

Asilomar Institute Goals 2004 (Survey Results)

In December 2003, AIfIA conducted a survey to better understand our members goals, priorities, and concerns. This document presents the results (*112 responses*). AIfIA's [board of directors](#) and [board of advisors](#) will consider these results carefully as we define our strategy and goals for 2004.

1. AIfIA supports projects that benefit the public. Some are active. Others haven't begun. To learn more, see our [Initiatives](#) page or follow the links below. Then, rate the importance of these initiatives on a scale of 1 to 5.

	Least Important			Most Important		
	1	2	3	4	5	Response Average
Research (Best Practices)	2	3	20	44	39	4.06
IA Tools	2	6	18	42	41	4.05
Promote IA to Business	4	9	22	28	48	3.96
Metrics for IA	7	5	29	37	31	3.73
IA Library (iaguide v2)	4	5	36	44	20	3.65
Educational Curriculum	7	7	37	38	20	3.52
Content Management (Workshop + Resources)	6	9	40	40	14	3.43
AIfIA Newsletter	5	17	36	34	19	3.41
Mentoring	8	22	31	38	12	3.22
IA/ (blog)	7	26	29	32	15	3.2
Translation of IA	15	25	31	23	12	2.92
Define IA (Big IA vs. Little IA)	32	26	26	18	7	2.47
Total Respondents	112					
(skipped this question)	0					

2. AIFIA provides services focused on the needs of members. To learn more, see the [web site](#) or follow the links below. Then, rate each of these initiatives on a scale of 1 to 5.

	Least Important			Most Important		Response Average
	1	2	3	4	5	
Local Groups	3	8	23	45	29	3.82
Members Discussion List	6	9	26	37	29	3.69
Job Board	8	9	29	31	31	3.63
IA Bootcamp						
(Seminars + Workshops)	3	14	24	49	16	3.58
F2F (Networking Events)	7	10	30	45	15	3.48
Member Directory	7	16	32	31	22	3.42
Certification						
(IA Skills + Knowledge)	14	16	28	27	22	3.25
Funding Program (Sponsorships)	13	25	32	24	8	2.89
Website Redesign (aifia.org)	26	41	25	8	8	2.36
Total Respondents	108					
(skipped this question)	4					

3. Which type of initiatives are most important to you?

	Response Total
Build the Practice (share tools research and best practices for IA community)	69
Explain the Value (explain importance of IA to business government education professional groups etc.)	30
Focus on Members (further develop members-only services and benefits)	5
Total Respondents	104
(skipped this question)	8

4. Please let us know your questions, concerns, and suggestions regarding AIfIA's plans for 2004 and beyond.

29 Total Respondents, 83 Skipped This Question

1. Build good relations with other professional organizations in a way that helps them see IA as multidisciplinary and that their is not a hierarchy in who has a stake is the success of the IA perspective. This means adopting a much bigger vision of what IA is and at the same time making a comfortable home for practitioners at the margin.
2. How will AIfIA fund itself moving forward? What is the business model? Where will the bulk of income come from? Are there plans to diversify the revenue stream? Is AIfIA a professional organization? What does it mean to be an institute? What will AIfIA look like in 5 years? How is AIfIA differentiated from ASIST and other membership organizations?
3. I'd like that AIfIA focus their job not only in american members. I'm from Chile and I'd like that local initiatives have repercussions in my diary job. Also I hope that papers, brochures and other documents from IA Tools initiative will be translated in other languages.
4. The role of IA in companies often falls between the cracks, particularly when dealing with the organization and publishing of information across media (cross media). I think some real life stories of how IA roles can function and LOOK within an organization would be helpful to business groups. I see a huge relationship between IA and content management, and again, I see no professional organization taking on the challenge to explain the real-world relationship between architecting information to communicate well and architecting systems for effectively managing content and publications that are cross-media and enterprise-wide. Information architecture seems like a good home to discuss the many flavors of content management, from the library-like storage of assets all the way to the metadata-driven workflows required for managing asset creation, to the architecture of living publications (like on the Web) that need to have content updated daily, etc. I feel ISOLATED here in the Northwest, but would love to carry on dialog with others about the importance of content management issues to the practice of Information Architecture.
5. 1st - Build Practice 2nd - Focus on members Would be good to have a point of view on how the mission and operations of this org differs from other large orgs who talk IA.(CHI, AIGA, etc.)

6. thanks!
7. Having been a practicing IA for over six years, I am -- I realize rather selfishly -- focused more on sharing tools, best practices and research. I've had my "spiel" for quite some time on value, so that is not very helpful to me although I realize it helps others. All in all, I think there is distinct value that this group can and will provide. It's a great group of smart people!
8. I guess I'm being selfish, since I'm already established in a job, and needing help right now to get stuff done - wanting the connection to others ideas and the virtual collaboration. That's what I need right now - that's why I picked Build the Practice.
9. I have a wealth of best practices, lessons-learned, and points of view collected through experience on large and complex enterprise portal projects for fortune 100 clients. I'd like to share some of this with the group...not sure how to be more involved. Please let me know.
10. interested in certification program; think bootcamps and certification will aid in explaining the value.
11. regarding question #3 - while I think explaining the value - the good ol' ROI argument! - is most important for me as a professional starting out in the field, the other 2 are extremely important as well - especially the 'build the practice' part. Please don' make me choose! :)
12. Selling the value of IA over and above that of the 'fluffy business analyst' held by many a UK Project Manager and Program Sponsor depends upon both building the practice *and* explaining the value of the skill set. IA will only prosper when it is seen as a serious tool delivering bottom-line benefits. As such I support AIfIA's goals fro the year ahead. In delivering a recognised / shared tool kit and assigning measurable bottom-line benefits we will be focusing our efforts on the AIfIA membership by providing the necessary ammunition to better promote IA within organisations.
13. There isn't much activity. As a virtual organization where most is done through email and what not, the groups tend to stick to people they know. There's little to no support for new people or people who work outside of major US cities. I have not decided to renew my membership because the organization does not benefit me, my work, or my interests in any way.

14. How can Aifia support (lead?) the development of IA outside english-speaking countries when the cultural context seems to have prevented that development so far?
15. I really hope we'll take our own medicine as IA's and fix our site asap. It's embarrassing to direct people to aifia.org when the site looks as it does. Remember that the site is our only "gestalt" as such. I am involved in other initiatives and I don't have the time to take part in this too. But it IS very urgent.
16. I think that standards and innovation/creativity go hand in hand. As and when the business community reach consensus on a certain set of standards, they will be able to enforce them, which allows for more innovation within an agreeable framework and subsequently a new set of standards arise.
17. though it is important to build an understanding of the issues, there is a need to greater connect with other disciplines. You also need to ensure that people get value from being a member.
18. Too much self-promotion.
19. While I have selected Build the Practice as the most important initiative to me, I find that member networking/communication/interaction to be integral to building best practices.
20. I'm still concerned with the AIFIA's lack of attention to good and appropriate writing in website content. It seems you believe your goals should be loftier than simply good writing, or that writing that is appropriate to the environment of the Web is abundant. Let me propose that it is not and that your neglect of this primary focus is a significant oversight.
21. I think AIFIA needs to start actually producing something, and not just talking. The metrics list is a perfect example of something that should've documented a pile of stuff already, instead of just talking around in circles... As someone located outside the US, the "member-focused" activities don't seem to do much for me, but the "build the practice" resources could be extremely useful.
22. will it reach its international audience, regarding projects for training, learning and work opportunities?

23. Developing a common library and set of tools for IAs to use will help further legitimize the practice to big business. If managers and VPs are constantly exposed to consistent terminology, tools and practices, they will internalize as well. Concentrating efforts to standardize IA (as much as possible) is important to me.
24. I can't emphasize enough the importance of IA to business, government, education, and other groups. We experts know that continual audience research, learning their thought patterns and needs/wants, contributes to the overall success in planning and building successful systems. Over the years, I've found that many businesses think that simply slapping a label on a bucket of unorganized information is enough for their audience...nothing is farther from the truth.
25. Consider breadth and integration with other design disciplines as the hallmark of a mature design field. Hold more interdisciplinary meetings, like the AIGA's DUX. Discover and promote where IA can be applied off the Web as well as on.
26. I would like to see more CFP (calls for participation, papers, projects, proposals) out to the membership, so AIFIA breaks out of its secret cabal mode.
27. I offered a corporate membership to IAs in my department. Their response was: why? what would it get me? From the ensuing conversation, I got the sense that AIFIA was perceived as useful for people who were actively networking (read: looking for a job) but did not provide services or benefits to IAs in practice. People thought the membership fee did more to foster AIFIA's support for the discipline of IA than it did to support them as individuals -- so providing a corporate membership was more about giving a donation to a worthy cause than it was about giving them a useful tool for their careers. I would still like to offer them a membership but would like to go back with a more succinct answer for what services AIFIA would provide them.
28. I think we need a nice balance of internally-directed and externally-direction programs. This applies to IA (AIFIA members and non-members) and to the larger business community.
29. Clearly AIFIA needs to pick a few top-priority projects and focus on completing them successfully.