

ARE Success Teams

FAQs

BECOMING A MEMBER OF AN ARE SUCCESS TEAM

What is an ARE Success Team?

We discovered that most people were having problems taking the ARE exams because they felt isolated and unsupported. In contrast to the "old days," when everyone took the exam at the same time of year, candidates now can take the exams at any time. This leaves us without anyone to talk to about our progress with, ask questions of, or offer support to.

We also discovered that most people were not scheduling their exams in advance. In the old method, the twice-yearly exam periods provided a structure for the exams. In the success teams, we encourage you to schedule at least half your exams in advance. This creates a structure that is lacking when you try to go it alone.

What is the goal of each success team?

Each participant in every group will pass the ARE and become a licensed architect. Everyone in each group will continue to offer support to group members until every member of the group passes all his or her exams.

How do I join a success team?

We form groups at kick-off meetings in March and September. Groups are formed on a first-come, first-serve basis. Any and all Associates who are ready to take the ARE and have an authorization number, issued by Thomson Prometric, are welcome to attend. RSVP to associates@aia-nj.org to let us know you are coming. At the kick-off meeting you will be asked to sign the [commitment letter](#) and be matched with team members.

Can I join a success team before I've finished IDP? Before I've received a letter from the State? Before I've been authorized to test by Thomson Prometric?

No. We will ask that you give us your authorization number from Thomson Prometric, which administers the exams, before you can join a group. We have tried forming teams before they have finished all their paperwork with NCARB, the State, Prometric's Candidate Services (PCS), and Thomson Prometric, but have found that it can sometimes take several months before all the paperwork is complete. Therefore, we must know that you are ready to take the exams before you can join a team.

You may submit your name now to AIA-NJ to indicate your interest in joining a future group. We will keep you on our email list and notify you when the next round of groups will be formed. However, to join a team you will have to submit your Thomson Prometric authorization number.

How are success teams formed?

We schedule a meeting for the first 40 people who sign up for each new series of teams in March and September. At this meeting, we discuss the functioning of the success teams, what AIA-NJ will provide, and what we ask of each team member. We then ask you to break up into groups based on your availability (where you work and what nights you're available to meet with the team), proposed schedule, and proposed sequence. We have plenty of time to talk about the pros and cons of various schedules, and we should come out of the process with four distinct groups. At that meeting we ask you to appoint a team leader for your group and sign a letter of commitment confirming that you will stick with your team throughout the process.

How many people are in a success team?

We recommend 6-8 and no more than 10. Any fewer than 6, and you run the risk of being rendered ineffective if a couple of people drop out. At 10 people, it becomes very difficult to schedule meetings and keep everyone in communication.

Can we have a success team of only people from one office?

Although it can be helpful to have other people from your office on your team, we don't recommend it. We believe it is more helpful for you to work with people from other offices for a number of reasons. First, it gives you a chance to meet other people in our profession and make contacts and learn how other offices operate. Second, you will have access to a much wider range of study information, since people in separate offices can discuss problems and ideas with their colleagues. And third, it frees up additional study materials in your own office. We will support an office team, but we don't recommend it.

I have a very full schedule. How do I let my bosses know I'm studying for the ARE and need a break?

Once you have joined a success team, you will be able to download our "[Letter to the Principal](#)" to give to your project manager and/or principal in charge. We recommend you let everyone know you are studying for the ARE. You should give your colleagues a schedule indicating the days you will be at meetings and taking exams. Your employer has an ethical requirement to assist you in taking the exams. We strongly recommend that you let your principals, as well as your project manager, know you are taking the exams. Sometimes a project manager is under so much pressure to get a job done, that he or she will not understand your need to become registered. You may find that your principals will be strong advocates for you.

How much does this cost?

It is free; AIA-NJ is underwriting this program as a service for young Associates. You will give AIA-NJ a deposit of \$100 for study materials. This deposit you will be returned to you at the end of your exams, after you have completed a program survey. You may also opt to take an AIA-NJ sponsored seminar at your own expense; otherwise, the program is free.