



**National Council for
Interior Design Qualification**

NCIDQ Definition of Interior Design

Interior design is a multi-faceted profession in which creative and technical solutions are applied within a structure to achieve a built interior environment. These solutions are functional, enhance the quality of life and culture of the occupants, and are aesthetically attractive. Designs are created in response to and coordinated with the building shell, and acknowledge the physical location and social context of the project. Designs must adhere to code and regulatory requirements, and encourage the principles of environmental sustainability. The interior design process follows a systematic and coordinated methodology, including research, analysis and integration of knowledge into the creative process, whereby the needs and resources of the client are satisfied to produce an interior space that fulfills the project goals.

Interior design includes a scope of services performed by a professional design practitioner, qualified by means of education, experience, and examination, to protect and enhance the life, health, safety and welfare of the public. These services may include any or all of the following tasks:

- Research and analysis of the client's goals and requirements; and development of documents, drawings and diagrams that outline those needs;
- Formulation of preliminary space plans and two and three dimensional design concept studies and sketches that integrate the client's program needs and are based on knowledge of the principles of interior design and theories of human behavior;
- Confirmation that preliminary space plans and design concepts are safe, functional, aesthetically appropriate, and meet all public health, safety and welfare requirements, including code, accessibility, environmental, and sustainability guidelines;
- Selection of colors, materials and finishes to appropriately convey the design concept, and to meet socio-psychological, functional, maintenance, life-cycle performance, environmental, and safety requirements;
- Selection and specification of furniture, fixtures, equipment and millwork, including layout drawings and detailed product description; and provision of contract documentation to facilitate pricing, procurement and installation of furniture;
- Provision of project management services, including preparation of project budgets and schedules;
- Preparation of construction documents, consisting of plans, elevations, details and specifications, to illustrate non-structural and/or non-seismic partition layouts; power and communications locations; reflected ceiling plans and lighting designs; materials and finishes; and furniture layouts;
- Preparation of construction documents to adhere to regional building and fire codes, municipal codes, and any other jurisdictional statutes, regulations and guidelines applicable to the interior space;
- Coordination and collaboration with other allied design professionals who may be retained to provide consulting services, including but not limited to architects; structural, mechanical and electrical engineers, and various specialty consultants;
- Confirmation that construction documents for non-structural and/or non-seismic construction are signed and sealed by the responsible interior designer, as applicable to jurisdictional requirements for filing with code enforcement officials;

- Administration of contract documents, bids and negotiations as the client's agent;
- Observation and reporting on the implementation of projects while in progress and upon completion, as a representative of and on behalf of the client; and conducting post-occupancy evaluation reports.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Accessibility means features of buildings or spaces that enable use by people regardless of their level of ability.

Building shell means the architecture of the existing building, including the framework, the perimeter/exterior walls, the building core and columns, and other structural, load-bearing elements of the building.

Construction documents means the detailed working drawings that define the work to be constructed. This may include partition plans, power and communications plans, reflected ceiling plans, material and finishes plans, and furniture layout plans, as well as elevations, sections and details, along with the drawings of associated consultants.

Contract documents means the set of documents that form a part of the legal contract for services between two or more parties. These typically include detailed instructions to the contractor, tender forms, construction documents and specifications.

Contract administration means the set of services which may include developing and monitoring schedules and construction costs; ensuring construction is completed in conformance with contracts and design intent; liaison with contractors and consultants throughout the course of construction; reviewing shop drawings and submissions from the contractor; observing and commenting on construction progress; monitoring move-in and furniture installation; and conducting required post-occupancy evaluations.

Environmental means the aggregate of the physical conditions of the interior environment that affects the health and safety of the occupants, including air quality and circulation, temperature control, ergonomic layout, physical circulation plan and related matters.

Maintenance means the ability of a product or material to be kept to its proper condition, and the work required to sustain that condition over the life of that material.

Non-structural or non-seismic means interior elements or components that are not load-bearing or do not assist in the seismic design and do not require design computations for a building's structure. It excludes the structural frame supporting a building. Common non-structural elements or components include, but are not limited to, ceiling and partition systems. These elements employ normal and typical bracing conventions and are not part of the structural integrity of the building.

Partition means a wall which does not support a vertical load of a structure other than its own weight, but may support loads attached to it such as cabinetry, shelving or grab bars, and does not extend further than from the floor of an interior area of a structure designed for human habitation or occupancy, to the underside of the deck of that structure.

Programming means the scope of work which includes, but is not limited to, conducting research; identifying and analyzing the needs and goals of the client and/or occupant(s) of the space; evaluating existing documentation and conditions; assessing project resources and limitations; identifying life, safety and code requirements; and developing project schedules and budgets.

Reflected ceiling plan means a ceiling design that illustrates a ceiling as if it was projected downward and may include lighting and other elements.

Space planning means the analysis and design of spatial and occupancy requirements, including, but not limited to, space layouts and final planning.

Specifications means the detailed written description of construction, workmanship and materials of the work to be undertaken.

Sustainability means the use of resources in such a way that they are not depleted; a method of practice or use of materials that is capable of being continued with minimal long-term effect on the environment.