Financial, Budget and Dues

Q1. Why are you increasing dues now, when you know that so many designers have experienced a challenging last couple of years with the economy having been under pressure?

A1. Research has highlighted that IDC’s annual membership dues are among the lowest of any national advocacy association in North America – substantially below those of comparable professional associations such as the Royal Architectural Institute of Canada (RAIC), American Society of Interior Designer (ASID), International Interior Design Association (IIDA) and Canadian Decorators' Association (CDECA).

IDC currently gets around 39c per day, per member. We also know that some ‘sister’ associations, such as AISD, pass on approximately 25% of their membership revenues to their network of chapters. Even with an increase in dues, IDC’s situation will take three years to become stable enough to consider helping others, including through P&P funds.

- Current minimal dues restrict both the type and level of service(s) which we can provide to our members – specifically in areas such as best practice research, government relations, international partnerships and bespoke training for IDC’s senior practitioner members.
- IDC membership dues have remained relatively unchanged since the transition in 2010, with modest increases reflecting only the cost of living: not tied to the services provided to IDC members. In fact the last big ($30) increase in dues was in 2009 when the dues went from $100 to $130. At that time IDC had one staff person and a very limited mandate.
- IDC’s Board chose to hold back on raising membership dues in 2010 to allow the provincial associations to raise their own membership dues to become financially sustainable. It was felt that to raise IDC’s dues at that time could prove financially punitive for our members. The termination of $230,000 of annual transition funding/support from ARIDO has also adversely impacted IDC’s revenues.

The Royal Bank of Canada’s RBC Economic Research Report dated July 28, 2017 (updated August 9, 2017) quotes “Canadian GDP jumped a much stronger than expected 0.6% in May marking the 7th consecutive month of increases” *. And slow, steady growth within the Canadian interior design sector was highlighted during our team’s research for IDC’s ‘2016 State of the Industry’ Panel at IIDEX – with that research having been conducted with Provincial Presidents during late 2016.

Similarly, Reuters News Agency reported on May 31, 2017:
While the first-quarter expansion was shy of the Bank of Canada's 3.8 percent forecast, it made Canada a growth leader among its industrialized peers at the start of the year.

“At the end of the day, we have to call it strong no matter what,” said Derek Holt, an economist at Scotiabank. “A lot of other countries would like to be in this position.”

Economists said the strong data put the Bank of Canada one step closer to raising rates. The central bank is largely expected to be on hold until 2018.”

* Stats from the Toronto Star (dated March 31, 2017) if needed: “Growth in March was stronger than expected, with GDP growing 0.5 per cent, above estimates of 0.2 per cent. Goods-producing industries climbed 0.9 per cent, while service industries added 0.3 per cent.”

And:

“Statistics Canada said real gross domestic product grew at an annualized rate of 3.7 per cent in the first quarter in a broad-based expansion.”

Q2. What will happen to IDC members who simply refuse to, or are unable to, pay these increased dues?

A2. IDC is committed to helping facilitate our members’ continued business and professional growth, and we believe that they both perceive and derive value from their membership of IDC. We will therefore be offering the option of quarterly payment plans.

IDC’s Board and CEO are in regular contact with all provincial association presidents, who have provided input to this membership dues increase and both understand and support the reasons underpinning the change.

We would urge any IDC member experiencing difficulties to advise communications@idcanada.org as well as their provincial association president. IDC will continue to provide the majority of existing services and benefits to our members, wherever possible, however it will not be possible to continue to deliver the current portfolio of services, into the future, at 2016/2017 membership dues levels.

Q3. How have you arrived at these increased dues, which represent a more than 125% hike? They seem outrageously high – on what basis have you arrived at these figures?

A3. In comparison with other professional association dues, IDC’s annual membership dues are still among the lowest of any national advocacy association in North America and less than most provincial associations and yet it continues to provide valuable services to members, stakeholders, and the public. There has been no real increase since transition in 2010.

IDC delivers a similar range of member services – professional development, networking, DesignEx trade shows, awards, bursaries and other scholarship opportunities, but from a much reduced revenue base.
• IDC agreed, in the past, that the provincial associations required to increase their membership dues in order to remain sustainable, and dues to ongoing requests for more resources, industry research and networking opportunities from our membership, the time has come for IDC to become equally sustainable.
• Since the transition in 2010, ARIDO has supported IDC in real financial terms, with annual transition payment of between $230,000 to $255,000; however that funding has now ended.
• Increased dues will allow IDC to better meet our core advocacy mandate while also responding to member requests for increased activity in areas such as industry research, dedicated senior practitioner education, events and conferences, and access to more Canadian and international resources through new partnerships with ‘sister’ organizations.

Q4. Who has provided input to these new dues rates? Has the IDC Board approved these rates? Who can I talk to, to put forward my concerns?

A4. IDC’s team under the direction of the IDC Board has extensively researched and analyzed annual membership dues for comparable North American professional membership associations, serving similar advocacy and education functions to IDC.

• IDC’s Board, who has representatives from each of the provincial interior design associations represented, has unanimously approved this first real dues increase since the transition in 2010, and supports the drive to focus service delivery and support to our members in line with IDC’s mandate as the national advocacy association which promotes the interests of Canada’s interior design profession nationally, and internationally.
• All IDC members will be invited to attend IDC’s annual meeting on Oct. 19, 2017, at the World Design Summit in Montréal, to learn more about the vision, moving forward, and to put their questions, in person to IDC’s President: Clinton Hummel and IDC’s Chief Executive Officer, Tony Benders.
• In addition, the IDC team and Board are holding a series of six webinars over three days - September 20, September 28 (one in French) and October 3 - in advance of the annual meeting to discuss these issues.

Q5A. Many of the provincial interior design associations raised their dues only just a few years ago. Why did IDC not do the same, at that time? Why now?

A5B. Why are we implementing a one-time increase versus a phased increase for dues?

A5. IDC’s Board chose to hold back on raising membership dues to allow the provincial associations to raise their own membership dues to become financially sustainable. It was felt that to raise IDC’s dues at that time could prove financially punitive for our members. The ending of $230,000 of annual financial support from ARIDO directly impacts on our revenue.
• Our membership base consistently highlights the desire and need for industry research, and conducting research represents one of the core elements of a national association’s mandate.
• In addition, financial analysts, Government departments and business media consistently report evidence that the Canadian economy is experiencing consistent and steady growth, further highlighting the need to identify new and emerging trends and opportunities for our members.
• Board members talked at great length, at the board and executive committee meetings, about options and whether to have a phased-in increase or a one-time bump in dues. As the association’s fiduciary leaders, and following analysis and many discussions with other associations, the Board settled on a one-time increase, believing that the time is now right to increase dues to allow daily operations and support to members to continue, and to allow for the introduction of new services such as industry research.
• Our analysis also demonstrated that a phased in increase would not immediately solve the challenge of providing the revenues IDC requires to effectively operate. It will take at least two years at this rate of new fees to be able to become fully self sufficient where IDC can begin to re-establish its P&P fund as well as establish its own operational contingency fund. A phased increase will only make IDC operate at half speed for a much longer period of time with the resources it needs to serve the members. It is an opportunity to address the issue once and to move on without having to also explain three times (separate years) why IDC is increasing their fees.

Q6. Was this increase sparked because of IDC’s close working relationship with other associations like IIDA or ASID?

A6. There is no link between IDC collaborating with IIDA or ASID on past or possible future, initiatives in relation to the current dues increase. Rather our partnership with both associations has allowed us leverage such that we can now provide access to additional quality programs, services and advocacy for our members. Without additional revenue from increased membership dues, we cannot continue to provide the existing programs of services with our current level of staff and resources.

Ensuring that we secure access to the maximum portfolio of resources and services for our members is one of the major pillars underpinning IDC’s collaborations with ‘sister organizations’ such as ASID, IIDA, OAA, RAIC, IFMA, BOMA, The Design Exchange, IIDEX and BuildEx and Architect@Work, to name but a few.

Q7. Will there be financial assistance available, or any exemptions made possible, for designers who simply cannot afford these rates?

A7. IDC is a non-profit organization, and we reinvest all revenues back into providing services for our entire membership base of interior designers, design firms, students, educators and industry partners.
• We do not have funds available to subsidize individual members’ annual membership dues. We will however be offering the option of quarterly payment plans.

• Students will now pay annual membership dues to IDC. However all such payments made by students will be deducted from their dues when they become intern members – deducted, at a rate of 50% of total student dues paid.

Q8. Why will you now be charging students and significantly increasing dues for interns? They are already saddled with significant debt from their design education. IDC is supposed to fight for designers’ rights, not place them under financial duress.

A8. Students in similar member-based organizations pay annual membership dues to belong, and IDC’s student rate will be less than the dues for registered members.

• We have also heard from interior design students and interns that a dollar value added to membership often means value in membership, and that they will happily pay a dues to belong to an organization like IDC, that furthers their profession and their opportunities to succeed.

• They have said that - were they to pay dues - they would see some additional value to belonging to IDC. So, as an incentive once they become interns, ½ of the student dues paid will be credited towards their intern dues for the years that they contributed, which we believe will add to the likelihood of them staying longer-term.

Q9. IDC will almost certainly lose members as a result of these dues increases. Will there be a reduction in services if IDC’s membership is condensed?

A9. There are numerous benefits already in place that members find invaluable. We believe that we will increase our membership base, over the long term, through having become more sustainable as an organization and thus able to deliver additional services, including services – such as research - actively requested by our members since IDC’s inception.

Q10A. Does this dues increase make up for the revenue that we lost from the ARIDO transfer, and do the dues apply to those who don’t belong to a Provincial Association? Who and what does the ‘Other’ category of membership involve?

Q10B. What is IDC’s plan to address the budget deficit of $140,000 identified due to repayment of the ARIDO transfer?

A10. In close consultation with IDC’s Chief Executive Officer, the Board (as IDC’s fiduciary leaders) have developed a three-year budget/action plan to address the current budget deficit of more than $140,000 – resulting from reduced revenue of $230,000 due to the end of the ARIDO grant.

• IDC staff identified $150,000 of expenditure eliminations this past fiscal year

• Under the 2017/2018 fiscal year/ new dues model (designer and industry members + new categories of membership) should result in a modest surplus of $4,021

• Even with an increase in dues, IDC’s situation will take three years to become stable enough to consider helping others, including through P&P funds.
• Over the last few years, the regulated design profession has seen membership numbers remain stagnant or decline while the broader design community has increased in size and influence. We want and need to be part of that community with increased reach and influence.

• The more people that we have in our tent advocating for the profession, the better off we believe the profession is, and correspondingly, each of the provincial regulatory associations will be.

• Dues for members newly-joining IDC under the ‘other’ category may therefore include professionals, practitioners and design industry advocates such as architects, engineers, decorators and students registered with design education programs that are not yet CIDA accredited.

Q11. **Can members opt out of paying the IDC portion of their annual dues, and, if not, will this increase in dues cause some associations to close their doors?**

A11. IDC was formed in 2010 to service the unanimously-stated need of all nine provincial associations for a national advocacy association to represent the interests of Canada’s interior design profession – in essence, a national body geared towards delivering ongoing professional education, research, networking, conferences and best practice learning opportunities, sharing and support, public education and advocacy involving all levels of government.

IDC will continue to work with its provincial association partners to have a single point of invoicing and payment – through the provincial associations. We truly believe that we are stronger together and by continuing as we have done for the last seven years regarding this point, is important for both the provincial associations and IDC.

IDC’s Board and staff are committed to helping facilitate our members’ continued business and professional growth, and we believe that our members both perceive and derive value from their membership of IDC. We will therefore be offering the option of quarterly payment plans.

Q12. **Are industry membership dues also being raised?**

A12. Industry member dues will be raised from January 1, 2018 for our Tier 1 and Partner memberships, to bring them more into line with membership levels in place for other North American design associations with whom IDC frequently partners. We will also be combining our current Tier 2 and Tier 3 membership levels into a new, third membership category, and that new category will also reflect an increased membership rate.

As a result we have created three new categories of membership – National Partners, Regional Partners and Local Partners; with appropriate access to members and programs based on their level and type of membership.
Q13. **How can IDC provide a clear picture to convince members why they should pay these additional dues, in order to prevent membership erosion? Traditionally, many members have struggled to recognize the value of IDC membership.**

This is especially relevant for provincial association, such as IDA in Alberta, which are voluntary associations vs officially regulated associations.

A13. The increase in dues is not intended to be punitive, nor is it aimed at any particular class of member. We realize that there may be challenges in some areas and that’s why we have keep the dues much lower than our sister associations across North America. Although the increase is more than you have regularly seen from IDC, it still amounts to only $0.50 more per day or the equivalent of a bottle of wine or a quarter tank of gas a month. Not insignificant but important for the future of IDC.

Q14. **Was any consideration given to increasing membership levels vs increasing dues for existing members? And, if IDC dues were collected separately would it make things clearer to the members?**

A14. The IDC Board has created a three-year budget plan which combines a blend of increased membership dues for both designer and industry members, combined with revenue from a new membership category which – in the Board’s considered view - represents the most fair and sustainable formula: one designed to deliver a modest, projected surplus of $4,021 in fiscal year 2017/2018.

- With some additional modest funding available we believe that we can more effectively advocate for you and the profession by educating stakeholders and the public about the great work we all do as interior designers.
- We are also looking to secure IDC’s financial sustainability and provide the advocacy support, including industry research that many expect from a national advocacy body. If we continue along doing less than we need to do, we may never achieve the respect or support we need nationally, internationally or from the public.
- Members are aware that IDC works closely with all nine provincial associations to deliver services of benefit to all members, Canada-wide. The Board therefore feels that to continue the existing membership dues invoicing arrangement through the provincial associations is the most logical approach.
- The IDC Board has also discussed at length the concept of collecting fees on its own, apart from provincial associations. Although it has benefits to both IDC and provincial associations, it also has some potential huge risks for both. By splitting who collects, we are giving members the real opportunity to choose between two voluntary associations. We believe that by allowing choice right now, may result in members choosing one association over the other resulting in significant losses of members for provincial associations. This is not our goal.
Q15. **What investments did IDC hold, and were these all related to the Practice and Protection Fund?**

A15. IDC and ARIDO both benefited from the sale of IIDEX to Informa in 2012. A portion of the profits were allocated to a Practice and Protection (P&P) Fund. As it currently stands, those funds are essentially spent with a real need to reinvest into this fund.

Q16. **Are we reducing staff? Staffing is down one member.**

A16. IDC reduced its staff compliment by 10 per cent last year and additional duties have been reallocated to existing IDC staff as part of $150,000 of total expenditures eliminated this fiscal year. In addition, we have cut travel and the opportunity to meet with members across the country – something that is not sustainable long term for a national advocacy body.

Q17. **Does IDC have a contingency plan in place should the dues increase result in loss of membership? A robust, and stable, body of membership is vital including for provincial associations pursuing regulatory recognition.**

A17. The IDC board has a number of contingency plans that it is considering, but each of them is significantly less palatable for the association longer term and, in their view, to members and the profession in Canada.

Q18. **Do IDC’s ‘sister associations’, such as IIDA and ASID, require their members to pay additional dues towards chapters and states in addition to their national association dues?**

A18. Yes, Registered Interior Designers in the U.S. often need to be members of a state board in order to practise – similar to our model with provincial associations in Canada. These state boards are part of state governments and are heavily subsidized by taxpayers. As a result, those dues, in some cases, are lower than those charged by Canadian provincial associations. However, the principle is generally the same. Our research shows that U.S. interior designers will then pay in the range of $525 - $800 USD annually to belong to both the state boards and national advocacy association such as IIDA and/or ASID. Our proposed fees are modest in comparison and, our Board of Management believes they are reasonable investments in each member’s professional advancement and professional development.

Even with an increase in dues, IDC’s situation will take three years to become stable enough to consider helping others, including through P&P funds.

Q19. **Are the nine provincial associations comfortable, and on board with, these dues increases?**

A19. The IDC Board includes members of all nine provincial associations, and all Board members, including those from each Provincial Association have been actively involved in drafting and approving the three-year plan to move IDC onto a sustainable funding formula, which includes this increase in Membership dues – the first real increase since transition in 2010.
In addition, the IDC Board and Chief Executive Officer have held an advance briefing – similar to today’s webinar - for all provincial association Presidents and Executive Directors.

Q20. **When will members receive their first, new invoice reflecting these increased membership dues?**

A20. The new IDC membership dues will be included in the annual membership renewal invoice which members receive from their provincial regulatory association for payment January 1, 2018.

Q21. **Will the ‘sliding scale/variance’ of stepped, annually increasing membership dues for students also apply to other categories of member?**

A21. The Board has created modestly-priced, annually-increasing membership dues solely for student members as this will be their first experience of professional association dues.

Q22. **Please explain the $80,000 difference in staffing costs from financial year 2015-2016 to 2016-2017. Why has this occurred?**

A22. Following the departure of former IDC Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Susan Wiggins, IDC operated without a CEO throughout most of financial year 2016/2017. This, coupled with the departure of our interim CEO, left a sizeable gap between budgeted vs expended salaries. IDC Past President Aandra Currie Shearer stepped up to fill the role of interim CEO, and was compensated through an increased honorarium, approved by IDC’s Board of Management.

The absence of a full time CEO was therefore reflected in a significantly lower salary component for 2015/2016 when compared with 2014/2015, (when a full-time CEO was in place). In addition, IDC’s accountant throughout 2015/2016 was a part-time employee retained at a salary level lower than our current senior level, full-time accountant. With combined, these two factors create what might otherwise appear to be an increase in staffing levels.

Q23. **Why have financial statement from the last few years not been used to anticipate the current financial situation?**

A23. IDC’s Board and staff have been extremely rigorous in exerting cost control, and the Board has a three-year financial plan in place to address the current financial shortfall.

We do not believe that the IDC Board that was in office in 2010 could have reasonably foreseen that the revenue from the IIDEX sale in 2012, and the accompanying payments to ARIDO from that sale, would result in such significantly reduced future revenue. Nor could the departure of the long-time Chief Executive Officer have been foreseen.

Q24. **For retired members, why move from the zero membership to $175 annually if we wish them to become mentors. Will this not drive them away?**

A24. We are hoping that, by paying a small membership due, this will help to foster an enhanced feeling of belonging, engagement and ownership among our retired members, thereby helping to nurture current and future mentoring.
Q25. What protections are in place to safeguard against future potential overspending?

A25. The key reasons for the current financial situation is reduced revenue of $230,000 due to the end of the ARIDO transition payment, and from previous revenue forecasts not coming to fruition – not overspend.

IDC staff salaries are comparable with other small Canadian businesses and membership organizations, and a reduced staff complement would correspondingly result in fewer programs being delivered for members.

The Board’s three-plan, requiring approval of the new by-laws and membership dues, is intended to bring IDC into a self-sustaining position with membership dues supporting the organization’s daily operations, and all member suggestions regarding potential sources of revenue are most welcome.

Q26. Do you anticipate future increases in membership dues, or will this be a one-time occurrence?

A26. IDC’s membership dues have not been increased since transition in 2010 – there have only been cost of living adjustments.

In past years, the IDC Board agreed that the provincial associations should increase their membership dues in order to become financially sustainable, however IDC dues were not increased at the same time. With hindsight, perhaps they should have been raised in tandem.

The Board has discussed the issue of a staggered vs one-time membership dues increase at length; however we feel that this ‘one-time bump’ is essential to ensure the future of IDC - hence the current budget. There may be future cost of living increases, however it is the Board’s intention that increased membership revenues will let us access areas presently out with our reach, which could deliver additional future revenues. We could then invest in the P & P fund – in short, we could invest in ourselves.

Benefits to Members

Q1. What exactly, does IDC provide for its members, and what benefits will members see from the increase? What new services will be added?

A1. IDC’s improved benefits will include:

- industry research
- year-round high quality education and ongoing professional development seminars and webinars; networking events and opportunities;
- greater access to national relationships with industry partners;
- trade shows in multiple provincial cities;
- scholarships, bursaries and awards
- annual national conference for all members to gather
IDC also:

- advocates on behalf of the profession, to all levels of government, business, industry and the media;
- educates the public regarding the expertise of, and how best to work with, an interior designer;
- provides best practice research, professional salary survey, thought-provoking bi-monthly magazine, and weekly news clippings highlighting emerging trends and inspirational projects;
- negotiates preferential member rates on business, personal and auto insurance, and professional liability insurance;
- provides access to other programs delivered by ‘sister’ organizations – e.g. RAIC, ASID, IIDA TSA, OAA, CIP etc.

By-law Changes, Operations and Policies

Q1. **Are you not concerned that those not qualified as registered interior designers, who join IDC, will further confuse the public? Surely you need to be very clear regarding what ‘qualified’ means when opening membership to those not in a provincial association?**

Q1B. **Should IDC be open to everyone or just a Professional Association?**

A1. We have learned over the last number of years that the regulated design profession has seen membership numbers remain stagnant or decline while the broader design community has increased in size and influence. We want and need to be part of that community with increased reach and influence. The more people that we have in our tent advocating for the profession, the better off we believe the profession is, and correspondingly, each of the provincial regulatory associations will be. We also believe that by bringing those new members into IDC will help by having additional advocates spread the news of how design impacts lives and more broadly how design is important.

We will of course need to carefully ensure that the public is aware of all the regulatory aspects each of the Provincial associations and that they will enforce those components. We will also put policies on ethics in place for our members (new and old) to ensure that those who are under the IDC banner act professionally within those policies and with the public.

Q2. **How does this change affect associations such as IDNS which have a Practice Act – with this new model it may turn out that they can’t collect dues for IDC?**

A2. The new dues model and bylaws cannot affect, in any way, any existing collaborative relationships or agreements in place as it pertains to who sends out notices, collects dues, or how programs are delivered.
Q3. **How will the proxies be rolled out? Will proxies be recorded electronically?**

A3. Registered / voting members of IDC have been emailed on Friday, September 15 with a separate notice from that sent to non-voting members – that email to voting members contained a link to assign their proxy to a voting member who must be in attendance at IDC’s 2017 Annual Meeting in Montréal on October 19.

When that attending member signs in to the 2017 Annual Meeting, they will be handed a voting card representing the total number of assigned proxies set alongside their name on the register.

Q4. **Have IDC’s amended bylaws already been passed, or will members be voting to accept these at the 2017 Annual Meeting?**

A4. The board has passed the by-laws and now requires the members to ratify them at the annual meeting. Please rest assured that the board, in its fiduciary responsibility, has taken the time to analyze all components of the by-laws and their potential impacts (positive and negative) before passing them and presenting them to you.

Q5. **How will voting on the amended bylaws and dues increased be conducted? Will this be done nationally?**

A5. The amended Bylaws will be voted on by members attending the 2017 IDC Annual Meeting in Montréal on October 19, 2017.

Registered / voting members of IDC have been emailed on Friday, September 15 with a separate notice from that sent to non-voting members – that email contains a link to assign voting members’ proxy to a voting member who must be in attendance at IDC’s 2017 Annual Meeting in Montréal on October 19.

When that member signs in to the 2017 Annual Meeting, they will be handed a voting card representing the total number of assigned proxies set alongside their name on the register.

Q6. **These proposed dues increases relate to fiscal year 2018; however IDC’s bylaws indicate that such increases need to be published 90 days from the end of the fiscal year. Has this stipulation been sufficiently met?**

The date of IDC’s 2017 Annual Meeting falls after the 90 days bylaw notification period of Sept 28, 2017, therefore do these proposed dues increases not then relate to the fiscal year starting January 1, 2019?

A6. This timescale and these stipulations have been met - Registered / voting members of IDC were emailed on Friday, September 15 with a separate notice from non-voting members, and as a result, thereby meets the by-law notice provisions for changes to dues. That email contained a link to assign their proxy to a voting member who must be in attendance at IDC’s 2017 Annual Meeting in Montréal on October 19.
When that attending member signs in to the 2017 Annual Meeting, they will be handed a voting card representing the total number of assigned proxies set alongside their name on the register.

Q7. **Does IDC intend to market itself directly to students and other members?**

A7. IDC will continue to partner regularly with ‘sister’ organization such as IIDA, RAIC, IIDA, RGD etc. where we see that these partnerships can deliver additional benefits for our members, and this will continue as these relationships help us to meet our mandate of “advancing the profession of Interior Design across Canada and internationally”.

We will also continue our existing communications program which incorporates web and social media, proactive media relations, education outreach and personal relationship-building, through which we frequently receive requests to join IDC. We will therefore address all such requests as they are received.

Q8. **The new IDC will have nine board members – will these board members be drawn one each from the nine provincial associations?**

A8. A revised board structure – one wherein all board members, beginning at the annual meeting in 2018, will be voted in as members to the IDC board. That means that there will no longer be members appointed from each of the provincial associations.

This doesn’t mean that there won’t be representation from across the country. We will have a policy developed to ensure that our nominations committee has guidelines for a rational distribution of members on the board. Our governance committee will be finalizing those policies this fall and they will also include a set list of competencies required for board members.

Q9. **Why are we only giving members and provincial associations four weeks notice to an increase or change to dues?**

A9. The board has been working diligently over the summer to get a package of information together that is consistent and coherent for all to understand. The dues come into effect on Jan. 1, 2018, so we are in effect giving 108 days notice of the change – more than a quarter of the year.

Q10. **What happens to proxies in the future ie under the new by-laws?**

A10. The by-laws are structured so that there will not need to be proxies going forward. The intent is to have the membership engaged in a way to either attend the annual meeting and/or to vote in advance of the annual meeting for any items requiring decision, e.g. election of directors. We believe that this change is a more transparent and effective way for our membership to see and participate in association business.

Q11. **Why are the by-laws structured to only allow the board to increase dues or special assessments to members, versus having members vote on dues increases?**
A11. The Board of Management are your fiduciary leaders of the corporation and as such are tasked with ensuring that the corporation runs in a manner that makes financial sense and which represents the members effectively. It doesn’t make financial or fiduciary sense to have members make these types of decisions. Nor is it best practice, naturally, for a board to delegate its financial responsibility to the members.

Q12. Why are we reducing the requirements for designers – moving from a required 4 year degree to a 2 year degree, (per existing by-laws)? Won’t this adversely impact how the public sees interior designers?

A12. Over last number of years, the regulated design profession has seen membership numbers remain stagnant or decline while the broader design community has increased in size and influence. We want and need to be part of that community with increased reach and influence. It is becoming clearer, through our research that volunteer associations need to find ways to be more inclusive.

We also know that there are thousands of individuals across the country are engaged in the broader design community, who are seeking to belong and also access the benefits we deliver, be it programs, events, professional development or networking opportunities.

As a result the IDC Board of Management has decided that by changing our entry requirements, those changes do not, by any means, impact the CIDA standards, nor the requirements each provincial association requires for its registered interior designers. This is simply intended as a means to opening access to the national advocacy body and the important work it does and allows IDC the ability to influence additional advocates for the profession. It will not result in confusion but rather a clarification of the differences in our roles between IDC and the provincial regulatory associations.

Q13. If IDC is opening the door to allow more non-registered interior designers into the fold, will that not water down the impact and influence of interior designers and the profession more broadly?

A13. Over last number of years, the regulated design profession has seen membership numbers remain stagnant or decline while the broader design community has increased in size and influence. We want and need to be part of that community with increased reach and influence.

We believe that we, as an association for the interior design profession, would benefit from a less restrictive access to all advocates of the profession, in an effort to educate our partners, stakeholders and the public. The more people that we have in our association advocating for the profession, the better off we believe the profession is, and correspondingly, each of the provincial regulatory associations will be.

Q14. What are IDC staff doing? Who does what?

A14. IDC’s staff of nine includes the Chief Executive Officer who oversees the daily direction of the organization, and looks after all requirements of the IDC volunteer board. He is supported in this by an Executive Assistant.
A team of five deliver all marketing and communications, including all DesignEx trade shows, national conferences, emerging professional programs and conferences, ongoing year-round professional development, emarketing, web and social media, member networking, education outreach, proactive media relations, provincial education and chapter liaison, member benefits and member enquiries.

Two more team members look after all industry membership, industry training and new business development, and all finance services for IDC, DAIC, the IDC Foundation as well as IDC’s annual audit, ongoing payroll and human resources support.

Q15. **Members have received a significant amount of information regarding the changes to IDC’s by-laws. Will there be a separate venue, from the webinar series, to discuss these?**

A15. The 2017 Annual Meeting being held in Montréal on October 19 is the platform for that discussion, prior to members voting on the new bylaws. As your fiduciary leaders, it is the Board’s’ considered view that IDC does not have sufficient financial resources to support a second event of this nature.

Q16. **Is the 2018 IDC National Conference intended to replace IIDEX, and will it move from province to province?**

A16. IIDEX is a separate entity, owned by Informa. The 2018 IDC National Conference is intended to provide members with the ideal blend of professional development, networking, awards ceremonies, keynote speakers, emerging professionals’ conference, guided tours and the 2018 Annual Meeting – i.e. a multi-faceted, inspiring conference tailored specifically for our members.

We are pleased that members are expressing enthusiasm for plans surrounding a national conference, and IDC’s Board and staff are equally keen that the event should deliver additional revenues.

It may be possible to stage the National Conference in multiple locations from year to year, however this will require additional resources on the ground. For that reason and because this is our first national conference, Toronto has been chosen for 2018 both for total number of members located in the Greater Toronto Area, and also for ease of access from across the country.

Q17. **Why are new policies being mentioned if these have not yet been drafted? And how will you ensure that these policies reflect equal representation, and that members understand what they entail?**

A17. Under the new by-laws, the Board will be elected by members, still drawn from the provincial associations, and these new by-laws must first be approved by members. Once approved, the Board can establish a separate volunteer Committee tasked with creating policies.

IDC’s Governance Committee has created some draft policies, intended to reflect equity across the country as well as representing the various professional sectors – whether retail, hospitality, commercial, residential etc., Canada-wide – and these draft policies can be transferred to this new Committee, once in place.
Members of the Governance Committee include IDC Board members Carol Jones (IDIBC), Deborah Rutherford (ARIDO), Sally Mills (IDIBC), IDC President clinton hummel (ARIDO) and Kara MacGregor (IDNS). There is still work to do, but please rest assured, our committee is engaged and passionate to ensuring that IDC is strong going forward, with the right mix of skills, competencies, gender equality and geographical considerations, to name a few.

Q18. **What is the use of IDC’s ambitions for ‘international exposure for the Canadian interior design profession’ if this understanding is missing at home?**

A18. Forging international relationships that benefit our members and elevates respect for and understanding of the Canadian interior design profession forms a key element of the Board’s strategic plan.

During events such as trade missions abroad, Board members have been extremely impressed and proud at the high regard in which Canadian designers are viewed outside of our borders, and it’s our plan that we take this information and harness it for our own Canadian content.

Q19. **Surely admitting non-registered, non-qualified people will not help our case for educating the public. Does this not demonstrate the importance of securing a Practice Act? And since IDC is an advocacy association, and not a jurisdictional body, why should anyone be empowered to use the appellation IDC?**

A19. The Board has been closely examining this issue as well and analyzing who should be entitled to use the appellation ‘IDC’. The board will be establishing appellation policies to protect our registered interior designers.

Additionally, members have advised the IDC Board that they have a sense of pride in belonging to the association, and that they wish to actively use the IDC appellation.

Q20. **Since electronic voting is not possible, will this skew the outcome of the members’ vote in favour of the 2017 Annual Meeting’s host province?**

A20. Based on the advice of IDC’s legal counsel, the practice operated by other professional associations and attendance at past IDC Annual Meetings, a quorum of 30 has been set for the result of the vote. We are aiming for a higher attendance than this modest threshold which should allow members to reach a quorum on these important issues. A quorum of 30 should not, therefore, affect the outcome.

Q21. **How is voting in advance to be achieved?**

A21. A process will definitely need to be established. The governance committee will begin this work, later this fall.

Q22. **In previous years, the Annual Meeting moved location to coincide with the Presidents’ Meeting, and a quorum was achieved. Will this happen again?**
Since 2010, the Annual Meeting has been held in numerous cities and, this year, Montréal was chosen to tie in with the World Design Summit – an exciting opportunity for members to participate in both the World Design Summit and in the 2017 Annual Meeting.

We plan to tie in the 2018 Annual Meeting with the first National Conference, in Toronto, in September 2018, and we anticipate that attendance will be higher for the 2018 Annual Meeting due to the extensive education, networking, keynote speakers, conferences and tours planned.

In addition, the National Conference Committee will be tasked with 'digging in’ to identify optimum locations for future National Conferences.

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September 22, 2017