

NeoCon®

NEOCON ANNOUNCES POWERFUL AND TIMELY EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMMING

Top Experts and Innovators Will Explore the Future of Work and Beyond Through the Lens of Sustainability, Diversity, Technology and More

(Chicago, IL - April 4, 2023) NeoCon is thrilled to share its robust lineup of featured presentations, virtual and on-site CEU programs, workshops and tours for this year's edition, June 12-14 at THE MART in Chicago. A dynamic complement to the show's inspirational daily keynote presentations, the various sessions allow attendees to take deeper dives into a wide range of topics and gain insightful perspectives and strategies for professional advancement. Registration for all sessions is now live on NeoCon's website.

Led by industry thought-leaders from diverse backgrounds, seven afternoon "featured presentations" will explore topics ranging from rethinking the concept of occupancy in an evolved work landscape, to the power of design to be a force for good when it comes to social justice. More than 50 virtual and on-site CEU-accredited programs and hands-on workshops will feature speakers from leading design associations, universities, architecture firms, manufacturers, and top media outlets, as well as experts in emerging technology, sustainable building, and inclusive workplace culture. These presentations and panels will offer lively discussions and insight into evolving industry topics, including Workplace, Sustainability, Healthcare, Technology, Wellness, Hospitality, DEI, Public Space, and Facilities Management.

"We are thrilled with our exceptional roster of speakers and educational sessions for 2023," comments Allison Kearns, Director of Programming for NeoCon. "This year's range of topics reflects the most important and relevant issues impacting our industry today. Whether it is prioritizing diversity in the workplace, utilizing and exploring innovations in emerging technology, or engaging in thoughtful planning around sustainable design practices, this year's programming will bring important conversations to the fore."

Below is a selection of programming highlights. The NeoCon Programming Hub, the show's digital portal, will host virtual streaming of these featured presentations and the full lineup of CEU-accredited programs, as well the daily keynote presentations. For the full NeoCon 2023 programming listing, head to neocon.com.

Monday, June 12, 2023

- **On-Site CEU: From Surveys to Solutions – the Impetus Behind Good Design**

9:00 AM CDT

Presenters: Lizzie Gerock, Gresham Smith, Jack Weber, Gresham Smith, and Lauren Modelski, Workplace Surveys and Solutions

As the need for workplace strategy over the past few years has expanded, so does the case for aligning client culture, business and design. In this 1-hour CEU, a case study of an organization returning to the office after the pandemic will be presented. A 6-survey series was conducted with emphasis on employee emotions, connection, and satisfaction over a 4-month period. Additional perspectives from the audience will be actively sought throughout and engaged to understand the complex array of issues at play. Recent national studies will be provided as context, and the format will shift to examining the survey results constructively to build the case for objective design.

- **Featured Presentation: BIFMA + IFMA: Return to Occupancy: New Paradigms**

1:30 PM CDT

Moderator: Kate Davis, HKS

Panelists: Matthew Negron, Dauphin Americas, and Richard Oliver, 9to5 Seating (additional panelists TBA)

The return to occupancy creates an opportunity to reset previous workplace strategies and expectations with new approaches to address the paradigm shift. These conversations provide new opportunities to include additional stakeholders early in the process to respond to growing requirements around sustainability, wellbeing, and technology; themes that are driving the new evolution of the built environment. New research done by the International Facilities Management Association (IFMA) exploring how people interact with space will be discussed by a panel of experts. The concept of occupancy in all its dimensions is of paramount interest to those providing product solutions to meet user needs in the built environment and those who manage assets related to all types of spaces.

- **Featured Presentation: Design Your World with IIDA**

3:00 PM CDT

Presenter: Cheryl Durst, IIDA

Join IIDA and Cheryl Durst, Executive Vice President and CEO for a discussion and screening of short films featuring the IIDA Design Your World program—an education initiative designed to provide early exposure to architecture and interior design careers for diverse high-schoolers, returning for a third session this summer and continuing its national expansion with programs in Chicago, Miami

and now St. Louis. The programs provide opportunities and pathways for students that may otherwise not be exposed to careers in design, with the goal of promoting equity and diversity in the industry. Join firm partner Gensler, supporting Chicago and Miami, along with manufacturer sponsors, OFS, 3form, Mannington Commercial, Configura, DIRTT, and partners Fresh Artists, Interiors and Sources, IIDA So. Florida, IIDA Gateway Chapter, Black Architects in the Making (BAM), and FIU in supporting the program.

Tuesday, June 13, 2023

- **Featured Presentation: Diversity in Design: The Time for Change is Now
11:30 AM CDT**

Moderator: Joseph Cephas, Novità Communications

Panelists: Angelita Scott, International WELL Building Institute Maya Bird-Murphy, Chicago Mobile Makers and Ronnie Belizaire, JLL

The Time for Change Is Now. This powerful panel examines the role design plays in solving social justice issues as well as the lack of diversity and representation in the profession. Novità Senior Vice President Joseph Cephas hosts the panel alongside black design industry leaders: Angelita Scott, Ph.D. (Director and Community Concept Lead for the WELL Building Standard and WELL Equity Lead at the International WELL Building Institute), Maya Bird-Murphy (founder, Chicago Mobile Makers), and Ronnie Belizaire, IIDA (Vice President, JLL). The discussion examines the problems facing African Americans both in society and in the design industry, including institutional racism and discrimination, reviews changes made in recent years, and focuses on a path toward equity.

- **On-Site CEU: How to Connect with the Next Generation of Designer: Helping You Stay Ahead as Gen Z Influences Change in the Interiors Industry**

11:00 AM CDT

Presenters: Amanda Schneider, ThinkLab, Jeanette Kim, Perkins + Will, Audrey Koehn, DLR Group, and Isabel Das, Gensler

Explore groundbreaking new research that will change the way you think about the future of the interiors industry. Gen Z is set to make up 27% of the workforce by 2025, and the ripple effect of their impact on the industry will be felt by all generations. Discover the latest insights from top A&D firms as we reveal the results of ThinkLab's latest Hackathon. Over the past 6 months, the brightest minds in the industry have been working to challenge outdated norms and identify the most impactful ways to CONNECT with the next generation of designers. Join us for a panel-style presentation and gain a unique perspective

on the shifts and impacts to come. Don't miss out on this game-changing research!

- **On-Site Workshop: Decolonizing the Design Process: A Community Workshop for a New Era of Creativity**

1:00 PM CDT

Presenter: Rhea Vaflor, Hickok Cole

An interactive workshop for design professionals who are interested in cultivating an intentional and joyful design process dedicated to equity and inclusion. The workshop features an exploration of conventional design processes and how they no longer serve our societal or personal needs. Attendees will learn about a project in Tulsa, OK for the Greenwood neighborhood, participate in self-inquiry exercises to catalyze their own paths, and join small group breakouts for community building and share insights via Mentimeter. The workshop is for everyone regardless of where they are in their design journeys.

- **Featured Presentation: BIFMA + IFI: ID2 – The Interdependency of Industrial Design and Interior Design**

1:30 PM CDT

Moderator: Carl Magnusson

Panelists: Alessandro Munge, Studio Munge, Andre Sandifer, Sandifer Studio, and Julie Michiels, SOM

This invited panel will bring together four esteemed international professionals to explore the interdependencies between the spaces we inhabit and the products that bring them to life. The conversation will be moderated by one of the legends of design, Carl Magnusson, acclaimed industrial designer who has dedicated his career to product innovation for human environments. You won't want to miss this dynamic session hosted by BIFMA and IFI, two organizations devoted to advancing the built environment.

- **Featured Presentation: ASID: Inspiration for Impact**

3:00 PM CDT

Moderator: Mark Wilson, Fast Company

Panelists: George Bandy, Fiber Industries, Sequoyah Hunter-Cuyjet, Determined by Design, Khoi Vo, American Society of Interior Designers and Jon Strassner, American Society of Interior Designers

ASID believes that design has the power to impact lives, and the spaces we create in the built environment work best when they are accessible, inclusive and sustainable. There is an intrinsic connection between sustainable design and social equity. Whether we are talking about fence line communities struggling to

thrive against challenging toxic and unsustainable conditions or access to health and wellbeing, the design profession can create spaces that have the capacity to regenerate our environments and rejuvenate our health and wellness. Join Khoi Vo, ASID CEO, Jon Strassner, ASID CSO, George Bandy, President and CSO of Fiber Industries and Sequoyah Hunter-Cuyjet, Vice President + Advocate for Design Equity at Determined by Design, in a panel discussion moderated by Mark Wilson, Global Design Editor of Fast Company, to address the social equity and sustainability challenges that affect the interior design profession.

Wednesday, June 14, 2023

- **Featured Presentation: Designing a Better Chicago: Panel Discussion**

11:30 AM CDT

Presenter: Quilen Blackwell, Chicago Eco House & 2022 Grantee

Designing a Better Chicago shines a light on our city's extraordinary design legacy — the local talent, assets and community that have long supported civic good through design. Launched in 2020 with a Design Impact grant program, this initiative showcases individuals and organizations, public art and programs across the city, inviting residents and visitors to consider the many ways design improves civic life. Join the new 2023 grant winners (yet to be announced) as they discuss their work, the impact they are making on Chicago, and lessons they have learned along the way. This conversation will be moderated by Quilen Blackwell, president of Chicago Eco House and the 2022 Designing a Better Chicago grantee.

- **Workshop: BRAND New You: A Personal Branding Workshop for Emerging Professionals**

11:30 AM CDT

Presenter: Aaron Estabrook, OFS

"Brand New You" is a personal branding workshop designed specifically for emerging professionals who want to establish a strong and memorable personal brand. In today's competitive job market, it's more important than ever to stand out and make a lasting impression on potential employers and clients. Through interactive exercises and group discussions, this workshop will guide participants through the process of identifying their unique strengths, values, and goals, and help them create a personal brand that authentically reflects who they are and what they want to achieve in their careers. Participants will learn how to communicate their personal brand effectively through social media, in-person, and networking opportunities. By the end of the workshop, participants will have the tools and confidence they need to present themselves as a "brand new" and highly visible candidate in the design industry.

Virtual Programs

- **Virtual CEU: A Diamond in the Rough: A Case for Adaptive Re-Use**

Presenters: Leah Bauer, Gensler, and Ed Palushock, Gensler

See the possibility of adaptive reuse to research environments. This interactive discussion will challenge the possibilities for the conversion of unexpected building types into workplace and research environments while prioritizing planet impact and design innovation. Our knowledge sharing of two different West Coast project case studies have pushed boundaries to expand thinking, while sharing the opportunities and challenges. The presenters will inform the audience of current metrics, statistics and data around adaptive reuse, carbon reduction impacts and evaluation. Leading the audience through a series of interactive queries, the presenters will lead a discussion around the possibilities and limitations for repurposing assets in unexpected ways. The presenters will share case studies for various adaptive reuse scenarios and the outcomes from these studies.

- **Virtual CEU: Human-Centric Design in a Digital World: From Transactional to Transformational**

Presenters: Bevan Bloemendaa, NELSON Worldwide, and Anne Gibson, NELSON Worldwide

The widespread shift to remote offices coincides with a significant uptick in digital experiences in all aspects of our life, from meals delivered via apps to self-checkout at grocery stores and endless Zoom calls at work. The barrage of digital screens that inhabit our “always connected” world today have forever transformed the way we communicate, bringing us closer together in many ways but also marginalizing some who feel isolated, unseen, or unheard. At the end of the day, humans need humans to feel human. This session will explore how technology and the seamless blending of physical and digital touchpoints in the built environment can be leveraged to bring life to human-to-human connections at the intersection of design, technology, and storytelling.

- **Virtual CEU: Branded Interiors and Storytelling**

Presenters: Hayes Slade, Slade Architecture, and James Slade, Slade Architecture

Brands are communicated through stories. We have designed successful interiors that tell unique and powerful brand stories from the first moment of the experience all the way through to the touchpoints and materials. We will illustrate and analyze retail and hospitality case studies of award-winning interior designs that create immersive and unique branded environments which deliver a strong brand narrative for visitors. Projects: Barbie Shanghai flagship for Mattel, Virgin Atlantic Upper Class Clubhouses at JFK, Newark and LAX Airports, and Flightclub New York and LA locations. Each of these projects articulates the

brand promise and tells the story with a visceral and intuitive visitor connection. Each of these projects was awarded Best-of-Year Design Award from Interior Design Magazine as well other national and international awards.

- **Virtual CEU: Cracking the Code of Commercial Interiors in Mass Timber Buildings: How Interior Design Influences and Reacts to Mass Timber Structures for Longevity and Reduced Carbon Impact**

Presenters: Matthew Wasylciw, SOM, and Elissa Gee, SOM

A case study in mass timber design to explore how workplace interiors can support and advance sustainability goals. Beyond the renewable nature and visceral appreciation of wood these buildings offer, the material properties expose design opportunities unique to the structure unlike more common steel and concrete offices. This session identifies the conditions to anticipate and how to develop a lasting solution. With restrained material use, optimized energy systems, and infrastructure strategies for future changes, this facility is designed to support a government organization striving to build by example. In addition to targeting LEED Platinum certification, upon completion in 2023, the five-story, 207,000 square foot County Office Building in Northern California will be the first net-zero-energy civic building constructed with mass timber in the country.

- **Virtual CEU: Learning Lessons from the Hospitality Sector in the Return-to-Office Movement**

Presenter: Sara Duffy, Stonehill Taylor

Stonehill Taylor is a leading hospitality-focused architecture and interior design firm. Sara Duffy, Principal of the firm's Interiors Division, leads projects from the design of the new Raffles Boston Back Bay opening this spring to the renovation of the public spaces of one of NYC's oldest operating hotels, the Algonquin, to the guest room and public-space interior design of the iconic TWA Hotel at JFK Airport. These properties and others appeal to the identity of their clientele, inspiring a loyalty among their consumer base that defies expectations. Sara Duffy will expand on the design tips and tricks that cultivate brand loyalty among hotel-goers to convey how office designers can tap into that magic in their own work.

NeoCon 2023 [registration](#) is currently open and is free for all attendees. Stay tuned for more details on programming, exhibitor updates, product trends, show highlights and more.

For showroom, exhibitor, and general NeoCon news, images, and real-time information, follow NeoCon on: [Facebook \(@NeoConShows\)](#), [Twitter \(@NeoCon_Shows\)](#), [Instagram \(@NeoCon_Shows\)](#), and [LinkedIn \(@NeoCon-Shows\)](#).

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About NeoCon: NeoCon is the world's leading platform and most important event for the commercial interiors industry, held each year at THE MART in Chicago. Since launching in 1969, NeoCon has served as the annual gathering place for the commercial design world's manufacturers, dealers, architects, designers, end-users, design organizations and media. The three-day event showcases game-changing products and services from close to 500 leading and emerging companies—providing unparalleled access to the latest and most innovative solutions. A robust educational program of keynote presentations and CEU sessions offers world-class expertise and insight about today's most relevant topics as well as the future of commercial design.

www.neocon.com

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About THE MART: THE MART (formerly The Merchandise Mart), located in the center of the sought-after River North submarket, is interwoven into the fabric of Chicago as an innovator in business, technology, culture, art, media and more. It is one of the world's leading commercial buildings, wholesale design centers and the preeminent international business location in Chicago. Encompassing 4.2 million gross square feet, THE MART spans two city blocks, rises 25 stories, and is visited by an average of 30,000 people each business day and nearly 10 million people annually. Offering continuous innovation and creativity from leading manufacturers and design forward showrooms, THE MART serves as the home to Chicago's most creative and technologically innovative companies.