
ASLA PHL2018

**Annual Meeting
and EXPO**

**October 19-22
Philadelphia**

#ASLA2018

MON-C04

Congratulations on Starting Your New Landscape Architecture Firm! Now What???

A panel of professionals who have varied years of experience in their own firms – from a new start up with less than 2 years, a firm now in business for over 5 years and a well established firm with over 20 years moderated by a professional with over 40 years in the practice of landscape architecture will give real life examples of what one can expect to encounter when first starting out including licenses, laws, and codes that may pertain to starting a new business, as well as avoiding potential pitfalls. Panelists will share their individual stories of what challenges they encountered, what information was important and useful to them as well as the things they wish they had known before starting out.

Learning Objectives:

- Discover the questions to ask and steps to take BEFORE starting your business, and how to market your skills and talents effectively.
- Learn which typical business model types there are to choose from, how to develop a business plan, and how to determine business strategies for yourself and your new company
- Examine the wide range of start up opportunities and challenges, and how to avoid some of the many common pitfalls and mistakes often made when starting a business
- Understand your legal requirements, learn about your liability insurance needs, plan on how to get that first client, and how to get paid for your work and services



Moderator:

Andrew Bowden, ASLA, Principal Landscape Architect

Land Concern

ABowden@landconcern.com

Andy Bowden is a steadfast contributor to the success of Land Concern and as a team leader is known within the building community for his ability to handle the most challenging of projects. Andy has served as an energetic and forceful advocate for the profession, playing a prominent role in defense of licensure; advocacy for the central role of landscape architects in promoting the health, safety and welfare of the public; and supporting innovative paths to joining the profession. He is a mentor to students and emerging professionals and was instrumental in endowing the California Landscape Architectural Scholarship Fund to provide scholarships into perpetuity.



Panelists:

Wendy Miller, FASLA, Principal

Wendy Miller Landscape Architecture PLLC

wendy@millerbarefoot.com

Wendy Miller is a Principal with her firm specializing in multi-modal planning, corridors studies, transportation aesthetics, and public involvement strategies. She has over 25 years experience working in public sector urban design and transportation planning developing multi-agency plans, corridor design solutions, and promoting efforts to improve the visual environment through design policy and public awareness. As a member of the Transportation Research Board Landscape and Environmental Design Committee, she collaborates on research needs for landscape architects in transportation practice and served on the National Academy of Sciences NCHRP Panel on Visual Impact Assessments.



Duane Border, ASLA, Principal

Duane Border Design

duane@duaneborder.com

Duane Border has over 15 years experience as a design leader of large and small projects all over the world, but finds his most rewarding projects those close to home in Southern California. He is intent on bringing the art form of landscape design to the forefront of the experience of projects by immersing the audience in the richness and wonder of the natural environment. Duane shares his dedication to creating interactive landscapes with students at the UCLA Extension Landscape Architecture Department. He leads a design studio emphasizing new solutions to traditional problems with an ability to meet the new challenges of construction technology, sustainability and economics.



Baxter Miller, ASLA, President

BMLA, Inc.

baxter@bmla.net

Baxter Miller is responsible for the operation and design direction of BMLA Landscape Architecture, which he established in 1987. He has led a wide variety of projects from parks and streetscapes to national memorials and downtown redevelopment. Baxter's 30 years of practical knowledge in design helps him work with developers, cities, and agencies to create a unique vision that translates into real world projects. He works extensively with ASLA as an Executive Board Member to promote the technical advancement and public prominence of the profession.

Introduction (Moderator): Making the Decision to Start Your Own Firm

The Factors that Lead to Making the Decision

Finding a Mentor

Researching the State/City Laws and Regulations

- Business Start Up
- Landscape Architecture Services

Pulling the Trigger – Going Out on Your Own

Legalese

- DBA / LLC / S-Corp
- Contracts
- Liability / Errors and Omissions

Structure and Staffing - How to Get It Done

- Licensing Software
- 1099's vs W2's

Where to Set Up Your Practice

What Type of Practice and What Type of Services Are Going to be Provided

- Establishing Scope and Fee
- Supplemental Training / Education
- Affiliated Professions / Collaboration

What Consultants Will Be Needed

Introduction of the Panelists – Telling Their Own Story

Wendy Miller, FASLA – Principal, Wendy Miller Landscape Architecture, PLLC

- Just recently started her own firm

Duane Border, ASLA – Principal, Duane Border Design

- Has had his own firm for less than 5 years

Baxter Miller, ASLA – President, BMLA, Inc.

- Seasoned professional with 20+ years of having his own firm

Discussion Questions:

- What/how/why did you make the decision to start your own firm?
- What research did you do beforehand?
- What didn't you know when first starting out but wish now that you had?
- What resources were useful to you and what would you have done differently?
- What worked best, and what didn't? The good, the bad, and the ugly...
- What was your biggest success and what was your biggest failure?
- How did you get your first client? Was that a successful experience?
- When were you ready to hire on help? How did you do that – employees, contract services, part time as needed?
- How do you market your firm? What have you found works the best?
- How have you dealt with liability insurance and planning of your firm's legacy and growth
- Start up costs?
- Getting Paid – Agreements, contracts and collections

Resources

"Ready, Set, Practice" Bruce Sharkey, FASLA, John Wiley & Sons, Inc. 1994

"How to Market Professional Design Services", Jones G., New York; Wiley, 1985

"How to Start, Expand, and Sell a Business" James Comiskey, San Jose, CA; Venture Perspective Press, 1985

"Start Your Engines" Kevan Williams, Landscape Architecture Magazine, May, 2017

Notes: