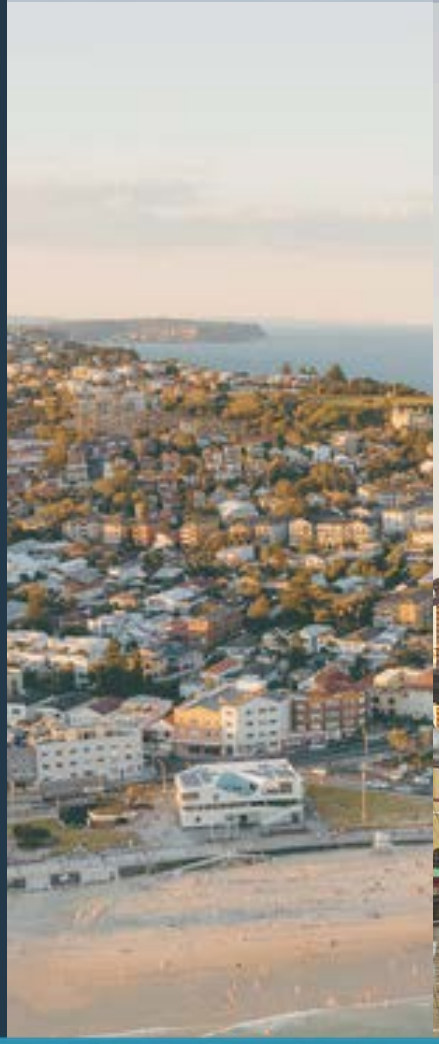
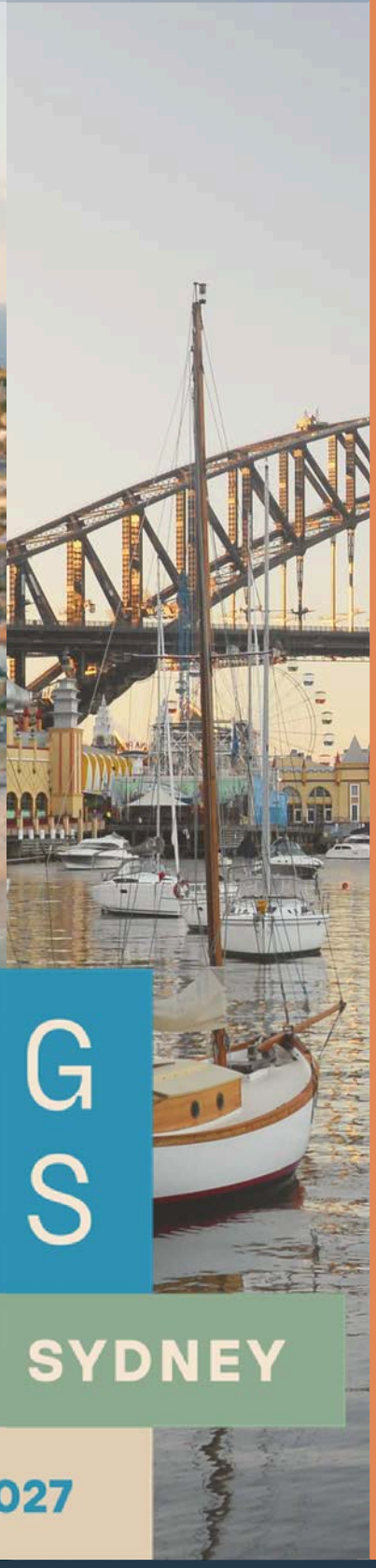






PLANNING CONGRESS 2027

SYDNEY

12 - 14 MAY 2027

PIA

CALL FOR ABSTRACTS

PROUD PLATINUM SPONSOR

Objective

PLANNING CONGRESS 2027

Planning Congress 2027: Shaping What's Next

Australia is changing and planning is being asked to do more. Population growth, housing pressure, the energy transition and new technology are changing what communities need and how quickly decisions must be made. At the same time, expectations of planners are shifting: people want clear decisions, practical solutions and places that work for communities now and into the future.

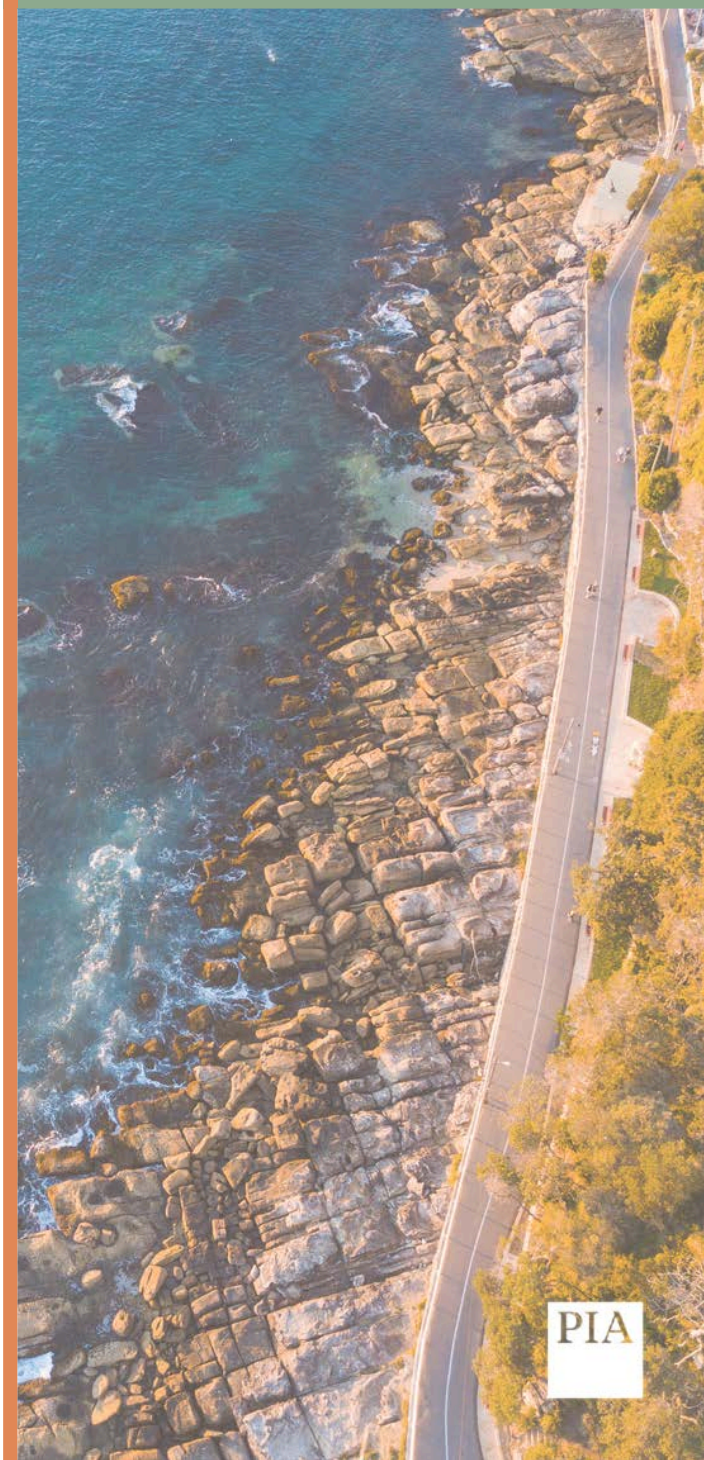
Planning Congress 2027 will bring the profession together to examine how we respond. Where do our systems need to change? How can good plans become delivered homes, infrastructure and places? What does sound professional judgement look like when priorities compete and the answers are rarely simple? And how can planning make a stronger contribution to the big challenges facing Australia?

The program will look at the forces shaping Australia, the realities of development applications, approval and delivery, as well as the infrastructure and skills needed for the future. It will also ask how planners can strengthen trust with communities and work more effectively with First Nations peoples and Country.

Across the Congress, we want to hear from people doing the work: planners, government, industry and communities. Through practical examples, different perspectives and honest discussion, Congress will explore what the profession should keep, what it needs to change, and how planning can make a stronger contribution to great places and thriving communities.

Acknowledgment of Country

PIA acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of Country throughout Australia and their connections to land, sea and community. We pay our respect to Elders past and present.





ABOUT PIA

The Planning Institute of Australia (PIA) is the peak national body representing the urban and regional planning profession.

Through education, communication and professional development, PIA is the pivotal organisation serving and guiding thousands of planning professionals in their role of creating better communities.

PIA's mission is to lead effective planning for people and places to ultimately deliver good planning outcomes for our communities. We do this by advocating for better planning, developing high quality planners, and supporting the profession.

Congress at a Glance

Wednesday 12th May
Study Tours
Bump in Exhibition
National Awards for Planning Excellence
Congress Welcome Function

Thursday 13th May
Full Day Congress

Friday 14th May
Full Day Congress | Gala Cocktail

Congress Details

Congress dates
Wednesday 12th - Friday 14th May 2027

Congress venue
International Convention Centre (ICC)

Congress website
www.piacongress27.com.au



PROGRAM STREAMS

1. The Forces Shaping our Places

Australia's cities and regions are being shaped by population growth, changing demographics, housing demand, climate risk, economic uncertainty and rising expectations about the places we live External challenges are adding pressure to plan at a pace that can be difficult for existing systems to match.

This stream looks at how planning can respond to these forces and make choices today that serve communities over the long term. It invites discussion about density, reform and whether our systems are fit for purpose, alongside the question of whose priorities guide decisions about change.

Sessions might examine how growth affects different communities, how strategic planning can better connect housing, jobs, infrastructure and services, and how knowledge of Country can inform the way places evolve.

2. Development Application: Judgement and Delivery

Statutory planning and development applications sit at the point where policy, technical advice, community expectations and commercial realities meet. Decisions need to be defensible and timely, but a sound process alone does not guarantee good outcomes.

This is the practical stream for planners and other professionals involved in preparing, assessing and advising on development proposals. It explores the day-to-day challenges of statutory planning, including professional judgement, referrals and technical advice, feasibility, conditions, negotiation and the path from approval to construction. It also takes on complex areas of practice such as heritage and cultural heritage, conflicting evidence and competing community and development interests.

We're looking for proposals that bring statutory planning practice to life. Consider using real or realistic cases, competing perspectives, live problem-solving or audience participation to explore how planners interpret policy and evidence, negotiate outcomes, navigate competing priorities and exercise professional judgement in the practice of statutory planning.

PIA



PROGRAM STREAMS

3. Planning the Next Frontier

The energy transition and growth of digital infrastructure are changing what needs to be built and where. Renewable energy projects, transmission lines, battery storage, data centres and demand for water and electricity raise planning questions that cross sectors and boundaries. AI is also beginning to change how planners work and how planning systems operate.

This stream examines how planning can anticipate these demands and make informed decisions about land use, infrastructure and competing needs. It also looks at the capabilities planners will need, from working with new data and technology to engaging early with communities and Traditional Owners on projects with a wide footprint.

Sessions could explore how strategic planning can anticipate emerging needs, identify the right locations for new infrastructure, coordinate investment and manage impacts on communities, Country and competing land uses.

4. The Planner's Role

The way planners work matters as much as the systems they work within. Professional judgement, workplace culture, leadership and the quality of our relationships all shape planning outcomes. As expectations of planning grow, the profession needs to consider how we create environments where planners can exercise judgement, challenge assumptions, learn from experience and do their best work.

This stream looks inside the practice of planning. It explores the cultures of planning teams and organisations, how planners work across disciplines, how leadership affects practice, and how we build confidence, capability and professional standards throughout a career. It also creates space for conversations about ethics, wellbeing, mentoring, difficult decisions, working with communities and learning from First Nations approaches to planning and Country.

Sessions might examine what good planning practice looks like day to day, how workplace culture shapes decisions, how planners navigate pressure and competing interests, and what needs to change within the profession to prepare the next generation of planners.



SUBMISSION FORMATS

Two formats are open for abstract submissions this year:

Concurrent Sessions

20 minute presentation slots to give you ample time to inspire your peers and showcase your project, work or concept. Explain its impact and what the profession needs to adapt, learn &/or change.

All skillfully delivered to keep your audience engaged. Please note: Congress presentations are to be delivered in person.

Workshop

These workshops are outcome focused and must have a strong learning objective. If you can help planners learn a valuable skill crucial to a trend impacting on the profession, we want to hear from you.

Workshops are typically limited to 80 people (*if accepted, PIA will work with you on how many participants you are willing to allow*) and run for 1.5 hours.

We will supply a room in any configuration you need, and work with you on any other materials needed for your facilitation.

Please note, Congress workshops are to be delivered in person and places are very limited.

Key dates for Submission

Call for Abstracts open: Monday 9th November

Call for Abstracts close: Friday 18th December

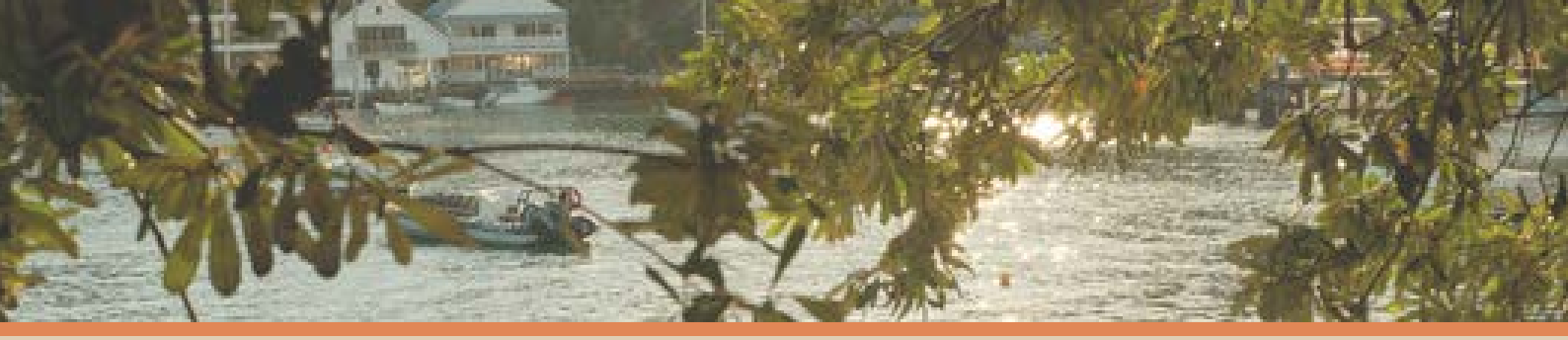
Abstract Review process: December / January

Presenter notification/Program Release: Expected January / February

Submission Guidelines

All submissions must be submitted in English. Please ensure you thoroughly check your submission for spelling and grammatical errors as accepted abstracts will be printed as per your submission.

- Abstracts are to be no more than **300 words.**
- References, presenter and affiliation information and abstract titles are not included in the word count.
- Abstracts must not contain bulletpoints, pictures, charts, diagrams or tables. Please ensure any acronyms are spelt out in the first instance.
- Ensure that **all presenter information** (names, affiliations and presenting presenter biography) is included and entered correctly.
- Each presenter may submit up to **three** abstracts.



GET PREPARED FOR YOUR SUBMISSION

Please include the following with your submission:

- **Presenter/s details:** Name, post noms, position, organisation and email for presenters and co-presenters
- **Headshot/s:** A high-resolution head and shoulders photograph in JPEG or PNG format for presenters and co-presenters
- **Biographies:** 50–100 words for presenters and co-presenters
- **Presentation format:** Select Workshop or Concurrent
- **Congress stream:** Select your preferred stream:
  - The Forces Shaping our Places
  - Development Application: Judgement and Delivery
  - Planning the Next Frontier
  - The Planner's Role
- **Abstract:** Enter your abstract directly into the portal (maximum 300 words)
- **Video link (optional):** Share a previous presentation or a brief outline of your proposed session to demonstrate your presentation skills. Provide a YouTube, Dropbox or similar link, as videos cannot be uploaded directly. Videos are reviewed by PIA staff only; abstracts are reviewed separately by the Program Committee.

Additional Criteria

Abstracts will also be assessed on:

- Practical case studies and lessons learned, including successes and challenges
- New evidence, information or tools that support better planning
- Innovative ideas that challenge current practice or explore new concepts
- Perspectives from communities, end users and planning stakeholders
- Clear relevance to the selected Congress stream
- Intercultural, cross-cultural or multicultural considerations
- Appeal to a broad audience, identifying any particular career stage or area of practice
- A realistic scope for the allocated time, including contributions from all concurrent presenters
- A clear title that reflects the session's content



SUBMISSION PORTAL

Visit the Congress Website at piacongress27.com.au

Select Call for Abstracts from the menu

Click Submit your Abstract Here

Create a new account or sign in with your existing email and password

Update your details and photo under Contact Information

Select Submit an Abstract and follow the left-hand menu to complete each section

Save your draft to return later, or select **Submit** when ready

For assistance, contact **congress@planning.org.au**

REVIEW PROCESS

Planning Congress brings the profession together to explore changes affecting society, planning and individuals. Places for concurrent sessions and workshops are limited.

Each abstract will be assessed by at least two reviewers, with the Program Committee recommending submissions for acceptance based on:

- Quality and alignment with the Congress focus and streams
- Relevance to a broad delegate audience
- Suitability for the allocated presentation time
- Contribution of new ideas, projects or solutions, including relevant technology and digital initiatives

Final acceptance rests with PIA and the Program Committee. To ensure a varied and balanced program, accepted presentations may be limited to one abstract per presenter.



TERMS±CONDITIONS

By submitting an abstract, you agree to the following conditions if accepted:

- All presenters and co-presenters must register and pay to attend Congress. A discounted speaker rate is available; complimentary registrations are not provided.
- Presenters must register by the specified deadline to secure their place in the program. Presentations with unregistered presenters will be removed.
- Accepted abstracts will be published on the Congress website and app, subject to presenters confirming their attendance.
- PIA may use and share presentation slides and photographs, including with Congress delegates.
- Presentations may be recorded and published online after Congress.

You will be asked to accept these conditions when submitting your abstract.

NEED HELP?

CONTACT US
CONGRESS@PLANNING.ORG.AU

PIA PLANNING CONGRESS 2027

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