



## 2021 LAF Innovation + Leadership Symposium Discussion Guide

The 2020-2021 LAF Fellows raised forward-thinking points and questions on landscape architecture practice as we know it today. Below, you will find discussion questions specific to each presentation. We encourage you to read through and select those that offer your team theoretical and practical thought exercises. We hope that these prompts will spark dialogue and perhaps influence future designs, planning, and implementation.

**The Fellows have provided their contact information should you wish to reach out directly to continue the discussion or offer perspectives and/or resources to their endeavors.**

### Day 1

#### **El Río está vivo... y nadie lo sabe!: Re-envisioning Flood Control in the Río Piedras Watershed**

*Edmundo Colón Izquierdo* – [ecolon@eco-designstudio.com](mailto:ecolon@eco-designstudio.com)

- Identify the actors/agencies with whom Edmundo interacted during his fellowship project that are not typical to a landscape architect's collaborative process. What did their involvement mean for Edmundo's practice and approach?
- What are the benefits of Edmundo's alternate vision for the Río Piedras Watershed? What were the successes and challenges in communicating that message, and how can landscape architects effectively form alliances?
- What were some of Edmundo's takeaways on the question of how landscape architects can become change agents in political and economic climates? Do these apply to your projects, firms, and/or communities?

#### **Redistributing Power: Energy Justice Beyond Kilowatt Hours**

*Andrea Johnson* – [drecha1@gmail.com](mailto:drecha1@gmail.com)

- What are some of the disproportionate impacts of power distribution throughout New York City? What does the distribution of power look like in your localities?
- What skills, expertise, and considerations can landscape architects contribute to the transition to clean energy at various scales?
- What are the parallels between evolving forms of cleaner energy distribution and ownership and the precedents set by stormwater management adaptations led by landscape architects?

#### **Redrawing Infrastructure: 2500 Years of Water Management**

*Diego Bermúdez* - [bermudez.diego@gmail.com](mailto:bermudez.diego@gmail.com)

- What value can uncovering and incorporating legacy infrastructures into regional design bring to the performance of a landscape?
- Diego plans to hold an exhibition that brings together stakeholders who do not always communicate with one another so they may review contesting visions for the region. What outcomes can be gained from such an event?
- How does the use of student work add value to the assortment of existing plans and visions for the region?

## **Day 2**

### **Landscape and ‘the Working Country’: Food Justice and Landscape Ethics in California’s Central Valley**

*Alison Hirsch* – [alisonh@usc.edu](mailto:alisonh@usc.edu)

- What are some of the structural environmental and spatial inequalities that can be found in landscapes of food production?
- What elements of the San Joaquin Valley’s history surprised you? Why do you think this knowledge is not more ubiquitous?
- What seeds of resistance did Alison identify, and how might they play a formative role in the valley’s future?

### **Design with Disabled People Now: Including Disabled People in the Design Process**

*Alexa Vaughn-Brainard* – [alexamvaughn12@gmail.com](mailto:alexamvaughn12@gmail.com)

- What can landscape architects contribute to the public realm when they push beyond the minimum standards set by ADA requirements?
- Why should disabled people be included as both stakeholders and experts in the design process?
- Reflect on the [Deafscape](#) principles Alexa introduced. Have you encountered these elements in design? How does their inclusion improve the lived experience of the disabled community?

### **Including Animals: Co-creating with Our More-Than-Human Neighbors**

*Roxi Thoren* – [rthoren@gmail.com](mailto:rthoren@gmail.com)

- What do landscape architects miss out on when they fail to consider and/or learn from the non-human species that populate an intended design site?
- What might moving towards a mutually beneficial, collaborative design model with animals look like in your design process?
- What would be some of your region’s key species to collaborate with, and what might they bring to your designs?