

2023 Conference Essential Questions

Essential questions exist to provoke further questioning by the learner and promote the concept of individuals becoming **lifelong learners**. A question may be essential if it:

- Causes genuine and relevant inquiry into big ideas and core content;
- Provokes deep thought, lively discussion, sustained inquiry and new understanding
- requires learners to consider alternatives, weigh evidence, support their ideas, and justify their answers;
- stimulates vital, on-going rethinking of big ideas, assumptions, and prior lessons;
- sparks meaningful connections with prior learning and personal experiences; or
- Naturally recurs, creating opportunities for transfer to other situations and subjects.

The following questions were developed with the advancement of the strategic directions of OPPI's Strategic Plan 2025 in mind. [Read more about OPPI's Strategic Plan here.](#)

The Pressures of Planning	The Career Lifecycle of a Planner
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What are the external pressures (changes in legislation, technology, housing, mobility, climate change, societal shifts, and the changing world around us, etc.) and internal pressures (mental health and wellbeing, changes in the work environment, work-life balance, etc.) that planners face, and how do they respond to these pressures? 2. In what ways are demographics, ableism, racism, sexism or genderism changing the perception or practice of planning? 3. What are the challenges planners will face because of unprecedented pressure for creation of new housing supply and affordability? 4. What are the responsibilities of planners and the profession in response to frequent changes in legislation (either at the draft legislation stage or following Royal Assent)? 5. Has the relationship between planning and the public changed (based on technology, legislation, societal changes, NIMBYism, etc.) and is the public interest evolving? 6. How can technology (AI, GIS, communications technologies, etc.) in our communities and profession lead to greater sustainability, placemaking, and planning? 7. How is change shaping the profession and how are planners adapting? 8. In what ways do planners act as integrators or educators to address underrepresented planning issues, or to drive change? 9. What challenges or opportunities can a crisis (housing shortage, climate change, pandemic, etc.) present to planners and the profession? 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. In what ways are planners sharing knowledge across generations (i.e., mentoring needs to include two-way knowledge transfer)? 2. What are the benefits to preserving and passing forward institutional knowledge, vs. starting afresh with a new outlook? 3. In what ways can planners address the lack of voices from equity-deserving groups at all levels (i.e., from student to leadership roles) within the profession? 4. In what ways can planners embody the RPP designation to retain membership, recruit new members and/or employees? 5. What are the major “phases” of a planning practitioner’s career, and how can planners, regardless of career phase, continue to challenge themselves? 6. In what ways are public sector, private sector, development, academic and not-for-profit planning practitioners different from one another; how are they similar, and how can we learn from each other? 7. What are the inherent issues in planning that influence or limit the career choice or advancement of a planner in the workplace? 8. In what ways have major trends or topics, such as technology, the economy, demographics, climate change, equity issues, conversations surrounding Indigenous sovereignty, etc. influenced the career choices of planners? 9. What challenges have you experienced as a professional planner, and how did this inform your practice? 10. Tell your planning story; what got you interested in planning, what keeps you interested, what is your specialization, what has surprised you, who inspires you, and what’s left to accomplish in your planning career?

10. In what ways have we learned from our history, and how does that get reflected in modern practice (either in a positive, negative, or other fashion)?