



**Australian  
Institute of  
Architects**

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The Royal Australian Institute of Architects  
trading as Australian Institute of Architects

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Department of Jobs, Tourism, Science and Innovation  
Level 11, 1 William Street  
PERTH WA 6000

To whom it may concern,

## **RE: DIGITAL INDUSTRIES ACCELERATION STRATEGY**

### **Introduction**

The Australian Institute of Architects (Institute) is the peak body for the architectural profession in Australia. It is an independent, national member organisation representing over 14,000 members across Australia and overseas. More than 1,200 of these are based in Western Australia and are supported by the WA Chapter.

### **The Institute supports the policy**

The Institute supports the aims of the policy to accelerate the State's digital transformation/capability to support future economic growth and diversification. Architects as significant contributors to the State's design and construction industry, are innately at the forefront of digital capability to present ongoing value, innovation and service to their (public and private) clients.

### **Consultation Questions**

- 1) *Are the vision and mission proposed in WA: Digitally Evolved relevant and appropriate for Western Australia?*

The Institute supports the vision and mission proposed for WA and supports the design industry-specific initiatives flowing from the Strategy.

We highlight the importance of the State's policy being developed based on the most accurate and up-to date data available, and subsequently recommend reference documents to be updated accordingly. Specifically, *WA Creative Industries: An Economic Snapshot* report prepared in 2019 for the Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries<sup>1</sup> to be updated referencing the latest ABS Census and datasets.

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<sup>1</sup> See: <https://www.dlgsc.wa.gov.au/department/publications/publication/wa-creative-industries>



*2) Are the 3 goals proposed in WA: Digitally Evolved relevant and appropriate for Western Australia?*

The Institute supports the proposed goals within the Strategy, and views Architects as being integral to the success of the implementation of all 3 goals.

*3) What type of initiatives should the WA government champion in the 5 priority areas below? Could you provide examples for each?*

Advocacy and education:

- Expand Fee-Free vocational education to support professionals returning to industry after career-breaks, which will help to guarantee capability.
- Expand Fee-Free vocational education to include Building Information Modelling (BIM) software training and AI in construction<sup>2</sup>.
- Expand Fee-Free vocational training with a focus on designing and delivering low carbon buildings in Western Australia:
  - o for targeted professional development and skills training across a range of disciplines in energy efficiency and condensation mitigation.
  - o to assist the University and TAFE sectors to commercialise their research into net zero building materials.
- WA Creative Industries Innovation Hub: ensure this includes investment in BIM and AI for construction capability. This should showcase new technology capability, and provide pathways for training and subsidy for implementation into WA's SMEs.
- WA Creative Industries Innovation Hub: expand focus to designing and delivering low carbon buildings, including low carbon materials.
- WA Creative Industries Innovation Hub: expand focus to designing and delivering well-designed, energy efficient housing using modern methods of construction.
- Create scholarships/training support opportunities to attract and retain diverse specialist-trained West Australians to the design and construction industry.

Advisory and technical support:

- Small Business Development Corporation (SBDC) is a service frequently accessed by architects and design professionals. Continue to support the services offered and expand to include:
  - o targeted design industry support
  - o expanded design industry business mentoring

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<sup>2</sup> Refer to national submission in response to Supporting Responsible AI Discussion Paper:  
[https://www.architecture.com.au/wp-content/uploads/Aust\\_Inst\\_Arch\\_submission\\_CW\\_DISR\\_Supporting\\_Responsible\\_AI\\_20230726-1.pdf](https://www.architecture.com.au/wp-content/uploads/Aust_Inst_Arch_submission_CW_DISR_Supporting_Responsible_AI_20230726-1.pdf)



Financial support:

- Internship support for students: funding support to allow for internship/work-experience program. All Universities in Western Australia (Notre Dame, Curtin and UWA) have incorporated this into the curriculum, but often students struggle to find placements and their graduations are deferred as a result. Practical learning, in offices and on-site would greatly support the future skilling on the profession and ensure ready-to-work ability once graduated. This type of training could easily be cross-disciplinary with engineers, shop drawers, trades.
- Digital training in BIM and other software – relevant computer program training and subsidy support for laptops / desktop computers. This could easily benefit students, architects returning to the industry (post career break) and ongoing professional development for the industry. This will ensure the profession is leading in the digital requirements and future proofing the building industry.
- Support Continuing Professional Development (CPD) for design and construction professionals in maintaining digital capability.
- Similarly to the Defence Ready Initiative, develop a 'Low Carbon Building Ready' initiative, to support Western Australian SMEs in building and enhancing capability and capacity in delivering low carbon buildings and infrastructure.
  - o Stage to expand this initiative to include climate resilience and resilient disaster responsive design.

Data access and market intelligence:

- Central database for all Planning and Building Permit applications to ensure consistency, efficiency and central database for all building related applications.

Opportunity facilitation:

- Invest in local design industry support to enhance global competitiveness.

*4) Do the 5 priority areas proposed capture the most important areas to be addressed to enable the digital transformation of WA businesses and industries? Would efforts in these areas enable that transformation or should other areas be considered?*

The Institute would recommend the expansion of priorities to include:

- Research and Development – in particular associated with building materials and modern methods of construction.
- Manufacturing capability – local capability in the delivery of low-carbon building materials.



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*5) Do you have any other suggestions or feedback on the strategy?*

No.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback and we look forward to future engagement regarding the consultation on the bushfire risk maps later this year.

Yours sincerely,

**Jonathan Speer** RAIA  
Executive Director - Western Australia  
Australian Institute of Architects