

## New study finds strong correlation between architecture firms designing high performance buildings and overall firm excellence

*Report examines key elements of architecture firms behind the most ecologically advanced buildings*

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**Washington, D.C. – March 30, 2017** – By advancing how the architecture industry approaches design and construction, architects play a leading role in mitigating the effects the built environment can have on climate change and energy consumption. The American Institute of Architects (AIA) Committee on the Environment (COTE) has analyzed the characteristics of the architecture firms that regularly produce the most advanced buildings and compiled their findings in a new report, [\*The Habits of High-Performance Firms\*](#).

For over 20 years the [AIA COTE Top Ten Awards](#) have recognized architecture firms who have completed projects that employ the latest innovations in sustainable design to create the highest performance buildings. Closely studying these firms reveals several common traits related to their specialization, size, location, staff, and age. Of the 130 architecture firms that have won at least one COTE Top Ten Award, 29 have done so more than once and 17 have won three or more times. Of those winning more than three COTE Top Ten Awards, 59% have also been recognized as [AIA Firm Award](#) recipients, the AIA's highest honor given to architecture firms. These findings support the concept that there is a connection between great, sustainable projects and overall firm excellence.

According to the new research, these high-performance firms have the following traits:

- Unanimous signing of the [AIA 2030 Commitment](#)
- Significantly high project performance for energy, water, and other metrics
- Energy modeling, daylighting modeling, and post-occupancy evaluations as standard practice
- Geographic concentration (47% on the West Coast)
- Medium size (average staff number of 75)
- A high percentage of women in staff (46%) and leadership positions (34%)
- Low staff turnover (under 10%)
- A high percentage of staff with LEED accreditation (48%)

You can learn more about *The Habits of High-Performance Firms* by accessing the full report here: <https://www.aia.org/resources/72031-the-habits-of-high-performance-firms->

### About The American Institute of Architects

Founded in 1857, the American Institute of Architects consistently works to create more valuable, healthy, secure, and sustainable buildings, neighborhoods, and communities. Through

nearly 300 state and local chapters, the AIA advocates for public policies that promote economic vitality and public wellbeing. Members adhere to a code of ethics and conduct to ensure the highest professional standards. The AIA provides members with tools and resources to assist them in their careers and business as well as engaging civic and government leaders and the public to find solutions to pressing issues facing our communities, institutions, nation and world. Visit [www.aia.org](http://www.aia.org).