

*Graduates of FIDER-accredited programs receive an education recognized by the interior design profession as meeting requirements for entry into the profession. In the future this factor may affect the right to practice in states with licensing or registration acts.*

In 1997 the professional societies' leaders joined the FIDER trustees in developing plans to address the future of interior design accreditation. FIDER's governance structure was identified as a significant strategic concern. With the support of the founding organizations, FIDER was restructured in 1999 from a trust into a nonprofit corporation. The new structure was designed to maintain productive connections with all "communities of interest," to assure continued collaboration between interior design educators and practitioners. Today, FIDER maintains strategic relationships with those organizations.

The FIDER board of directors, the governing body of the foundation, is responsible for ensuring that the organization fulfills its mission. The board sets standards, determines the process through which accreditation occurs, maintains relationships with the design community, and secures funds and other resources. The board of directors is responsible for maintaining the legal, fiscal, and ethical integrity of FIDER. Financial support for FIDER comes from fees paid by institutions for accreditation, annual fees paid by programs to maintain their accreditation, and contributions from the profession, industry, and interior design press. There are nine directors on the FIDER board, each serving a maximum of two three-year terms. A director represents each of the five constituent groups. Those five directors appoint four other directors, who represent all other stakeholders in the profession. The executive director is an *ex-officio* member of the board.

The mission of FIDER is further achieved through the work of additional commissions and committees. The Accreditation Commission and Board of Visitors are hands-on volunteers, trained in the standards and evaluation process, who are responsible for implementing the process of program accreditation. The FIDER Research Council validates the accreditation process through studies and encourages research in interior design. The Standards Council monitors the standards through periodic surveys. Standards are revised when significant or cumulative developments in the interior design profession occur, which must be addressed through education.

Because postsecondary interior design programs exist in different types of institutions, in 1999 FIDER adopted a single set of standards for professional degree programs. These standards were developed through research with practitioners and educators to determine appropriate levels of preparation