

**Q&A with IDC President, Ian Rolston**  
**Jan. 13, 2022, President's Webinar**

**Q1: Could IDC provide CEU's that are more technology based such as SketchUp and Autocad updates?**

A: We are currently taking a look at the CEUs that we are offering, and we are thinking of some innovative ways to perhaps bundle some areas of interest that really speak to some of the needs that the membership has been expressing. So, look forward to some more information on that, but I think technology is key to the work that we are doing. It is increasingly becoming a tool that we must use and acknowledge and make good use of in the development and delivery of our work.

**Q2: Is IDC working with the National Building Code (NBC) to change their wording across Canada to support the provinces working towards practice act?**

A: To help affect change, IDC is working on getting members across the country to consider joining NBC committees, along with working with the federal government to get interior design recognized in the Request for Proposal (RFP) process, which will help members in working with their provincial associations.

IDC will pull together a comprehensive package of information to share with members of all the IDC initiatives that we are working on and open it up to members for input on those to see if there are gaps or items that we are missing in our areas that we should be more focused on. Look out for more engagement around that topic.

**Q3: Can IDC look to provide NBC CEU's or offer discount on those already out there like what Muniak Enterprises offers?**

A: It's important that we are focusing very strategically on the objectives that we've set out for this year. They're quite robust. We want to make sure that there's an alignment that is validated to ensure that we're putting the best of our resources towards meeting those needs that you, the members, are bringing forth.

**Q4: How can we integrate universal design into practice and what's the best way to deal with other trade associations?**

A: There are good resources around universal design and inclusive design, such as the Inclusive Design Research Center at OCAD University. IDC can put together some more information such as books or

professional firms that are focused on this type of work that you can engage with and get more information from.

The best way to do this work is in the very early stages in project planning so it becomes a strategic objective within the work that you're doing and then aligning with groups and professionals to apply resources, to those strategies to make those things happen.

We are looking at how to better engage associations that are connected to the practice of interior design, like trade associations. There's a considerable focus on that this year to make sure that we are in alignment with other organizations that may have an impact on our industry more broadly.

**Q5: In keeping with CEU enhancements, would IDC consider doing a webinar on writing the BCIN exam (what's required, possibly a Step program...etc.)?**

A: This may require some engagement with our provincial associations' representatives, who understand those details better. We are looking to make sure that we're offering you the support that you need to engage in the programs and CEUs and professional advancement. We are going to look at this holistically to understand what the breadth of the needs are and come back to you with a plan to share. This is why your engagement is so important.

**Q6: IDC has hosted CEU's about insurance requirements for designers. Have you ever considered having a CEU for those designers that are looking to retire and close out firms? They require a different approach to insurance and other mitigations for the professional liabilities that carry on for several years. Might be a panel of professionals?**

A: That is key in how we are going to look at this. There are generational considerations across our industry, and we want to make sure that we're servicing the diversity – of all our members. We are going to consider how we can meet the needs that you express in a way that is efficient for you, the members. Please continue to share this type of information with us because we are committed to figuring out how to program these types of topics in a manner that is useful and meaningful for you.

**Q7: Since much of our design success stories are Ontario-centric - understandable since it is the most highly populated, can IDC provide interior design success stories or spotlights on under-represented areas of Canada?**

A: Yes, but we need your help to do that. We need your engagement to share some of these stories. We are looking very closely this year at sharing stories about the uniqueness of Canadian design across the country. We're looking for your engagement to do that in a way that is meaningful and compelling because we know that there is great design happening across the country. So let us know. I'm hoping that the communication channels are going to be blowing up with introductions and information specific to various communities in areas across the country that we can connect with and really begin to call and create and curate some of these stories that we want to absolutely share with our members and with the industry at large.

**Q8: Are the 2022 goals shown on the website for members to see?**

A: Yes, they are found on the Advocacy page of IDC's website under the Strategic Plan tab. We spent a great deal of time in 2021 really honing the strategic objectives. What we are doing now is aligning with a few key pieces that help to push those objectives forward in meaningful and practical ways through the course of this year. We will have a schedule of elements and events that are going to be directly connected to those strategic objectives. We need a little more time to fine-tune them and then we will share that with the members for an opportunity to engage and to share your thoughts.

**Q9: ARIDO had asked for input on permit denials for BCIN members in Ontario which seems to happen too often. Is the IDC aware of this and can/will the IDC be able to assist in this?**

A: ARIDO and IDC have discussed efforts to address the unfairness of permit denial in Ontario. As this is a provincial matter, it is agreed that ARIDO will continue to exercise its authority as the provincial regulatory body for interior design in Ontario to address this matter with provincial government directly.

IDC recently attended a CIDRAC meeting to engage with all provincial interior design bodies across Canada to discuss opportunities for IDC and the Provinces to collaborate. It has been agreed that advocating for improvement to Procurement practices across Canada where interior designers are recognized and valued for their contribution to the built environment. In particular, IDC and the provincial bodies, including ARIDO, will be working together over the next year to identify a strategy to advocate on this important matter together.

**Q10: Can we have a discussion on what it means to be an interior designer in Canada, as opposed to an interior designer elsewhere in the world. Is there a difference (should there be)?**

A: I believe that we are uniquely positioned to really distill information and represented in a real sort of diverse and dynamic way that is uniquely Canadian. There is a human and conservative approach to design that I think presents itself as an undertone through the work that we do and just even how it changes across the spectrum of practice within the country. I don't necessarily believe that it must be a style, but I think that our approach to looking at design issues, broadly, really enables us to distill information differently that informs our design delivery. It would be great to catalog how that is expressed across the country in various communities and perspectives. Even the languages that we use to describe various aspect of design, how that translates across our country would be fascinating to capture. I would love to engage in an exercise like that. It's important to tell these stories because I think we have so much to offer as a design community. The world needs more Canada. I hope we have an opportunity this year to do our part to share that with the world.

**Q11: How can we address mental health/burnout in interior design, how can we negotiate salary, starting your own business/ freelancing?**

A: This is key to how we do design and come out alive at the end of it. We know as practitioners how to do this job. At any level it takes a great deal of focus, passion, and skill and that can take a toll to meet the needs and targets of clients. If you're a sole practitioner or part of larger or midsize teams, it is a challenge. We need to understand and recognize that the way we've practiced design has been a bit of an issue for some practitioners. We are looking at ways that we can share information. At our Symposium last year, we began to talk about how wellness can be applied to design and in the way that we're delivering our work. This is something that we're focused on and we'll share some more information on as well as how we are delivering design and the best ways to do that.

**Q12: To what extent do trends and new styles affect the interior designer's work? How do trends affect color and form choices?**

A: Trends have an impact on design work, but I think it is our professional obligation to ensure that we are translating those trends into our projects in ways that are meaningful. It's for us as practitioners to really set trends in terms of whether the design is really showing up in physical environment because everything that is happening in our world, life itself, is happening in the spaces that we create. We have a great deal of impact on how elements and items are showing up and supporting our living, working, playing, resting, and all aspects of human interaction.

I think we need to expand colour choices in a manner that's impacting human responses as well as understanding. Let's ask what some of the cultural considerations are that are impacting colour, so there's more nuance to that question.