The mission of the Interior Design Educators Council, Inc. is the advancement of interior design education, scholarship, and service. (www.IDEC.org).

“It is perhaps incumbent upon those designers whose prime activity is in teaching and research, to take the initiative in presenting research, and in general, taking an objective and possibly questioning look at the work we do, and at the direction in which we move” (Friedmann, 1975, 2).

The above quotes are from the Interior Design Educators Council website in 2011 and the first issue in 1975 of the Journal of Interior Design Education and Research (JIDER; now, Journal of Interior Design, JID since 1993). As they indicate, research is and has been a focus of the organization. IDEC and its members have devoted time and effort to producing and disseminating rigorous scholarship to the discipline and profession.

When it was founded in 1962, IDEC’s goals centered on interior design education and the profession (Harwood, History-Historical Milestones). The goals soon expanded to include research and scholarship. The tremendous growth in this area has taken place in many ways throughout the last 50 years. From the beginning, conference presentations, keynote speakers, and IDEC publications have supported and provided opportunities for members to share their work and assisted them in gaining tenure and promotion. More important, this scholarship has continually added to the interior design body of knowledge.

Teaching has always been at the heart of IDEC scholarship. Addressed in many ways, some has been very significant. In 1968, IDEC conducted a study of interior design education. A Critical Study of Interior Design Education collected information on institutions, curricula, and courses in interior design and made recommendations to improve education based upon that data. Not only did the study provide the basis for IDEC’s influence on interior design education, it also aided the profession through the formation of the Foundation for Interior Design Education Research (FIDER, now CIDA), the National Council for Interior Design Qualification (NCIDQ), and the Interior Design Issues Forum (Harwood, History-Historical Milestones).

Since the 1980s, IDEC has published white/position papers on such important and timely topics as tenure and promotion (1985, 1993), graduate education in interior design (2006), creative scholarship (2008) and sustaining interior design education (2010). In 2004, IDEC founded IDEC Academy to provide continuing education for interior design educators and practitioners. The Academy offers online courses, webinars, and workshops on a variety of subjects of interest to educators. It also provides a way for members to share their pedagogical expertise and mentor others.

IDEC publications have had numerous articles and discussions about teaching. The first JIDER featured an article entitled “Interior Design Education Research in the Federal Republic of Germany” (Willis, 1975). Teaching presentations, panels, and posters are well attended at conferences. Interior design educational research centers on various aspects of interior design education, such as the design process (Fowles and Skjelver, 1976 and Null, 1989). It also changes to reflect new and innovative theories and practices. During the 1990s, for example, technology presentations were the most attended, while in the 2000s we want to learn how to effectively teach this new generation of students who are very different in many ways from previous ones. As part of its mission to promote education and scholarship, IDEC has begun to make great strides in attracting the future generation of educators and scholars through graduate students scholarships, workshops, and mentoring.

Many of IDEC’s founders were scholars, so they recognized that there were no journals or other venues solely dedicated to interior design scholarship. In the same way that they sought to raise the professional level of interior design education, they addressed the lack of interior design scholarship. In 1972, IDEC co-sponsored a symposium.
called *Research Methodology and Environmental Design* along with the National Society of Interior Design (NSID) and the College of Home Economics at the University of Missouri. Outstanding scholars in "the developing interface of design and social research" were invited. Excerpts from the symposium dialogues and the continuous relevance to research in interior design were invited. Excerpts from the symposium dialogues and the continuous relevance to research in interior design were invited. Excerpts from the symposium dialogues and the continuous relevance to research in interior design" (Friedmann, 1975, 54). The dialogues addressed behavior and the design process and still have relevance today.

More important was the beginning of *JIDER* in September 1975. The "Introduction" (1975) set forth the goals of new journal, many of which are still true today:

> The Interior Design Educators Council was founded twelve years ago by a small group of design educators with much enthusiasm and no budget whatsoever. The Journal of Interior Design Education and Research is not unlike the founding of its sponsoring group. It is small, it has been initiated with enthusiasm, and it has no budget whatever. We hope it will generate much interest and support. IDEC has filled an important void in the field of Interior Design, and this publication is intended to fill another such void. Although the profession of Interior Design has reached a level of maturity in the year 1975 which was hard to imagine just two decades ago, there appears to be a noticeable lack of serious and scholarly work addressed specifically to problems of the profession. Few serious, critical or erudite articles appear in the professional magazines. It is precisely this gap which this journal hopes to bridge (Rogers, 54).

In its 35+ years of publication, *JIDER/JID* has more than achieved these goals. Articles by IDEC and other researchers have provided context, new ideas, dialogues, and reflection on interior design education, the profession, and the broad areas of interior design scholarship. It has contributed to and helped to define the interior design body of knowledge. Expanding from two to four issues a year, *JID* now has an international audience of readers and researchers thanks to an online presence. Special issues showcase specialized scholarship, such as narrative inquiry (26/2, 2000).

IDEC has expanded its scholarship outreach individually by members and collectively as an organization, particularly since the 1990s. During regional and national conferences, members and graduate students share their work in a broad range of topics in peer-reviewed presentations, panels, and posters. Beginning in 2000, IDEC posted national conference proceedings on its website (see http://www.idec.org/events/annual.php). IDEC supports research through awards for best presentations and media and Special Topics Grants. In 2003, two IDEC members partnered with ASID to establish *InformeDesign*, an online resource of summaries of scholarship directed toward practitioners (Harwood, History – Historical Milestones). The two interior design history symposiums (2008, 2010), and a sustainability symposium (2011 attracted practitioners and scholars from around the globe and papers appeared in special *JID* issues.

Articles by IDEC’s members appear in academic journals worldwide, as well as popular and professional periodicals. IDEC researchers give presentations at ASID, IIDA, EDRA, NeoCon, and a host of other professional/educational/scholarly conferences around the world. The number of members who have and are writing textbooks and other books has grown exponentially in the last 15 years. Thanks to their efforts, interior design education has a wealth of textbook and online sources in all areas from which to draw.

Over the course of its 50 years of existence, IDEC has built a large body of research and scholarship that has expanded the interior design body of knowledge and strengthened interior design education and the profession. In doing so, it has been a significant force for the profession. We salute our founding members whose vision included scholarship along with education. They recognized that a discipline requires its own body of research and instituted various ways for that to happen. As time passed, IDEC members have expanded those means in ways the first members could not have envisioned.

This is only a small selective review of some of those efforts. But all of us can be proud of what they and we have accomplished. We have a lot to celebrate! Congratulations to IDEC, its scholars, and all of the ways we have promoted research. Let us continue to expand this strength so that we can remain leaders in the growth and development of interior design as a discipline and profession. Happy 50th Anniversary to IDEC!


