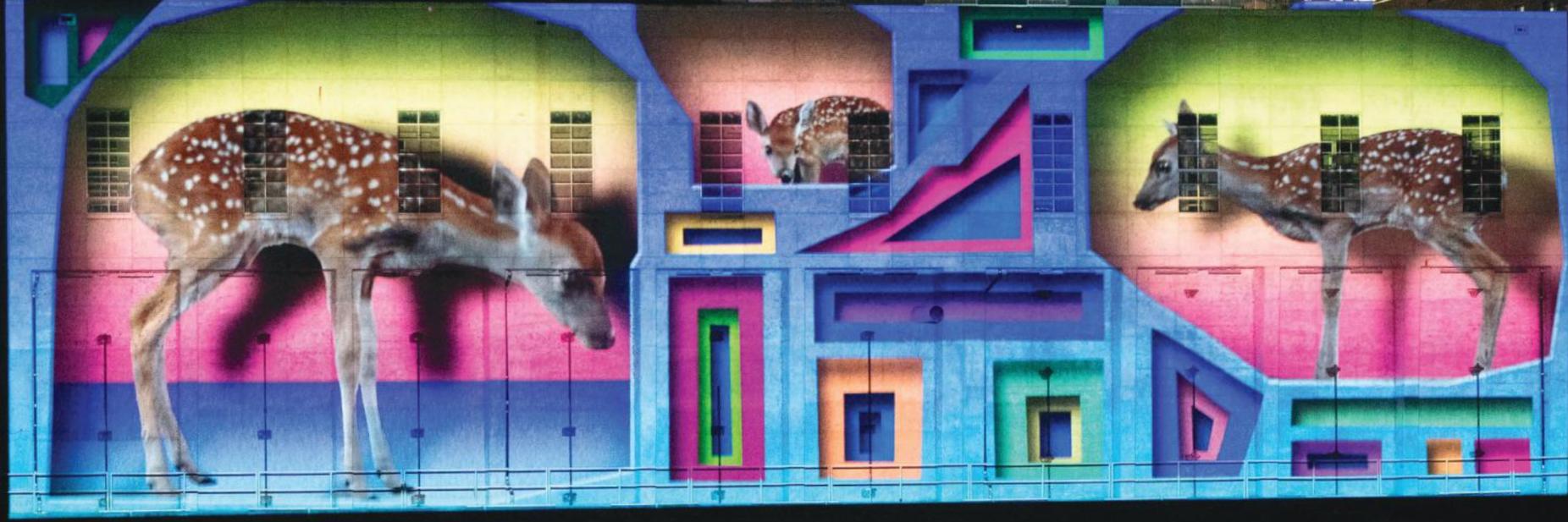


**DESIGN
AUSTIN**



2025 Impact Report

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Research, design, copy:
Courtney Mallen

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

2025 was a year of momentum, learning, and steady commitment to Design Austin's mission: connecting people to design and design to civic life. Even as we navigated questions of structure and strategy, the work itself continued to resonate deeply with our community. And we know that matters.

In 2025, Design Austin brought thousands of Austinites into conversation with architecture, landscape, planning, art, and design through public programs, exhibitions, talks, and partnerships. From *WaterWork*, Design Minded, and *ATX Voices*, to collaborations with cultural, civic, and educational partners, we continued to test new formats, reach broader audiences, and make design visible, accessible, and meaningful in everyday life.

We also strengthened our foundation. Behind the scenes, we invested time in refining processes and asking important questions about sustainability, governance, and long-term impact. While that work is ongoing, it reflects a shared belief that Design Austin's future should be as thoughtfully designed as the programs we present.

I am deeply grateful to our board, partners, sponsors, artists, speakers, and supporters for their trust, patience, and belief in this organization. Design Austin exists because people care about the role design plays in shaping a more connected, creative, and equitable Austin—and together, we are building toward a future worthy of that care.

Ingrid Spencer,
Executive Director, Design Austin

FROM THE INTERIM PRESIDENT

As I look back on this past year at Design Austin, I'm filled with gratitude for the energy, creativity, and deep commitment that our community continues to bring to the table. It has been a year of meaningful change and renewed purpose—one that positions us for an even more ambitious 2026.

One of our most important milestones was strengthening our board structure. I stepped into the role of Interim Board Chair, and together we initiated an updated strategic plan to guide Design Austin's future. With the thoughtful guidance of Tara Levy, this process has already brought clarity and momentum, and we're on track to complete and begin implementing the plan by year's end.

Our programs once again reminded us why this community is so special. PechaKucha—brilliantly coordinated and led by DJ Stout—continues to be an outrageous success, drawing big crowds and inspiring an excitement so strong that the posters have become coveted pieces of Austin design culture. And *WaterWork* returned with incredible force, led with creativity and vision by Emily Eisenhart and Justin Rankin. Attendance doubled, the visuals were hypnotic and incredibly creative, and, with the generosity of our sponsors, we were able to cover all event expenses and generate a small profit—an extraordinary achievement for year 2 of this game-changing event.

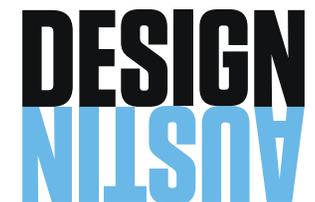
As we look toward 2026, we're setting our sights high. We plan to double our community impact, expand our design programming, deepen public engagement,

and continue to champion creative collisions across disciplines.

I want to express my deepest gratitude to our board—Michael, DJ, Larry, Justin, Veronica, Libby, and Emily—for the countless hours of creativity, passion, and behind-the-scenes work that make all of this possible. And an enormous thank you to the AIA Austin staff, whose tireless support helps us sustain and grow this organization every single day.

It takes all of us to build something meaningful, and I'm profoundly grateful to be part of this Design Austin community. I can't wait to see what we create together in the year ahead.

Daniel Woodroffe, PLA
Interim President, Design Austin
President and Founder, dwg.



ATX VOICES

PUBLIC ART COLLABORATION WITH TEXAS SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF (TSD)

ATX Voices is a series of large-scale sculptures on the TSD campus designed by TSD students and Design Austin over the 2024–25 school year and installed on South Congress Avenue in October 2025.

Design Austin's Exhibitions and Experiences Committee recruited architects and designers, working closely with TSD's arts faculty, to develop a student-led design process for a 3D installation that introduces the students to the public on their terms. The work consists of four seven-foot-tall hands that spell out "ATX" in American Sign Language, followed by the TSD Ranger mascot sign. Each sculpture is engraved with the student's wishes for and pride in themselves and the Deaf community.

The project was unveiled at TSD's public Homecoming event in October to some 10,000 attendees and permanently installed later that month. Prominently displayed along a major pedestrian corridor, *ATX Voices* will inspire thousands of viewers for years to come.

This project was supported in part by



DESIGN MINDED

EVENT SERIES WITH THE CONTEMPORARY AUSTIN (TCA)

TCA's iconic Moody Rooftop in the heart of downtown Austin is the perfect venue for this series, which brings together design-minded creatives for inspiring talks, film screenings, and community. In its inaugural year, each event hosted 30-60 people (with room for many more).

MARCH 5

Film Screening:
Playtime (1967)

APRIL 16

Design for All
Panel Discussion

OCTOBER 15

"Design is Trans"
with Joey Zeledón
and AIA Austin's
LGTBQIA+ Alliance

NOVEMBER 12

Film Screening:
Helvetica (2007)



Design Minded images: Essentials Creative

DONNA D. CARTER, FAIA SCHOLAR PROGRAM

PARTNERSHIP WITH AIA AUSTIN'S WOMEN
IN ARCHITECTURE COMMITTEE (WIA)

Awards are given to two or more minority female or minority non-binary students pursuing a Bachelors or Masters of Architecture at The University of Texas at Austin. Three recipients were honored on April 10 at the Texas Banker's Association along with 80 friends, family members, faculty, and supporters.

2025 SCHOLARS

Ji Yoon Ahn
Deyanira Rodriguez
Namratha Thrikutam

GUIDE TO AUSTIN ARCHITECTURE

AUSTIN'S SPACES AND PLACES, EXPLAINED BY DESIGNERS FOR EVERYONE

The [Guide to Austin Architecture](#), a joint project with AIA Austin, is an online, mobile-friendly collection of significant sites in Austin. Visitors can read individual entries or choose from tours arranged around themes like Black and Latino history, women-led projects, and LEED-certified spaces, among others. The Guide received about 28,000 website visitors in 2025 and now boasts nine tours and over 120 entries. Each year, at least one new tour is released. New for 2025:

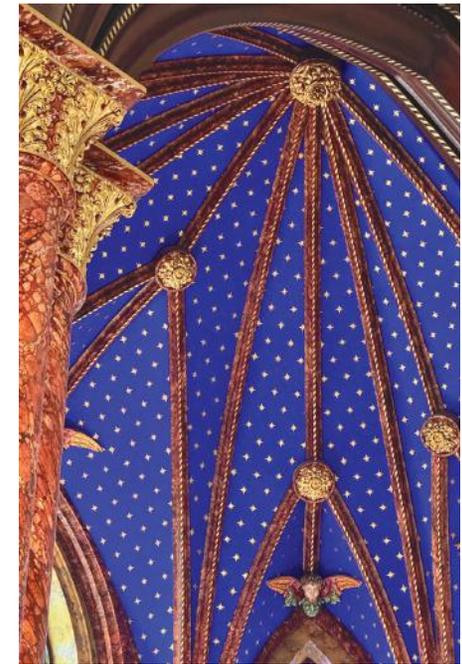
QUEER CORNERSTONES

Curated by AIA Austin's LGTBQIA+ Alliance

The Queer Cornerstones tour also held a sold-out bike tour for 30 people in March, with plans to reprise in 2026.

SACRED SPACES

A diverse collection of spiritually significant venues around Austin.



LAS PIÑATAS

CELEBRATION OF LATINO CULTURE
CURATED BY AIA AUSTIN'S LATINOS IN
ARCHITECTURE COMMITTEE (LIA)

The resilience and creativity of Austin's Latino community and East Side residents is the spark behind the annual Las Piñatas exhibition. Since its 2015 inception, Las Piñatas has become a feature of the Emma S. Barrientos Mexican American Cultural Center's (MACC) Dia de los Muertos Festival each November.

2025 LAS PIÑATAS DISPLAYS

Dulce Piñata: *First Gen Dreamer*

Pfluger Architects: *Alas Sin Fronteras / Wings Without Borders*

WRA Dream Team: *Rostrros de la Alegría*

BRR Architecture: *Puente de Cempasúchil*



PECHAKUCHA NIGHT AUSTIN

CREATIVE SPEAKER POPUP SERIES BELOVED IN AUSTIN AND WORLDWIDE

Originating in Tokyo in 2003, PechaKucha invites ten guest speakers to present a creative topic with just 20 slides, 20 seconds per slide (just over six minutes per speaker). Each event is held at a different venue, often repurposed for the evening. Design Austin partnered with PechaKucha Night Austin for two sold-out events attended by 300 people each.

MARCH 26

PKN #39 @ TCA's Moody Rooftop at the Jones Center

LINEUP & ORDER

sharon maidenberg—Director, The Contemporary Austin

Lope Gutierrez-Ruiz—Graphic Designer

Jes Fraley—Interior Designer

Michael O'Brien—Photographer

Kelly Mickwee—Singer/Songwriter

Daniel Woodroffe—Landscape Architect

Virginia L. Montgomery—Multimedia Artist

John Kunz—Founder, Waterloo Records

Michael Ray Charles—Artist

Candace Cooper—Film Producer

NOVEMBER 4

PKN #40 @ University of Texas Visual Arts Center

LINEUP & ORDER

Sinclair Black/Stephi Motal—Architects

Kristell Jean—Food/Fashion Visionary

DJ Stout—Graphic Designer

Elizabeth Gibson—Jewelry Designer

Gerardo Gandy and Jake Rosenberg—Architect; Artist

Karen Maness—Educator/Curator

Lauren Dickens—Graphic Designer

Joel Salcido—Photographer

Mariana Nuno Ruiz McEnroe and Ian McEnroe—Authors

Bob Schneider—Musician/Artist



WATERWORK

SITE-SPECIFIC PROJECTION ART COLLABORATION WITH THE TRAIL CONSERVANCY

Tucked into the edge of downtown Austin stands one of its most iconic facades. The Seaholm Intake Facility hugs the north waterline of Lady Bird Lake, capturing the view of thousands of daily visitors to the beloved hike-and-bike trail just across the water and hundreds of kayakers gliding east and west. The beautifully strange harmony between built and natural environments conjures endless interpretations.

On September 26 and 27, the visions of 15 local artists were projected onto Seaholm Intake in a 30-minute display that delighted 2,500 visitors. *WaterWork* was covered in the *Statesman*, *Austin Monthly*, KXAN, KEYE, and *Tribeza*, and widely shared on social platforms.

In only its second year, *WaterWork* has become a cherished event showcasing Austin's vibrant design community. We plan to continue our approach of recruiting 15 artists, ranging from emerging to established, from the local community to create two-to-three-minute original videos exploring the dynamic of the city with nature. Many of the works use projection mapping technology. All artists receive a stipend and are recognized online, in social media, and in print collateral.

2025 WATERWORK ARTISTS

Jasna Boudard
Luna Davis
Tova Katzman
Leslie Kell
Faiza Kracheni
Yuliya Lanina
Emily Lee
Paloma Mayorga
Katy McCarthy
R. Eric McMaster
Britt Moseley
Phoebe Shuman-Goodier
Topher Sipes
Tiffany Smith
Ana Treviño



Image top and bottom left: Limelight Imaging
Images bottom right: Ryan Vestil

STAFF AND BOARD

DESIGN AUSTIN STAFF

Executive Director
Ingrid Spencer

Events & Programs Director
Julia Brown

Director of Operations
Rob Hoffman

Communications & Marketing Director
Courtney Mallen,
Assoc. AIA

Development Manager
Kerrie Monahan (Jan-Sept)

Development Coordinator
Erika Wendel (Nov-present)

Bookkeeper
Shannon Ratcliff

Manager of Programs and Public Engagement
Tanya Zal (2026; elevated from
2025 Programming & Development
Coordinator)

DESIGN AUSTIN BOARD

Interim President
Daniel Woodroffe
.dwg

Treasurer
Justin Rankin
Gensler

Veronica Castro de Barrera, AIA,
LEED AP
VCdb Architecture & Art

Emily Eisenhart
Emily Eisenhart Studio

Libby Gillen, IIDA, NOMA
Momentum Textiles & Wallcovering

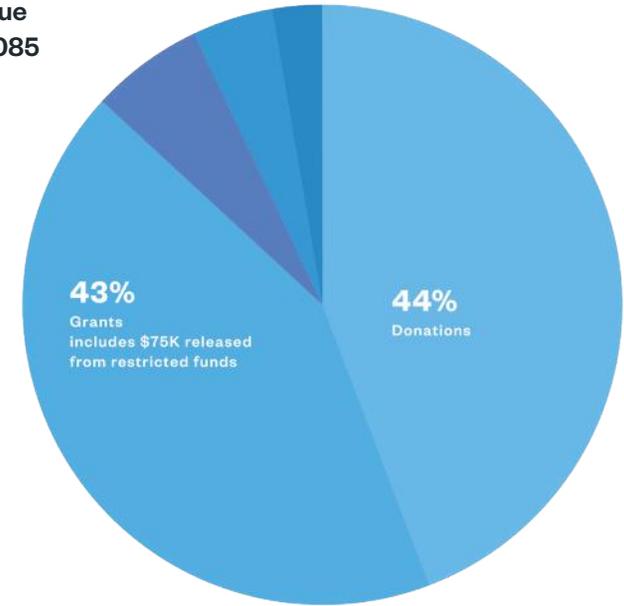
Michael Hsu, FAIA, IIDA, NOMA
Michael Hsu Office of Architecture

Lawrence W. Speck, FAIA
Page
University of Texas at Austin
School of Architecture

DJ Stout
Pentagram

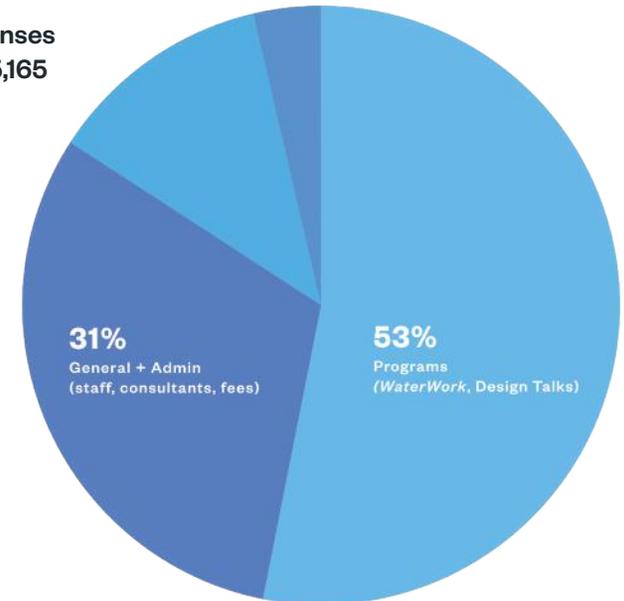
FINANCIALS as of 02/02/26

Revenue
\$246,085



■ Donations (\$108,749) ■ Grants (\$105,000) ■ Board Contributions (\$15,000)
■ Programs (\$10,694) ■ Miscellaneous (\$6,642)

Expenses
\$205,165



■ Programming (\$108,991) ■ General + Admin (\$63,674)
■ Shared Services/Facilities (\$25,000) ■ Grants + Scholarships (\$7,500)



Front cover image: WaterWork/Limelight Imaging
Back cover image: Design Minded/Essentials Creative
All uncredited images: AIA Austin



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