Building Innovation 2021

The National Institute of Building Sciences held Building Innovation 2021 this week. We are grateful to the hundreds of building professionals who turned out for this second annual virtual conference. Our subject matter experts covered a huge amount of information in 30 sessions over three days. Here’s a look at what happened each day.

Day 1: Design, Solutions, Innovation and Resilience

Technology is a means to an end, not the end itself, said Jessica O. Matthews, CEO of Uncharted.

Matthews, a dual-citizen of the U.S. and Nigeria, kicked off the first day of Building Innovation 2021, sharing personal experiences that led to her success as an entrepreneur and inventor. Years ago, Matthews created the Soccket, an energy-harnessing soccer ball.
In her keynote, "Innovating During Times of Uncertainty: Adapting Your Business for the New Normal," Matthews talked about how Uncharted pivoted in the business world by doubling down on its mission to redefine power access and build smarter, safer cities. The company builds operating systems for last-mile infrastructure.

“I believe universal access to smart, sustainable infrastructure is a right,” Matthews said, discussing three concepts – intersectionality, intention, and impact – that helped her course-correct throughout her professional life.

Intersectionality is the first step toward harnessing innovation. It means to know your true north, the thing you’re pushing for.

Intention is aligning your activities to your intended goal, and impact forces you to reflect on what you’ve accomplished.

“Every single time you win, you cannot think you’re done,” she said.

Inviting People from Around the World to Join Us

Carl Hedde, Head of Insurance Practice at One Concern and Chair of the National Institute of Building Sciences, opened the meeting to attendees.

“For the second year, we have decided to take our annual meeting virtual,” Hedde said. “There are many reasons for this. The safety and health of our attendees and members come first. But secondly, we learned last year that opening up this meeting to a broader audience translated into a greater built environment conversation.”

Day 1 of BI2021 included these sessions: Designing Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Policies on Purpose for Greater Impact; The Story of BIM and the New World of Digital Construction; An Overview of 4D BIM Construction Sequencing: The Reality and the Potential; Building Codes Save: FEMA’s Nationwide Building Code Losses Avoided Study Panel; The Rapidly Accelerating Housing Shortage and Modular Building Solution; Simulation Platform for Energy-Efficient Design (SPEED); and Resilience, Functional Recovery, Sustainability – What Are They & What Do They Mean to the Structural Engineering Profession?

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“The pandemic has challenged the built environment – and each and every one of us – in many ways,” she said. “We still have to work, build buildings, be safe at home, and recognize that work may not be in traditional locations. We’re reassessing, reassigning, and redesigning spaces. Through all of this, it’s still important for us to come together – probably more so than ever.”

Building Innovation is a meeting for the building industry that brings the most timely, relevant, and critical information to impact today’s jobs and tomorrow’s future.

Day 2 of BI2021 included these sessions: Addressing Climate Injustice: Building Our Way to Equitable, Sustainable and Resilient Communities; Unmasking Microaggressions in the Workplace; Data-Driven Collaboration at the Department of State; Accelerating Climate Change Solutions and Action Through Museums; and ESG & DEI: Best Practices for Building Industry Applications.

Day 2: We’re Reassessing, Reassigning, and Redesigning Spaces

Connectivity has led to true equity in the work environment, said Lakisha A. Woods, CAE, President and CEO of the National Institute of Building Sciences.

Woods opened the second day of Building Innovation 2021, sharing about the pandemic and its continued challenges.
It’s Not Difficult to Design to Zero Carbon

Edward Mazria, FAIA, Founder and CEO of Architecture 2030, opened the conference with his keynote, *If We Act Together Now, We Can Change the World.*

The time for half measures and outdated targets is over, if we are to stop the irreparable destruction of our cities, towns, and natural environments, Mazria maintains.

He outlined three steps to achieve zero carbon:

- Design an energy efficient building to the latest codes standards (or better). Efficiency standards include Title 24 (2019); IECC (2021 Appendix) and ASHRAE 90.1 (2019). Design would include an efficient building envelope; passive heating, cooling and ventilation; and efficient systems, equipment and controls.

- Design all-electric and renewables. This means addressing the building’s energy needs with on-site renewable energy and/or off-site renewable energy like wind, solar or hydro. In other words, no on-site fossil fuels.

- Phase out carbon. Very large buildings should get to zero carbon by 2030. Small buildings should be given a little more time – to 2040 to get to zero carbon. Providing incentives to building owners and communities would help; these include low interest loans, tax abatements, equipment discounts and rebates.

Mazria said it starts with changing the conversation.

“The greenest building, development or neighborhood is the one that is already built,” he said, discussing the idea of repurposing and adaptive reuse of existing buildings.

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Building Innovation Day 3: We Need Your Voice

Over three days, hundreds of BI2021 virtual attendees learned about everything from building resilience, safety and technology to building information modeling and climate injustice.

The third day of Building Innovation opened with remarks from Anne Ellis, Executive Director of the Charles Pankow Foundation and incoming Chair of the National Institute of Building Sciences, who spoke about this pivotal time for the building industry.

The nation’s existing buildings and infrastructure are being challenged in so many ways and by a number of elements, she said.

“We must talk about these issues and challenges,” she said, encouraging BI2021 attendees to join the NIBS community as members. “We need your voice. There is no limit to the number of seats we can have at this table. You have the power to help shape the future of our built environment.”

Sessions on Day 3 of Building Innovation included Systems Change to Create and Transform Healthy Buildings; Off-Site Construction: Addressing Common Community and Building Industry Challenges; Applying Artificial Intelligence to Buildings with Imperfect Data; Making Businesses and Homes More Resilient with the SBA, IBHS and the Insurance Information Institute; Climate Adaptation, Mitigation, and the Role of Building Codes; Innovations in the Life Cycle of Concrete Structures; and How Career Mapping is Helping Increase the Talent Pipeline for the Built Environment.

In case you missed any part of the conference, recordings of BI2021 sessions are available to attendees for the next 60 days.

Reimagining Infrastructure: A Future World Vision

Opening the third and final day of Building Innovation was Thomas W. Smith, III, Executive Director, American Society of Civil Engineers, with his keynote about A Future World Vision – Safe, Resilient and Sustainable Infrastructure.

Faced with challenges including aging infrastructure, demographic shifts and climate change, as well as opportunities like alternative energy, smart cities, and high-tech construction, the built environment is rapidly changing.

Smith discussed engineering challenges and opportunities for the natural and built environment, and ASCE’s new approach to a Future World Vision for safe, sustainable, and resilient infrastructure.

Reacting to disaster is costly, he said, citing the global pandemic, recent earthquake in Haiti, and costly hurricanes like Katrina, Sandy, Harvey and Irma. Quoting the Natural Hazard Mitigation Saves report, Smith said mitigation measures save up to $13 per $1 invested.

“Our infrastructure plays a critical role,” he said. “As engineers, we are problem solvers. We have some global challenges ahead.”

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NIBS Co-Sponsors Building Safety Event with ICC and BOMA

In light of the tragic condominium collapse in Surfside, Florida, the National Institute of Building Sciences participated in and co-sponsored a building safety event in West Palm Beach with the International Code Council and Building Owners and Managers Association International.

The event – Ensuring the Safety of Existing Buildings – was hosted by the Building Officials Association of Florida. Dialogue focused on monitoring the safety of existing buildings, building codes and inspections, and how future catastrophic events can be avoided. The goal was to establish a channel for the building safety community to develop information to help inform policy makers as they consider questions raised by the collapse of the thirteen-story Champlain Towers South.
Carl Hedde, Head of Insurance Practice with One Concern, Principal of CGH Consulting, LLC, and Chair of the NIBS Board of Directors, said the event came at a critical time for the nation.

“Our communities depend on the safe and resilient performance of our structures,” Hedde said. “The existing building stock must be prepared to respond. We must protect these assets.”

The NIBS team participated in the day-long event. They included Anne Ellis, PE, FACI, F.ASCE, Executive Director with the Charles Pankow Foundation, a professional engineer, and incoming Chair of NIBS, who served as a panelist on a discussion around current building codes and standards that relate to structural safety, existing buildings, and property maintenance. Drew N. Rouland, MBA, PMP, Vice President of NIBS, moderated a panel on the current process for building inspections, including guidelines for frequency and how they are performed.

Event participants included representatives from non-profit, academic and private organizations, as well as local leaders from Florida, and experts from the code enforcement, building, construction, design and real estate communities. The International Code Council plans to follow up the event with a virtual meeting for a national audience this fall.
Women Executives in Building – When “Being the Only” is Its Own Superpower

Initially, Michelle Buczkowski considered “being the only” an isolating place.

Buczkowski, vice president of talent management with 84 Lumber, shared during the virtual leadership meeting of the Women Executives in Building on August 31, that many times she felt like the youngest – and only – woman in a room.

“For a while I saw ‘being the only’ as a lonely place,” Buczkowski said. “[Later] all the things that made me ‘the only’ became my superpower.”

The executives in the NIBS Women Executives in Building meeting understood this. The built environment is a mostly male-dominated profession.

Cindy O’Malley, chief operating officer with the Association for Materials Protection and Performance, added: “Think of the opportunities you took and the fear you had. A lot of what you’re told is: ‘Why did you do that? You were on a good path.’ It’s the expected paths vs. fear of the unknown.”

Construction Specifications Institute Chief Operating Officer Velma Hart said practicing self-care and self-growth is important.

“[This] is something I learned late in life and now I have to remind myself almost daily,” Hart said. “I am more powerful individually, and my circle is more powerful collectively. I’m intentional, and I forge forward.”
**Women Who Blaze the Trail**

The first Women Executives in Building Summit was held in October 2019. Through the pandemic, leaders have come together quarterly to join NIBS for the **virtual leadership series**.

In these challenging and unprecedented times, women executives in the built environment must come together, support each other and share thoughts and ideas on how they are providing value. Many of these leaders work from home, while managing and keeping teams inspired and motivated. All this while running households, home schooling children, and trying to maintain mental health.

Women in the c-suite of the built environment are invited to join these quarterly Zoom calls.

“One is a powerful number, whether you're the only one or the first,” said Miriam Keith, president with Kayleb Consulting, LLC. “Both can have significant impact.”

NIBS CEO Lakisha A. Woods, CAE, said it’s important to support women and develop them as leaders in the building industry.

“You bring strength to your role,” Woods said. “When you are ‘the only,’ it’s important to showcase your success and advocate for other women to grow within the company.”

**Keep These Tips Handy**

The Women Executives in Building shared many tips about managing professional life. They include:

- Do not fall into the role of validator or accepting everything. (This is easier said than done, and it may come with consequences.)
- People choose how to react to you. Their response is not your responsibility.
- Make that change and go out on that limb. You’ll live to fight another day.
- Keep up with professional networks like NIBS for support and guidance.
- Build a personal board of directors – you need coaches, mentors and advocates in your circle.
- Be an advocate for all women: Blow the whistle if someone's being “talked over.”

The next Women Executives in Building virtual meeting is being planned for this winter. Visit nibs.org for more information.
COLUMNS

BIM Program Manager Jay Kline
Selected for 2021-2022 SAME Leader Development Program Class

The National Institute of Building Sciences and the Society of American Military Engineers (SAME) are pleased to announce that NIBS BIM Program Manager Jay Kline, PE, LC, has been selected to participate in the 2021-2022 Class of the SAME Leader Development Program (LDP). Twenty individuals from across SAME were chosen for this highly regarded development opportunity that focuses on leadership training to mid-career professionals from the military, government, industry, and academia.

LDP is a year-long commitment that began in May and will run through May 2022. It identifies and cultivates talent from within SAME’s membership to support the development of the next generation of leaders for the society and our nation. Through a curriculum of hands-on training, study, and active engagement in new opportunities, participants will explore individual strengths and team dynamics. For more information about SAME’s Leader Development Program, visit www.same.org/ldp.

BIM Council: NBIMS V4 Survey
Respondents Want an Accessible and Easy-to-Reference Standard

The National Institute of Building Sciences Building Information Management (BIM) Council has released the results of its NBIMS v4 Publishing and Formatting Survey. The survey was distributed to NIBS members and the general public during the month of June 2021.

The main takeaway: Respondents want a National BIM Standard that will be easy to use and accessible.

The ability to easily reference individual sections and lines of the standard was extremely important to 64 percent of respondents. Twenty-nine percent found this somewhat important. The final product of the standard will be created with the ability to reference it line-by-line for accuracy.

Regarding format, 70 percent of respondents found a packaged PDF or web-based product to be equally important. As a result, the product likely will be provided in both a web-based and downloadable PDF format upon final publication.

Finally, mobility did not have a clear consensus. Just 22 percent of respondents found access to the standard from a mobile device to be extremely important. Thirty percent said it was somewhat important, and 28 percent were neutral. Regardless, the final product will be accessible by mobile device as a convenience rather than a requirement.

Other survey highlights: 61 percent of respondents identified the existing National BIM Standard site (NationalBIMStandard.org) as the most likely place to find the standard. Twenty-one percent cited the National
Institute of Building Sciences site (nibs.org) as the place they would expect to locate the standard.

The BIM Council leads in the creation of tools and standards that allow projects to be built digitally before they are built physically through the use of building information modeling. For more information about the council visit nibs.org/bimc.

**BETEC, BECs Explore ENGAGE Information Exchange, Building Science Education, Strengthening Local and National Communities**

Representatives from the Building Enclosure Technology and Environment Council (BETEC) and its local component Building Enclosure Councils (BECs) assembled via Zoom for their annual meeting on September 21. Under the leadership of BETEC President Stephen Shanks, the group explored the new NIBS communications platform, ENGAGE and exchanged ideas on how it could be useful for sharing speakers’ lists, important new research, and upcoming events, as well as for a networking platform.

Given the increasing urgency placed by climate change, resiliency, and energy use on building enclosure, BETEC members stressed a need to ramp up efforts to rebuild their Education Committee to inject more building science education into higher education programs. Guest speaker Drake Wauters, representing the AIA’s Building Performance Knowledge Community, broached the notion of BETEC and AIA working together to present this urgency to the National Architectural Accrediting Board. BETEC member participants agreed to pursue this idea.

The BECs portion of the meeting, led by BECs-National Chair Will Babbington, demonstrated how, as COVID-19 fears and restrictions have reigned for the past 18 months, many local BECs have demonstrated their own brand of resilience and ingenuity in keeping their councils up and running. Although they report a ubiquitous case of “Zoom Fatigue” for virtual meetings, many BEC reps acknowledge their broader audience, increase availability of speakers, convenience, and economy. Some chapters, such as BEC Greater Detroit, have been able to host an in-person ball game and are looking forward to an outside Fall gathering, while others, such as AIA Portland, remain tied to virtual meetings because of local restrictions. All agree, though, that virtual components to events will continue to play a part regardless of venue.

As they move forward, BETEC members and BECs members also will work together in an exploratory committee to re-imagine a BEST6 (Building Enclosure Science & Technology) conference for the Spring of 2023. All NIBS members are welcome to join BETEC as part of their membership share in these efforts.

**NIBS Co-Authors FHWA Global Benchmarking Program Study on BIM for Infrastructure**

Once considered just for buildings, building information modeling (BIM) is gaining rapid acceptance in several
infrastructure industries, including highway transportation. BIM, as applied to highway infrastructure, involves collaboratively delivering capital projects through the planning, design, and construction phases and managing services using digital processes rather than traditional paper-based systems. BIM for infrastructure is a transformative approach of connecting data so that it is readily available across the life-cycle phases of built infrastructure.

To that end, NIBS recently co-authored a report with the Federal Highway Administration entitled “Building Information Modeling Practices in Highway Infrastructure.”

Although the movement toward BIM for infrastructure has been growing in the United States, several countries around the world are further along in advancing BIM for infrastructure and are developing a common set of standards and participating in international consensus efforts to address interoperability challenges. The FHWA undertook a Global Benchmarking Program study to learn from international experience, document evolving trends, and to understand how other countries are using BIM for infrastructure to better deliver transportation projects, manage assets, and provide related services—all with a view to benchmark and advance U.S. practice. Specifically, the study focused on the following areas: leadership, framework, communication and implementation.

Building Seismic Safety Council Announces Board of Directors

The Building Seismic Safety Council (BSSC) announced its Board of Directors for 2021-2022 at its council meeting on September 14, 2021. Chair Charlie Carter shared the vision of the board and BSSC’s future direction. With its core mission to enhance public safety by providing a national forum that fosters improved seismic planning, design, construction and regulation in the building community, BSSC will keep working with key government and industry partners to develop future National Earthquake Hazards Reduction Program (NEHRP) Recommended Seismic Provisions. The council also will continue convening dialogue on functional recovery design, lifelines, existing buildings, and innovation. BSSC Executive Director Jiqiu (JQ) Yuan shared the various activities and resources the BSSC provides, including the NEHRP publications and BSSC Tool for the 2020 NEHRP Provisions Seismic Design Map Values.

BSSC Board of Directors 2021-2022:

Charles J. Carter, SE, PE, PhD – Chair
Kent Yu, PhD, SE – Vice Chair
Roberto Leon, P.E., PhD – Secretary
Craig A. Davis, PhD, PE, GE – Member at Large
Joann Browning, PhD, PE – Member at Large
James Cagley, PE, SE – Past Chair
Jiqiu (JQ) Yuan, PhD, PE, PMP – Staff Lead

Data as an Asset Presented at DBIA Closing the Gap Design-Build in the Federal Sector Conference

BIM was a major leap forward from CAD, which was a major leap forward from T-squares and triangles. Within the last few decades, the process of planning and designing buildings has greatly evolved. The next generation of use cases capitalizes on the data aspects of BIM and open standard interoperability. People no longer have to be a highly-trained GIS specialist with very expensive GIS applications and workstations to call for an Uber ride or get turn-by-turn directions while driving. BIM has made similar leaps in capabilities.
The National Institute of Building Sciences has been working with federal agencies to establish practices that integrate existing internal processes and systems with BIM and the processes of design and construction consultants. At the recent Design-Build Institute of America (DBIA) Federal Sector Conference, Roger Grant, FbSI, NIBS Executive Director of BIM along with Lauren Frank, IIDA, LEED AP, Interior Designer at the Department of State Overseas Buildings Operations and Kimon Onuma, FAIA, Onuma, Inc., showed how federal agencies such as Veterans Affairs (VA) and the Department of State (DOS) Building Information Modeling (BIM) programs are evolving to capture the full value of BIMs the agencies were contracting for anyway. Improvements including how to use BIM to better communicate design requirements to AEC consultants; how to develop clear instructions for AEC consultants using Design-Build and other delivery methods to consistently deliver BIM (model and data) in a manner that will support the design and construction of the project as well as the overall lifecycle management of the facility; and how that sets up for using a digital representation of the facility to optimize facility and portfolio management were demonstrated. How federal owners are successfully using and integrating BIM with their internal operations and for collaborating with their industry partners was presented to support the case for treating data as a crucial asset for federal building owners and operators.

Multi-Hazard Mitigation Council Announces Board of Directors

The Multi-Hazard Mitigation Council (MMC) announced its Board of Directors for 2021-2022 during its council meeting on September 7, 2021. Chair Sara Yerkes led the conversation with members on how MMC could better serve and represent the industry. MMC Executive Director Jiqiu (JQ) Yuan presented the findings of the NIBS/MMC TurboGrants Survey Report.

MMC Board of Directors 2021-2022:

- Sara Yerkes – Chair
- Anne Cope, PhD, PE – Vice Chair
- Russ Strickland – Secretary
- Lauren Alexander Augustine – Member at Large
- Bryan Koon – Member at Large
- Daniel Kaniewski, PhD – Chair of Committee on Finance, Insurance and Real Estate
- Jiqiu (JQ) Yuan, PhD, PE, PMP – Staff Lead

FOX NEWS

MSNBC’s Joshua Johnson Suggests Surfside Condo Collapse can Justify ‘Price Tag’ of Infrastructure Spending

MSNBC anchor Joshua Johnson suggested that the tragic Surfside condominium building collapse can be leveraged to justify the “price tag” of infrastructure spending amid tense negotiations between lawmakers and the Biden administration. On Sunday’s “Meet the Press,” Johnson acknowledged that big-ticket proposals from Democrats are being used as “ammunition” by Republicans, but quickly pivoted to the horrific events in Florida, which has left at least 11 dead and 150 remain missing. READ MORE>>

INFORMED INFRASTRUCTURE

National Institute of Building Sciences Names First
Female Board Chair

The National Institute of Building Sciences, created by Congress in 1974, has named the first woman to serve as Chair of the Board of Directors. Anne M. Ellis, P.E., Hon.M.ACI, F.ASCE, M.NAC, Executive Director with the Charles Pankow Foundation, recently was elected to serve alongside several new officers. They include: Thomas H. Phoenix, Sr., PE, FASHRAE, LEED-AP, CPL Architects and Engineers, PC – Vice Chair; Darrell X. Rounds, FMA, C.E.M., Operations Group Manager, General Motors – Treasurer; and Charlie (Chuck) D. Curlin, Jr., PE, CEM, CPD, Principal with Shultz Engineering Group – Secretary. READ MORE>>

The Hill

Overcoming the ‘Information Deficit’ For U.S. Infrastructure and Buildings

To help the country recover from the economic impact of the pandemic, the U.S. government is working on funding for infrastructure improvements. A wise government investment estimated by the Congressional Budget Office to yield $2.20 of economic benefit for every dollar spent. An investment is sorely needed. READ MORE>>

Facility Executive

Healthy Buildings is The Focus on NIBS’ 2020 Moving Forward Report

The National Institute of Building Sciences (NIBS) Consultative Council has issued its 2020 Moving Forward Report, looking closely at the importance of healthy buildings. The report examines how buildings can protect and promote public health, providing recommendations for President Biden and policymakers on three components of healthy buildings: indoor environmental quality, the importance of design in promoting health, and promoting knowledge transfer between building owners and public health officials. READ MORE>>

WPTV

Building Safety Groups Meet in West Palm Beach, Work to Prevent Another Surfside Condo Collapse

Building safety organizations from around the country gathered Tuesday in West Palm Beach for a dialogue on how to prevent another Surfside condo collapse. The panel focused on how communities monitor the safety of existing buildings, what guidance exists for building owners and how future catastrophic events can be avoided. READ MORE>>

Architect Magazine

National Institute of Building Sciences Convenes Social Equity Roundtable

The National Institute of Building Sciences recently convened an executive Social Equity Roundtable, meeting with dozens of leaders to help move the needle on diversity, equity, and inclusion in the built environment. The late July meeting was a follow-up to a December 2020 executive roundtable entitled “Improving the Workforce of the Built Environment Through Social Equity.” The goal of these meetings is to discuss workforce, industry sustainability, review data and best practices, and partnerships. READ MORE>>

Scientific American

Fix Disaster Response Now

Given record-breaking wildfires, hurricanes and other weather disasters that cost lives and billions of dollars...
amid a pandemic that brought death to every corner of the country, the events of 2020 stretched U.S. emergency management institutions. Local governments have been unable to cope with the disasters, and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has been strained. READ MORE>>

IDAHO STATESMAN

President Biden Receives a Briefing from Federal and State Fire Agency Officials

U.S. President Joe Biden landed in Boise, Idaho, on Monday, Sept. 13. First stop on a wildfire-focused trip through the West. He met with federal and state fire agency officials at the National Interagency Fire Center. In this clip, President Biden utilizes NIBS’ Natural Hazard Mitigation Saves research in his remarks about the nation’s wildfires emergency. WATCH CLIP>>

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October 3-9: Fire Prevention Week
October 4: World Architecture Day
October 6: National Energy Efficiency Day

November: National Critical Infrastructure Security and Resilience Month

November 30: Giving Tuesday

EVENTS

Dec. 8: Best Practices for Anti-Terrorism Security
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