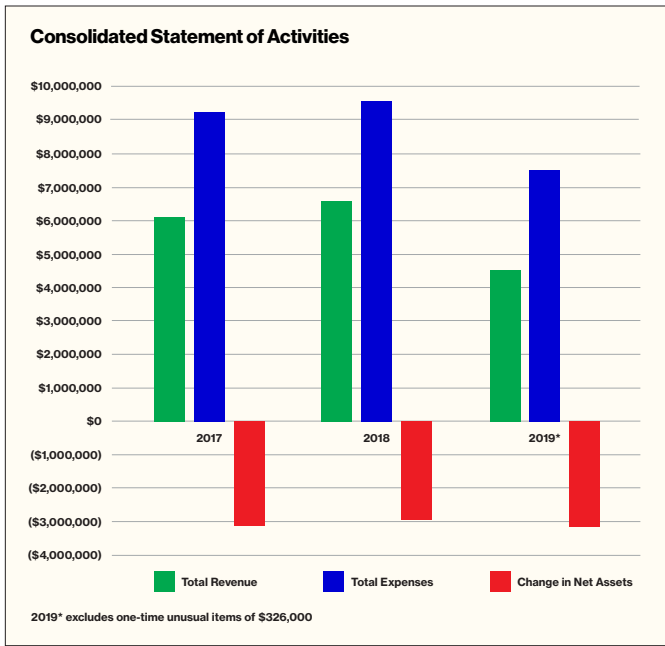
Over the past 18 months, the Board and our national team have been focused on correcting pressing issues regarding our organizational model—making immediate leadership adjustments, strategically aligning our operating structure and investments, and implementing essential governance and community support structures.

Over this time period, we've reduced our deficit spending by approximately \$1.9 million dollars, taken a portion of our staff remote, and conducted on-the-ground chapter engagement and research to better understand our problems in support of sharpening our focus on the right opportunities.

Core to this transformation is the 7-point action plan:

- 1 Implementation of a more efficient national operating structure
- 2 Realignment and streamlining our staff structure including exiting our national headquarters
- 3 Implementation of Board and chapter reforms that set the stage for the appointment of a new executive director and a renewed path forward for our task forces
- 4 Dedication to financial transparency and reporting
- 5 Purpose-driven governance and financial planning at the National Board level (36 month deficit reduction and balanced budget plan)
- 6 Installation of new best practices that will help us conduct business better
- 7 Engaging our chapters in the co-design of a new community driven vision

There's still work to do, but we're showing steady progress and delivering on these priorities and others.



You can also view [AIGA's 990](#) on Guidestar.

From the Executive Director

The last few months have been intense, revealing, and informative. We are in a period of discovery and planning, and while most annual reports tend to recap the previous year, this one will take a new approach incorporating some future planning too. I believe it is more important than ever to share thoughts on how we, as a community, are building AIGA's future—a future that will emerge as both productive and inspiring.

Our goals remain centered on our mission with a strong focus on meaningful impact for our membership, chapter network, and design professionals at-large.

In the following pages, we'll summarize 2019 highlights around conferences, awards, and initiatives, but I also want to share our plans for the remainder of 2020 and the work that will continue into 2021.

Membership is the central element at the heart of our professional community. Our objective is to rebuild a more rational approach to membership dues, creating a more sustainable financial model. We are expanding our leadership in this functional area to fill a critical void in our organization—this will strengthen our use and understanding of data and member needs so we can make informed decisions that benefit our entire community.

We are planning to develop a more comprehensive and representative content strategy that cultivates, curates, and distributes professional content from and for the design professional community. Our content strategy will be informed by subject matter expertise, journalistic practices, and creative inspiration to better engage and support our broad design audience universe.

We plan to build a digital learning platform and professional development strategy for the AIGA community and design profession at-large. The initial learning management system launch is slated for the fall of 2020 and will serve as a knowledge resource and learning hub with multiple format courses. The technology platform is secured and content is being created.

In closing, it's important to note that in addition to the programming work that is underway, we're also focused on building and funding key initiatives which include our Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Taskforce and the Design Educators Community. We will be raising awareness and participating in purposeful dialogues and activities to engage and learn. We are committed to diligently and humbly working to build a new future that empowers our community to make positive and lasting change.

Bennie Johnson

Bennie F. Johnson
AIGA Executive Director



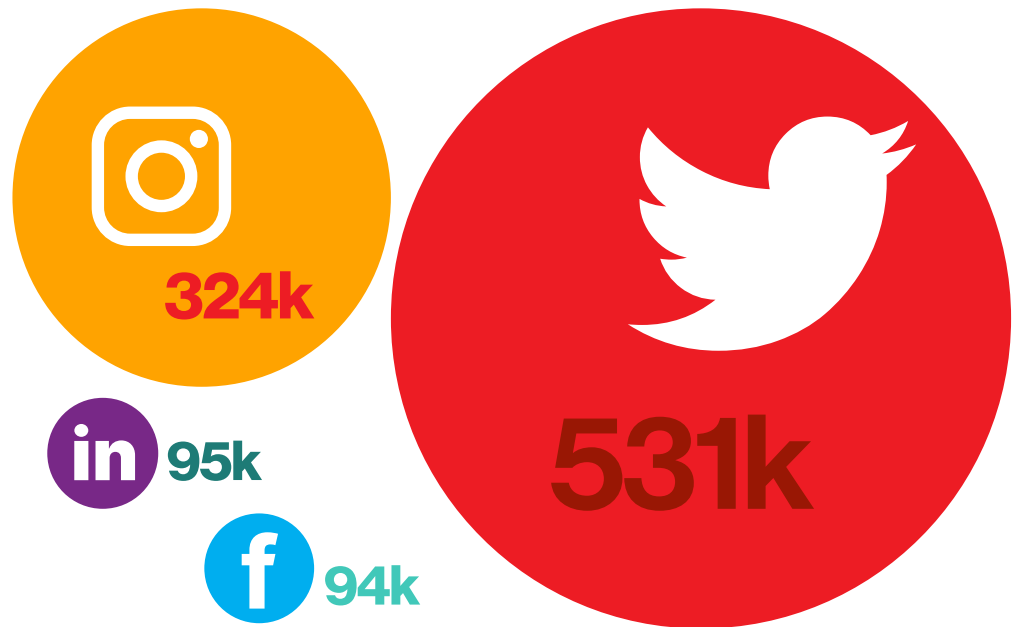
AIGA Year in Review

Membership

In the last year, we transitioned from Protech to a new Salesforce AMS database, Fonteva, to make the user experience more accessible. While we cannot deny there were some hiccups along the way, we feel this has improved the overall function of my.aiga.org. Due to the change in database, we don't have a direct year-to-year comparison to share at the completion of this report. That being said, our community continues to grow. We are seeing nonmember and member engagement on social media, event attendance, competitions, partnerships, and participation with our [Design Futures podcast](#), as well as with the [AIGA Commitment to Community resource hub](#). We are continuing to look at ways to leverage our new platform and create a better member experience, increase engagement with the community, and increase membership.

2019 AIGA Social Media Followers

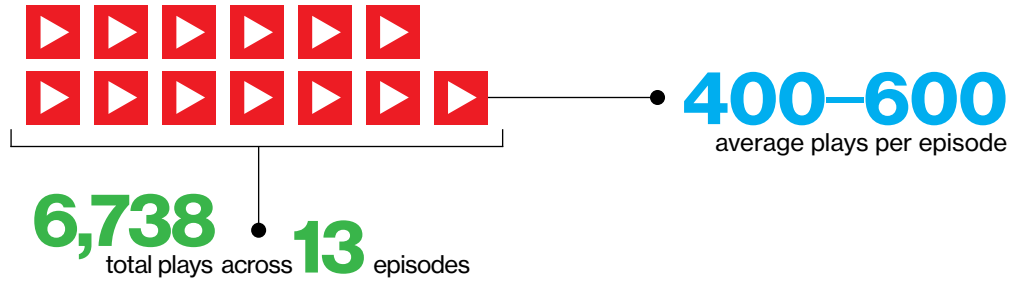
As of January 2020



Podcast Launch

In 2019, the [Design Future Now](#) podcast was launched. AIGA's design education manager, Lee-Sean Huang, explores questions about how design is changing as a discipline and profession, and how we face these opportunities as a community

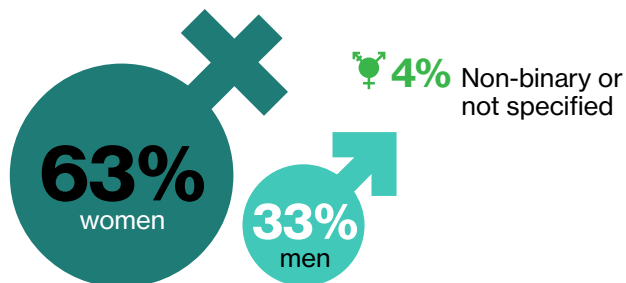
Season 1: Ran from December 2019 through May 2020. Total plays as of July 1, 2020.



Segments by Age:

23–27 year olds: 34%
28–34 year olds: 26%
35–44 year olds: 23%

Note: that the age bands are not evenly distributed, but that is just a quirk of how *Spotify* (the parent company of our podcast host, Anchor.fm) reports their stats.



AIGA Eye on Design

AIGA *Eye on Design*, the magazine of AIGA, reports on design community issues and highlights exciting designers and design.

Left to Right:

Eye on Design #4: Worth

Eye on Design #5: Distraction

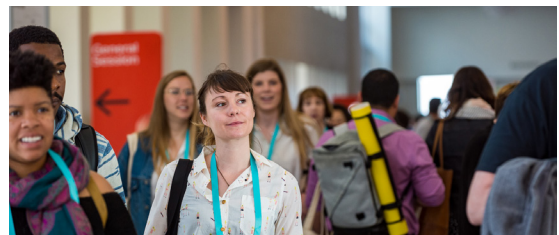
Eye on Design #6: Utopias



- » More than 1,000,000 unique visits to eyeondesign.aiga.org
- » Published three new print magazines
- » Sent 100 newsletters to our 125,000 subscribers
- » More than 500,000 followers on Instagram
- » *Design Census*: 10,000 responses

AIGA Conference and Events

2019 Design Conference. Held April 4–6 in Pasadena, California, with more than 1,400 individuals attending AIGA’s Design Conference to listen and engage with 83 speakers on topics ranging from ethical AI to why Comic Sans is actually a good typeface!





2019 Leadership Retreat. Sixty-four chapters joined AIGA in Atlanta, Georgia August 23–24 to develop and share chapter leadership skills. Topics ranged from:

- » *Influence:* mentorship & coaching, collaboration, motivating people, persuasion, and relationship building
- » *Operations:* finance & budgets, governance, sustainability, tools and resources, and internal & corporate communications
- » *Vision and Strategy:* strategic perspective & alignment, facilitating design thinking, metrics, analysis, benchmarking, and planning for the future

Awards

AIGA Medal. THE AIGA MEDAL—the most distinguished honor in the profession of communication design—has been awarded since 1920 to individuals in recognition of their exceptional achievements to the advancement of the field of design as a respected craft, strategic advantage, and vital cultural force. Medals have been awarded to individuals who have set standards of excellence over a lifetime of work or have made individual contributions to innovation within the practice of design.

In 2019, AIGA awarded three Medals to the following individuals:

ALEXANDER GIRARD (POSTHUMOUS)

<https://www.aiga.org/medalist-alexander-girard>

Note: the long edit by Dress Code for AIGA and Herman Miller was a nominee in the *Vimeo Festival Awards*. The AIGA essay and video are included in the exhibition, *Alexander Girard: A Designer's Universe*.



GEOFF MCFETRIDGE

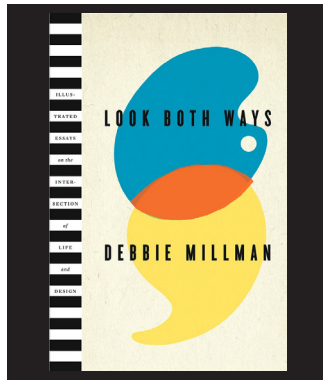
<https://www.aiga.org/medalist-geoff-mcfetridge>

Note: This video was selected as a Vimeo Staff Pick.



DEBBIE MILLMAN

<https://www.aiga.org/medalist-debbie-millman>



AIGA Corporate Leadership Award. Established in 1980, the AIGA Corporate Leadership Award recognizes the role of perceptive and forward-thinking organizations that have been instrumental in the advancement of design by applying the highest standards as a matter of practice and policy. In 2019, the AIGA Corporate Leadership Award was presented to Microsoft for leading the way around designing for inclusion, and for its philanthropic and employee-focused practices. Albert Shum and Tim Allen accepted the award on behalf of Microsoft.

Steven Heller Prize for Cultural Commentary. Established in 2017, the annual Steven Heller Prize for Cultural Commentary spotlights individuals who best exemplify the tradition of prolific writing and boundless curiosity established by Steven Heller—who has contributed and inspired engaging commentary about design and culture for the past three decades. This award celebrates critical thinking about design and the profession, and encourages development in the next generation of design voices through a variety of media such as book authors, editors, critics, reporters, copywriters, bloggers, podcasters, radio/video content creators, or filmmakers.

In 2019, the Steven Heller Prize for Cultural Commentary was awarded to two individuals:

ALEXANDRA LANGE
ELLEN MCGIRT

Scholarships

AIGA Worldstudio Scholarships. In 2019, 333 applications were received and 16 awards were granted to applicants whose work focuses on social, environmental, and cultural impact in three categories: Illustration, Photography, and Graphic Design.

- » Nine AIGA Worldstudio Scholarships, including two chapter AIGA Design Continuum Awards (range: \$2,500–\$5,000)
- » Seven AIGA Worldstudio honorable mentions (\$500 each)
- » Total: \$30,000
- » [Join the movement](#) #AIGATogether campaign raised \$28,295 for 2020 scholarships

Competitions

50 Books | 50 Covers. This survey of book design represents perhaps the longest-standing legacy in American graphic design. Beginning in 1923, the *Fifty Books of the Year* competition was a yearly mainstay of AIGA. As dust jackets became more common, covers were added to the competition. This time-honored competition aims to identify the 50 best-designed books and book covers. The February 2019 deadline yielded 503 entries (246 entrants total). [Winners of the 50 Books | 50 Covers of 2018.](#)



AIGA Design Census + Research and Insights

In 2019, 9,429 people participated in the Design Census. The census aims to uncover insights through data, leading to deeper and more informed conversations about where the design industry is now and where it's headed.

The research approach in 2020 and 2021 will continue to research and create an ongoing and open conversation with the design community through the use of Pulse Checks and focus groups. The insights gained will be used to inform member needs and allow AIGA to build new offerings and services for the community as a whole. Finally, this new approach to research will help our community to create greater awareness of the value and impact of design, enhance professional development and learning, and create content and resources for the broader design community.

Design Jobs

Since 2004, AIGA Design Jobs has successfully matched talented candidates with tens of thousands of jobs from firms, agencies and companies across the U.S., including Amazon, Bloomberg, Facebook, Herman Miller, IDEO, Interbrand, MTV Networks and Nokia. This exclusive job board is the first place AIGA members turn to find their next opportunity, and the premier place for employers seeking the most qualified designers. Job listings are displayed for 45 days and may be featured on [aiga.org](#), on local AIGA chapter websites, and in AIGA social media channels. Between October 2018 and September 2019, 1,500 jobs were shared on AIGA's Design Jobs, bringing in over \$130,000 in revenue.