



AILA 2022-23 Federal Budget Summary for Landscape Architects

AILA has reviewed the Australian government's budget papers and summarised some of the relevant initiatives that may be of interest:

Cities and Regions/Infrastructure

- The budget announced a renewed commitment to regional and priority infrastructure projects across Australia, that combines both previously announced and new projects.
- Regional investment package that includes investments in agriculture, infrastructure, and energy in the Hunter, the Pilbara, the Northern Territory, and North and Central Queensland.
- An additional \$17.9 billion committed to road, rail, and community infrastructure including \$3.7 billion for faster rail projects in New South Wales and Queensland to better connect cities with growing regions.
- \$7.1 billion for transformative investments including low emissions manufacturing and renewable energy.
- \$501.7 million support for local councils through the Local Roads and Community Infrastructure Program across Australia.
- Ongoing funding for a limited number of City Deals including \$1.8 billion for the Southeast City Queensland City Deal that will deliver infrastructure that will underpin the 2032 Olympic Games and improve Brisbane's liveability.

Education

- Small businesses will be able to claim a \$120 tax deduction for every hundred dollars they spend for eligible external training courses for employees. This may assist members to access or to provide access to Continuing Professional Development.
- \$142.7 million for the Education Infrastructure in Regional Australian Program.
- Decreases in higher education sub-function expenses through a reduction in the Commonwealth Grant Scheme.
- Small businesses will be able to deduct a bonus 20 per cent of the cost of business expenses and depreciating assets that support digital uptake.

Climate Positive Design

- \$6 billion investment in disaster recovery with \$300 million from the Emergency Response Fund for recovery and post-disaster resilience initiatives.
- As part of Future Proofing Australia's Unique Landscapes, Animals and Plants - the Government will provide \$100 million over 3 years from 2022-23 for the Environment Restoration Fund to support community-driven action to protect and restore the environment. At \$33 million a year this does appear to fall short to address documented ecosystems degradation, deforestation habitat loss and threatened species extinction.
- \$192 million to support the response to the Independent Review of the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 – intended to reform Australia's environmental laws to protect the environment, speed-up environmental law decisions, and improve transparency in project approvals. You can read here AILA's submission outlining our concerns re. the proposed **EPBC Act reform**.



- \$47.3 million for new technology as part of the Emissions Reduction Fund and Renewable Energy Target.
- An additional \$1 billion in marine science funding to build the Great Barrier Reef's resilience to climate change, remove pest species and improve the reef's water quality. \$67 million towards infrastructure to increase Australia's capacity to process organic waste, including through composting.
- Alignment with Infrastructure Australia recommendations including investments in regional batteries, small-scale renewable energy microgrids to support off-grid regional and remote communities (\$84 million to support more than 60 projects).
- \$170 million for threatened species and habitat restoration, and tree planting projects, including \$53 million dedicated to koala recovery and conservation.
- There was limited funding for national parks with an announcement of \$26.8 million to improve conservation and management. Also intended to support Indigenous engagement and employment, enhancing preservation of cultural and natural heritage.
- \$83.1 million for Australia's waste and recycling capabilities to help reach the 2030 waste targets. This includes \$60.4 million to develop new plastics recycling technology and advanced recycling solutions. \$18.2 million will go towards improving awareness of correct recycling techniques and develop a new 'ReMade in Australia' scheme to certify goods that are recycled and remade here in Australia.

Gender Equity

- Women's Health & Wellbeing – \$330.6m invested in programs including enhanced bereavement support for families post stillbirth/miscarriage.
- The Government has already fully implemented or fully funded 42 of the 55 recommendations of the Respect@Work report.
- The current gender pay gap is 13.8 per cent, with women earning on average \$255.30 per week less than men - \$18.5m Workplace Gender Equality Act (WGEA) funding, review of WGEA Act.
- Flexible Paid Parental Leave – 20 weeks which can be co-shared between eligible parents.
- New funding in this Budget, to support the next National Plan, and further support implementation of the Roadmap for Respect, with \$3.4 million provided for measures that will support women's safety in the workplace.
- Expanding the Future Women's Jobs Academy to provide mentoring support and skills training to help women to transition into management and leadership positions.
- The Mid-Career Checkpoint program supports eligible carers who are looking to return to the workforce or advance their career.
- The Launch into Work program supports the delivery of pre-employment projects that prepare job seekers for specific entry-level roles with an organisation, primarily focused on creating long-term employment pathways for women.
- Careers Revive Program - a program supporting employers to attract and retain women returning to work after a career break.
- Boosting the Next Generation of Women in STEM program.

Connection to Country

- Standout funding included \$636.4 million over 6 years for an expanded Indigenous Rangers Program – which will fund up to 1,089 new rangers, doubling the number of rangers, who will undertake land and sea management.



- The Government is also providing \$37.5 million to support native title holders to gain greater economic benefit from their land and \$21.9 million for leadership initiatives. The Women's Budget Statement also included the creation of a dedicated Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Action Plan and a commitment to hearing and including the voices of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women in the design of the plan – to future detail.
- As part of the Budget's delivering on the commitment to Close the Gap the Government recently committed \$316.5 million to establish Ngurra, a new Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural precinct in Canberra. Ngurra will include a learning and knowledge centre, a national resting place, and a new home for the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies.

AILA's Advocacy

To continue to prosecute AILA's advocacy, in particular in relation to Climate Positive Design, the value of landscape architects and connection to country approaches, AILA CEO Ben Stockwin Hon Ken Wyatt AM, MP the Minister for Indigenous Australians, to discuss Ngurra, the procurement of the new Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural precinct in Canberra and connection to country approaches in landscape architecture. As well as meeting with the Hon David Littleproud MP Minister for Agriculture and Northern Australia and the Hon Barnaby Joyce MP Deputy Prime Minister, Minister for Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Development to discuss urban green infrastructure and Green Bonds.

AILA will finalise and release our Federal Election Manifesto in coming weeks outlining our advocacy positions. What we need to see more of, and what's missing from the federal budget, including:

- Adoption of the 'Uluru Statement from the Heart' which calls for the establishment of a 'First Nations Voice' in the *Australian Constitution* and a 'Makarrata Commission' to supervise a process of 'agreement-making' and 'truth-telling' between governments and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. And the potential role of guides like the International Indigenous Design Charter to inform co-design and indigenous led project procurement.
- Recognition by the Australian Government of Urban Green Infrastructure (UGI) as an Asset Class or Green Bond, to drive a change in accountancy, business case preparation and feasibility process standards and investment.
- Mandated UGI targets on all projects with federal funding
- Development of a National Living Infrastructure Strategy to be led by the federal government (through Infrastructure Australia) to advance the significant contribution that ecological and biological systems can contribute to the development of city, regional and rural infrastructure. This will include targets and measures for federally funded projects.
- Federal support for Green Bonds which can be used to finance new and existing projects that offer climate change and environmental benefits through urban greening.
- Significant UGI investment as a budget priority as part of the National Climate Resilience and Adaptation Strategy sets out the pathway to build Australia's resilience to disasters and other long-term changes to Australia's climate.
- UGI targets (including green cover and canopy targets) to be set for projects included in the Infrastructure Australia Infrastructure Priority List.
- UGI to be added as an Infrastructure Australia priority initiative for climate and heat mitigation through greening; the integration of existing natural systems (creeks, rivers, parks, open spaces etc.), and the protection, enhancement and increase of biodiversity and habitat.



- Infrastructure Australia's Infrastructure Market Capacity program to report on the delivery of urban green infrastructure with the potential for independent auditing.
- Re-establishing the Major Cities Unit (MCU) and the Urban Design Protocol for Australian Cities or their equivalent within Infrastructure Australia to inform federally funded projects.
- Changes to the National Construction Code to improve climate resilience.
- Listing of Landscape Architecture on the Skills Priority List to reflect the skills shortage of landscape architects in Australia
- Review of the Labour Market Testing requirements to support Temporary Skill Shortage visa (subclass 482).
- Increases in the higher education Commonwealth Grant Scheme.
- Funding for state and local governments to implement gender sensitive design initiatives to increase the safety of women, girls, and gender diverse communities as part of the Local Roads and Community Infrastructure Program.
- Further efforts to reduce the gender pay gap and increased childcare subsidies to boost female workforce participation.

You can read AILA's 2022-23 Federal Budget media release [here](#).

Share your thoughts on Memberscape with what you would like to see the Federal Government deliver [#electionmanifesto](#)