

Irena Savakova

An award-winning architect and passionate professional with proven record in a broad range of complex building typologies, Irena Savakova transforms client aspirations into inspiring environments through collaboration and creative exploration. An inquisitive design researcher and tireless advocate for diversity in the field of design, Mrs. Savakova supports and actively mentors both women students and professionals in pursuing careers in the field. With unwavering focus on creating sustainable structures and wellness promoting environments, she persistently leverages strategies promoting resilient design solutions and through the process of building trusted partnerships and fostering collaboration, her work has global impact.

Irena Savakova is the first woman elevated to guide the overall design practice strategy for the internationally acclaimed firm Leo A Daly and serves as a Vice President at the company's Executive Leadership. In her roles as Design Director of the Washington DC office and a Global Design Principal, she oversees design efforts at a company level for all domestic and international company offices.

For over three decades of professional design practice Mrs. Savakova has delivered a wide array of technically complex, secure, and intricately sensitive projects, always remaining focused on the craft of design through collaboration. She has held senior level responsibilities related to design leadership, strategic planning and management oversight and has contributed to evolving design process methodologies through publications, academic and public speaking engagements. Ms. Savakova has extensive experience in placemaking, corporate commercial and government facilities, with solid knowledge of building core and shell development, as well as an eye for interiors and space planning of complex program elements. She has worked with clients in the larger Washington DC Metropolitan area, as well as nation-wide and internationally (Hong Kong, Dubai, Abu Dhabi, Qatar, China, Serbia, Bulgaria). Mrs. Savakova has collaborated with diverse integrated teams and has led the design of signature new-built administrative facilities for agencies such as the Social Security Administration, the National Guard Bureau, the Air National Guard, the Naval Facilities Engineering Command, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration and the US Department of State.

Mrs. Savakova possesses extensive experience in master planning with work implemented in the Middle East, China and Europe. Her recent design efforts include the Harbin Riverside District, winner of the Shanghai Design Excellence Award, the new School of Public Policy for University of MD, at College Park, winner of The Global Architecture and Design Award Rethinking the Future 2024, 20 Mass Avenue mixed-use development, a comprehensive placemaking and adaptive reuse effort transforming an outdated office structure into a vibrant mixed-use development, including newly rebranded Royal Sonesta Capitol Hill hotel and winner of NAIOP 2023 award and 8 design awards, including 3 on a global stage, the signature Cheung Kong II Office Tower in Hong Kong, completed in 2024, a signature residential tower at Wynwood, Miami and many mixed-use developments in the US.