



**The Merging of ASID and IIDA:
Results of a Preference Survey of IDEC Members
September 2009**

Background

Discussion about the possibility of ASID and IIDA merging their organizations into a single entity has for some time been a topic of debate. Three known initiatives from the 1990's to the present have been initiated. With regard to IDEC, this topic was the subject of focused discussion at the 2009 annual conference, which suggests it is of significant interest to IDEC members. This topic has gained further focus this month with the IIDA Board of Director's spring 2009 letter that indicates they do not intend to pursue unification at this time. Nonetheless, the spotlight on this issue has continued with three editorial articles in OfficeInsight released August 24 through September 7th, 2009.

The intersections between IDEC, ASID and IIDA are many—for example, a recent membership survey suggests that almost half of IDEC members belong to either ASID, IIDA or both organizations. Further, many IDEC members mentor ASID and/or IIDA student groups at their institutions. Finally, many members assume the responsibility as educators to nurture their students toward conscientious professional engagement that typically involves active participation in professional organizations such as ASID and IIDA.

Further, this a time of great evolution and change for the interior design profession. Challenges to licensing laws and lively discussions of professional nomenclature present hurdles to the profession as it identifies and refines its mission, identity and actions. Some interior design professionals feel a keen sense of attack from other groups, heightening the urgency of strategy regarding an answer to such organizations.

It is for these reasons that the IDEC Board sought to take the unusual step of informing the Boards and executive staff of ASID and IIDA of the IDEC educator perspective on the question of their merging. A brief online anonymous survey was initiated in mid September 2009 in order to ascertain the extent of concern about this topic and members' perceptions and preferred outcome. Multiple write-in opportunities enabled members to voice their unique opinions about this issue. This report provides a summary of both the descriptive statistics and write-in answers that were returned.

As the 2009-2010 president of IDEC, I wish to acknowledge and emphasize the value of the educator perspective on this and all matters, as education forms the primary foundation of both the present and future of the interior design profession. Therefore, this report is provided for the consideration of members and leadership of IDEC, ASID and IIDA and as a basis for further potential research.

Respectfully submitted,

Jill Pable
President, IDEC

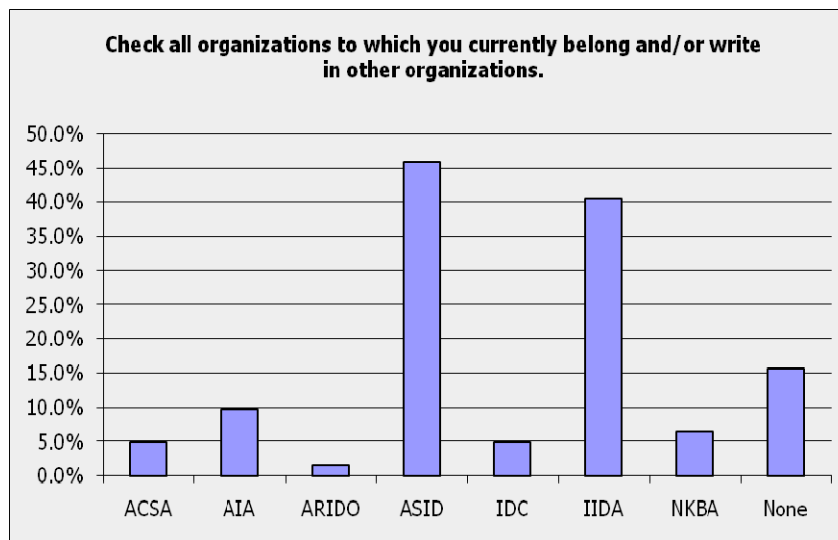
Survey Methodology and Response Rate

A 5-question online survey was distributed to all categories of members of IDEC via email on September 9, 2009. A total of 203 responses were received which represents 27% of all 746 IDEC members, a response rate well within standard parameters of acceptability for survey response rates in general.

Responses to questions

1. Check all organizations to which you currently belong and/or write in other organizations.

Of all organizations, respondents most frequently reported membership in ASID and IIDA.



Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count	Other write-in organizations (4 responses or more)
ACSA	4.9%	9	EDRA 13
AIA	9.7%	18	USGBC 13
ARIDO	1.6%	3	IES 8
ASID	45.9%	85	NEWH 5
IDC	4.9%	9	IFMA 4
IIDA	40.5%	75	
NKBA	6.5%	12	
None	15.7%	29	
Other (please specify)		84	
answered question		185	
skipped question		23	

2. If you are now or have been a member of ASID and IIDA at the same time, please briefly explain why you opted to do so, and describe any benefits you perceive from this dual membership.

72 respondents wrote in an answer to Question 2. Of these, 48 provided an answer that described their reasons for dual membership:

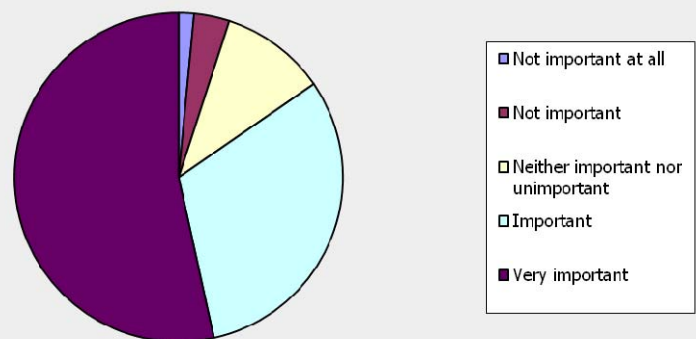
Frequency	% of total (48)	Reason
11	23%	the quality of information provided by both institutions; wanting to stay informed
10	21%	wanting to appear impartial to students (9) or clients (1)
9	19%	increased networking opportunities
6	13%	benefits their role as adviser to the joint student organization at their institution
6	13%	other reasons (unspecified)
2	4%	is a requirement of their institution (1 at request of advisory board, other not specified.)
2	4%	appreciate the diverse focus of the organizations
2	4%	important to support both

3. How important of an issue is it to you that ASID and IIDA either merge together OR elect to remain separate organizations?

Of the 202 responses to this question, 85% of respondents deemed this issue important or very important.

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Not important at all	1.5%	3
Not important	3.5%	7
Neither important nor unimportant	10.4%	21
Important	31.2%	63
Very important	53.5%	108
<i>answered question</i>		202
<i>skipped question</i>		6

How important of an issue is it to you that ASID and IIDA either merge together OR elect to remain separate organizations?



4. Which answer most accurately reflects your current preference concerning the unification of ASID and IIDA?

- I prefer ASID and IIDA to merge into a single professional organization
- I prefer ASID and IIDA to remain two separate professional organizations
- Other (please explain)

A large majority of respondents (81%) prefer that the two organizations merge into a single entity.

Which answer most accurately reflects your current preference concerning the unification of ASID and IIDA?		
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
I prefer ASID and IIDA to merge into a single professional organization	81.8%	166
I prefer ASID and IIDA to remain two separate professional organizations	8.9%	18
Other (please briefly explain)	9.4%	19
answered question		203
skipped question		5

16 respondents also provided further write-in comments to this question.

Among respondents that expressed a preference regarding the merger of the organizations:

Frequency	% of total (16)	Reason
1	6%	would improve the public perception of the profession
1	6%	would provide a stronger / unified front in the face of challenges presented by the architecture community
1	6%	in favor of a merger if it didn't compromise the strengths of either organization
1	6%	like to see ASID, IIDA and IDEC all merge
1	6%	would like to see ASID and IIDA merge, but listed concerns with ASID

The remaining write-in comments didn't express a preference regarding the merger, but cited perceived issues standing in the way of the merger or general observations about the two organizations.

Frequency	% of total (16)	Reason
5	31%	respondents cited that they have no opinion regarding the issue, and do not care either way
3	15%	believe control issues between the organizations stand as a roadblock to the merger
2	13%	the organizations appear to have different foci
1	6%	believe ASID is overly focused on social events

5. Is there anything else you wish to communicate about this issue?

107 respondents provided a write-in answer to this question. Responses were divided into the three main categories identified below. As some responses included thoughts for more than one topic, frequencies and percentages listed do not correspond to the total n of this question but instead identify the proportion of responses for each category.

The majority of comments received discussed the problems that separation of the organizations causes, or benefits of the two organizations merging.

Comments in favor of merging

Frequency	% of total (105)	Remark
57	53%	the merger of ASID and IIDA would provide a more unified voice and/or a stronger force in the face of opposition from AIA, NKBA, and anti-legislation movements
16	15%	the existence of two professional organizations is confusing for students
11	10%	the existence of two professional organizations is confusing for the public
7	7%	a combined professional organization would be more efficient (citing decreased administrative costs, increased conference attendance, decreased membership costs)
6	6%	a merger will better define the profession
4	4%	Respondent has considered or has already dropped membership in one or both organizations because of the lack of a merger
3	3%	merging is long overdue
1	1%	the merged organization should have a new name

Perceptions why efforts at merging have been unsuccessful

Frequency	% of total (12)	Remark
7	58%	characterized the disagreements over merging between the organizations immature, several calling it mere "squabbling" , other saying the differences are "turf wars"
3	25%	control issues among the administrations are the major stumbling block to unification
1	8%	money is one of the stumbling blocks to unification (specifically the potential for lost revenue from membership fees if both merge)
1	8%	the issue of organization name has blocked unification in the past

General comments

Frequency	% of total (20)	Remark
10	50%	cost makes it difficult to be a member of both organizations
4	20%	IDEC should be included in the merger
3	15%	allowing allied or professional members into the organizations is diminishing the importance of advancing the profession in exchange for money
2	10%	IDEC should not be included in the merger
1	5%	ASID should not allow members to be grandfathered in without the required credentials because it does not advance the profession