



Australian  
Institute of  
Architects

# 2025-26 STATE BUDGET COMMUNITY CONSULTATION



TO THE TASMANIAN GOVERNMENT



**TASMANIAN CHAPTER**

Submission date: 20 December 2024

## ABOUT THE INSTITUTE

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The Australian Institute of Architects (the Institute) is the peak body for the architectural profession in Australia. It is an independent, national member organisation with around 14,500 members across Australia and overseas.

The Institute exists to advance the interests of members, their professional standards and contemporary practice, and expand and advocate the value of architects and architecture to the sustainable growth of our communities, economy and culture.

The Institute actively works to maintain and improve the quality of our built environment by promoting better, responsible and environmental design.

## PURPOSE

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- This submission is made by the Australian Institute of Architects (the Institute) to provide comment on matters affecting the 2025-26 budget of the Tasmanian Government
- At the time of this submission the Tasmanian President is Mr Daniel Lane RAIA
- The Tasmanian Executive Director is Miss Jennifer Nichols

## CONTACT DETAILS

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## SUMMARY OF BUDGET PRIORITIES

### WORKFORCE SKILLS FOR MODERN BUILDING SAFETY, QUALITY AND PRODUCTIVITY

- **Support Tasmanian architecture practices to provide places for architecture graduates.**

Tasmanian architecture practices need support to provide 3,300 hours of employment, training and supervision for each graduate from the University of Tasmania's School of Architecture and Design so they can become registered.

Required investment: \$800,000 over two years for 20 graduate positions in Tasmanian architecture practices.

- **Support all architects and building designers to maintain contemporary skills.**

Continuing Professional Development (CPD) is vital for all building professionals and practitioners, including architects, if Tasmania is to build safe buildings which are compliant with the National Construction Code and to drive efficiencies and innovation through modern methods of construction.

Required investment: \$360,000 over three years to fund 60 CPD sessions for architects and building designers.

### MAXIMISE VALUE FOR TASMANIANS IN GOVERNMENT BUILDING PROCUREMENT

- **Continue to promote Infrastructure Tasmania's Strategic Architectural and Urban Design Advisor service.**

Continue to promote this role, to ensure it continues to provide a comprehensive service within government (including Tasmanian Government businesses) to achieve high-quality design and urban design strategies within Tasmanian Government projects. This will ensure these projects have addressed important design and delivery considerations and project risks before going to market for consultants and contractors to design and deliver projects. This will promote best value for Tasmanians in building and infrastructure procurement.

No required investment.

### PROMOTE BRAND TASMANIA AND TASMANIAN DESIGN

The Tasmanian Chapter believes in promoting outstanding work in Tasmania by our membership. Two key programs that public advocate the excellence of Tasmanian architecture include the Tasmanian Architecture Awards<sup>1</sup> and Open House Hobart.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.architecture.com.au/awards/2024-awards/2024-tasmanian-architecture-awards-gallery>

<sup>2</sup> <https://openhousehobart.org/>

➤ **Tasmanian Architecture Awards**

The annual awards program of the Tasmanian Chapter of the Australian Institute of Architects promotes the outstanding work across varied scales and typologies including residential, commercial, education, health and other public infrastructure facilities. Elevating projects through these programs has a positive effect on the image of Tasmanian architecture, and by extension, resonates with a core value of Brand Tasmania, to “quietly pursue the extraordinary”.<sup>3</sup>

Required investment: \$10,000 per annum for a minimum of the next three years.

➤ **Open House Hobart**

There is immense value in aligning with the statutory place-branding authority of Brand Tasmania, to promote Tasmanian architects and architecture while also strengthening the state’s economy. The Open House program has positive economic benefits, by making available to the general public key works of architecture, promote tourism, and pique the interest of interstate visitors. A sponsored partnership with the Tasmanian Government sends a positive message to the rest of Australia that Tasmania is proud of what it designs and builds and the Tasmanian economy is open for business!

Required investment: \$100,000 per annum for a minimum of the next three years.

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## DETAIL OF OUR RECOMMENDED BUDGET PRIORITIES

### WORKFORCE SKILLS FOR MODERN BUILDING SAFETY, QUALITY AND PRODUCTIVITY

#### Support Tasmanian architecture practices to provide places for architecture graduates.

Upon attaining a Master of Architecture degree, graduates – a candidate seeking architect registrations – must undertake a mandatory 3,300 hours of employment, under the supervision of a senior architect, to be eligible to sit the nationally governed Architectural Practice Exam for registration with the Board of Architects of Tasmania.

Architectural practices receive no support to employ, supervise, and/or mentor these graduates. Larger firms from the mainland permanently pull graduates away from our state. Tasmanian practices are largely comprised of small and medium size practices.

Subsidised post-graduate employment schemes for architects could be tied to a minimum period of employment in Tasmania to increase the state’s capacity to supply architectural services.

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<sup>3</sup> <https://tasmanian.com.au/brand-tasmania/>

Practices invest a significant amount of time and money training and supervising graduates that is not able to be recovered before a graduate becomes financially productive. The employment, training and supervision of recently graduated candidates seeking to become registered is a net cost borne by practices.

Support for architectural practices to train unregistered graduates on their pathway to registration could be delivered through an employer training subsidy that supports the award wage paid to a graduate.

This would help ensure that our architecture graduates can gain a supervised entry-level graduate position in a Tasmanian practice and attain the required supervised work experience to become registered under the support and guidance of experienced architects.

The required investment: We calculate this investment to be \$800,000 over two years. Our modelling is to subsidise 20 places by \$20,000 per annum for two years in order complete 3,300 hours of supervised employment, and is similar to the employer subsidy provided by the Commonwealth for employers of apprentices.

### **Support all architects and building designers to maintain contemporary skills.**

The future of our built environment and spaces that are environmentally, economically, and socially sustainable and culturally rich lies in the high-quality design and construction of our cities, towns, precincts and buildings. Design, and the technologies and standards that create a high-quality built environment, are continually evolving.

Critical issues in 2025 are ensuring compliant design – particular areas in the 2025 release of the National Construction Code that address fire safety, car parks and electrical vehicles, structural reliability (e.g., wind, storms, earthquakes, waterproofing and watershedding and condensation and mould prevention).

The built environment sector has fallen behind in productivity and needs to pursue a productivity dividend through innovation and modern methods of construction.

Therefore, all practitioners in the building sector need to undertake Continuing Professional Development (CPD) in order to be competent and maintain their professional knowledge. Architects and building designers in Tasmania currently have to self-fund their CPD. For many architects or their practices, the out-of-pocket cost is difficult to sustain. We recommend investing in free or low-cost CPD to architects.

In 2023 and 2024 the Tasmanian Chapter of the Institute ran a successful pilot CPD program, delivering 20 sessions for \$66,000. This successful pilot needs to be expanded so the Tasmanian Chapter of the Institute can extend the valuable CPD opportunities to other non-architect building designers.

The required investment: Our calculations are that \$360,000 over three years could fund an expanded program of 60 CPD sessions delivered through formal master classes, assessed online training packages and single session formally assessed and informal (non-assessed) CPD events for Tasmanian architects and building designers.

## MAXIMISE VALUE FOR TASMANIANS IN GOVERNMENT BUILDING PROCUREMENT

### **Continue to promote Infrastructure Tasmania's Strategic Architectural and Urban Design Advisor service.**

The Institute strongly supports the now established role of Strategic Architectural and Urban Advisor within Infrastructure Tasmania.

The Institute would like to see Government continue to promote this role, to ensure it continues to provide a comprehensive service within government (including Tasmanian Government businesses) to promote high-quality design and urban design strategies within Tasmanian Government projects and ensuring best value for Tasmanians in building and relevant infrastructure projects.

We note the experience in Victoria where in the three years to 2021 alone, the Office of the Victorian Government Architect (OVGA) had advised or collaborated with 187 Victorian projects of State Significance worth more than \$25 billion. It provided immediate project savings estimated by an independent study to be \$20 million through project risk reduction alone.

Operational and maintenance savings of upfront project reviews before engaging full consultant services are even more significant as embedded design improvements can drastically reduce costs over the life of a project. Given the estimated investment of planned Tasmanian Government, local government and known local private sector projects is more than \$27 billion over the next 10 years, the potential economic savings could be significant.

The United Kingdom's then Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE) observed that:

*Over the lifetime of a building, the construction costs are unlikely to be more than 2-3% of total costs, but the costs of running a public service will often constitute 85% of the total. On the same scale, the design costs are likely to be 0.3-0.5% of the whole life costs, and yet it is through the design process that the largest impact can be made on the 85%.*

The impact of good design decisions being built-in at the design and construction stage are significant economic savings for those larger ongoing operating and maintenance costs and future proofing. This return on investment is magnified for government as it is a long-term asset holder. Hence it is critical to have key design review input at the early design stages to capture these savings.

In addition to operational savings, there are also significant long-term financial and non-financial benefits to both society and users of well-designed buildings in areas such as climate resilience, energy efficiency, accessibility, safety, physical and mental well-being.

The Strategic Architectural and Urban Design Advisor service delivered by Infrastructure Tasmania to other government entities, including government businesses, is helping to ensure these projects have addressed important design and delivery considerations and project risks before going to market for consultants and contractors to design and deliver

projects. This can even include consideration for the optimum procurement model. This includes health services, schools, social housing and state significant community assets.

No required investment.

## PROMOTE BRAND TASMANIA AND TASMANIAN DESIGN

### Tasmanian Architecture Awards

This Awards series is an annual showcase of outstanding work of Tasmanian architects. Awards categories recognise projects of different scales and typologies, and winning projects secure the respect and recognition of the profession and the broader public. Previous winners from the awards program include (but are not limited to): the hotel Moss 25 by Circa Morris-Nunn Chua Architects, Spring Bay Mill Event Spaces by Gilby + Brewin Architecture, the Dove Lake Viewing Shelter by Cumulus Studio, the MyState Bank Arena by Philp Lighton Architects and Parliament Square Hobart by fjcstudio. While these projects are frequented by locals and interstate visitors and host events, their titles as 'award-winning buildings' elevates their status and further encourage their use and attention of tourists.

Funding for the Tasmanian Architecture Awards can be delivered through sponsorship of the Tasmanian Architecture Medal, which awards a project of exemplary standard and is the highest honour given at the Tasmanian Architecture Awards each year.

The required investment: \$10,000 per annum for a minimum of the next three years to be the Tasmanian Architecture Medal partner.

### Open House Hobart

Open House Hobart ran for the 12<sup>th</sup> year in 2024, and within its program, included 107 experiences including buildings open for public viewing, tours, speaker series, workshops and exhibitions. Open House Hobart is a highly popular event that attracts considerable attention both from residents of Tasmania, as well as visitors from interstate who fly down specifically for the Open House Hobart weekend. The 2024 program saw a total of 19,767 visits across the program. We are grateful for our current support from the Tasmanian Government, and further funding would be very much appreciated. Additional funding could be used to further promote the event outside of Tasmania, and expand the remit of the Open House program, alongside the event coordination.

The required investment: \$100,000 per annum for the minimum of the next three years for the costs of coordinating and promoting the event to increase the reach, particularly from visitors outside Tasmania.