

NETWORKING

In a highly competitive job market, it is necessary to foster relationships with professional contacts. By getting to know more people in your field, you can open yourself up to career growth and development and also expand your knowledge base.

HOW TO BUILD YOUR NETWORK

FACULTY, CLASS SPEAKERS, OR VISITING ARTISTS Start with the MCAD resources closest to you—faculty members, class speaker, panelists, and visiting artists. Contacting someone when you have something to reference, such as, “I heard you speak in Erik Brandt’s Typography class last month and really enjoyed it,” gives the professional some reference as to who you are. Also, they are more likely to respond positively with this type of connection.

FIRST, SECOND, AND THIRD DEGREE CONNECTIONS In addition to MCAD connections, think about the people close to you and the degrees of separation. Reach out to friends, family, friends of family, family of friends—tap into their network connections.

MCAD ALUMNI MCAD has alumni spread out all over the world. Find them through the Alumni Directory, the “MCAD Alumni and Students” LinkedIn group, or the MCAD Alumni Office.

PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS Professional associations can help you get connected, stay informed, and provide a forum for discussion and exchange of ideas. It can also be a resource for up-to-date industry information to help you in your career development.

ARTS ORGANIZATIONS Local and/or national arts organizations serve artists by providing career-related information and services. Arts organizations may provide exhibition opportunities, career counseling, access to lawyers who support the arts and offer sliding scale fees to counsel artists, and opportunities to interact with arts community members.

MAGAZINES AND TRADE PUBLICATIONS Publications related to your field provide industry updates, articles, technical advice, and notices about conferences and events.

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE The Chamber of Commerce is an association that exists in nearly every city that assists in promoting sponsorship and providing information about businesses in their jurisdiction. Search the internet for the Chamber of Commerce in a specific region by using “Chamber of Commerce” and the city name.

STAY CONNECTED

Staying connected is vital to successful networking. One way to stay connected with your network is through LinkedIn. You can also get on mailing lists of businesses, galleries, or

organizations that interest you, follow blogs, and connect online or in person. Pursue any opportunity to meet someone. Get involved. Attend trade shows, job fairs, and conferences. If you are not having luck in your field, consider something related. For example, if you are an illustrator who is hired mostly by graphic designers, you may want to join a graphic design organization or connect with graphic designers on LinkedIn.

PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS

Here is a list of a few local professional organizations to consider. You may also find more associations related to your field online.

- The Advertising Federation of Minnesota (Ad Fed): adfed.org
- AIGA (the professional association for design): aiga.org
- American Marketing Association (AMA, Minnesota Chapter): amaminnesota.org
- American Society of Media Photographers: asmp.org
- Minnesota Broadcasters Association: minnesotabroadcasters.com
- Minnesota Council of Nonprofits: minnesotanonprofits.org
- Minnesota Film and TV Board: mnfilmtv.org
- Minnesota Interactive Marketing Association: mima.org
- Minnesota Public Relations Society: minnesotaprpsa.org
- Minnesota Publishers Roundtable: publishersroundtable.org
- Minnesota Society of Children’s Book Writers and Illustrators: minnesota.scbwi.org
- Minnesota State Arts Board: arts.state.mn.us
- Mn Artists: mnartists.org
- Springboard for the Arts: springboardforthearts.org