

PLANNING CONGRESS 2026

CANBERRA 20 – 22 MAY

CELEBRATING 75 YEARS



Wednesday 20 May 2026

PRE-CONGRESS

FULL DAY STUDY TOURS	
Tours are limited and must be pre-booked	
Inside Canberra's Housing Future - SOLD OUT A behind-the-scenes look at the ideas, projects and partnerships shaping the next chapter of housing in the nation's capital.	Proudly Sponsored by Purdon
The Griffin's Plan for Canberra - SOLD OUT A bus tour through Canberra's iconic planning landscape, exploring how the visionary design for Australia's national capital was brought to life and continues to shape the city today.	Proudly Sponsored by GML Heritage
Inside Australia's Political Capital - SOLD OUT Step inside the places and systems that influence how Australia is governed, planned and shaped at a national level.	Proudly Sponsored by National Capital Authority
HALF DAY STUDY TOURS	
Tours are limited and must be pre-booked	
She Shapes History Tour - SELLING FAST An intimate exploration of the women, places and decisions that have quietly shaped Canberra's history and identity.	
The Capital Uncovered: Canberra City (Walking) - SELLING FAST Discover the layers and design of Canberra's City Centre and civic spaces.	Proudly Sponsored by City Renewal Authority
On Country Tours AM - SELLING FAST A guided experience grounded in Country, offering insight into First Nations knowledge, and connection	Proudly Sponsored by City and Environment Directorate
On Country Tour PM - SELLING FAST A guided experience grounded in Country, offering insight into First Nations knowledge, and connection	
4.30 PM - 6.00 PM At the Table: Emerging Planners in Conversation QT Canberra, QT Lounge	Proudly Sponsored by NSW Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure
6.00 PM - 7.30 PM 2026 PIA National Awards for Planning Excellence QT Canberra, Ballroom	Proudly Sponsored by Objective
7.30 PM - 10.00 PM 2026 Congress Welcome Reception QT Canberra, Lucky's Speakeasy	

PLATINUM PARTNERS

SILVER SPONSORS

STUDY TOUR PARTNERS

CONGRESS SUPPORTERS

EXHIBITORS

ACCOMMODATION PARTNER

THANK YOU TO OUR CONGRESS PARTNERS

Program subject to change

7.30 AM	Women In Planning Catch Up <i>Pre-Congress networking, Exhibition Hall</i>
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7.30 AM	REGISTRATION
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PLENARY 1
Royal Theatre, National Convention Centre Canberra

8.30 AM - 8.40 AM	Welcome to Country
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8.40 AM - 8.50 AM	Master of Ceremonies, Tim Ross <i>Welcome and Opening Address</i>
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8.50 AM - 9.50 AM	Creating a Country-Centred Future for Planning <i>Panel session facilitated by Elle Davidson MPIA, Planning Institute of Australia</i>
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9.50 AM - 10.05 AM	The Hon Clare O'Neil MP <i>Minister Address</i>
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10.05 AM - 10.20 AM	Emma Riley RPIA (Fellow) <i>PIA President Address</i>
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10.20 AM - 11.00 AM MORNING TEA WITH EXHIBITORS

CONCURRENT 1 / WORKSHOP 1

SESSION TYPE	CONCURRENT 1A Housing and Innovation	CONCURRENT 1B Turning Plans into Places	CONCURRENT 1C Country, Climate + Resilience	CONCURRENT 1D Planning for a Changing Nation	CONCURRENT 1E The Future of the Profession	WORKSHOP 1 Turning Plans in Places	PIA YARNING SPACE First Nations Knowledge and Planning	HEART FOUNDATION WALKSHOP
ROOM	Exhibition Hall	Menzies	Nicholls	Royal Theatre	Bradman	Murray	Fitzroy	Offsite
11.00 AM - 11.30 AM	Delivering Housing for a 2035 Australia: A New Blueprint Karmi Palafox MPIA, Tract Consultants	Designing for Minds We Don't See: Practical and Strategic Actions for Neuro-Inclusive Planning Liesl Codrington, Vaere Social	A River Needs Its Lands: Planning for Birrarung as a Living Entity Mitra Anderson-Oliver, Department Of Energy, Environment and Climate Action and Georgia Wellington, Department of Transport and Planning	Should We Plan More Canberra's? Emeritus Professor Paul Burton MPIA, Griffith University	Inspiring the Next Generation: Equipping Planners to Engage Australia's Future Professionals Emily Robertson PIA (Assoc.), City of Subiaco and Joyce Chung PIA (Assoc.), DevelopmentWA	Will It Actually Get Built? Financing Realities of the Infill Affordable Housing Scheme Michael Comminos MPIA, Astrolabe Group <i>*Limited places available, must be pre-registered to attend</i>	Allies Yarn This in-person session continues the conversation from the morning plenary and builds on our quarterly online Allies Yarn. It's a facilitated discussion focused on allyship in planning - what it looks like in practice, the challenges, and how we can improve. Open to all, with space to listen, reflect and contribute.	The Heart Foundation is offering 90 minute Walkshops. This is a great opportunity to find out more about their evidence-based Healthy Active by Design resources for planning and design outcomes which support heart health. Join us for a walk in the neighbourhood of the Convention Centre where you will be guided through a practical activity to help you apply the Heart Foundation's active living principles in your projects. Hosted by The Heart Foundation <i>*Limited to 20 places, must be pre-registered to attend</i>
11.30 AM - 12.00 PM	Density Deals: Not all players are equal, deal me in Cameron Murray, Fresh Economic Thinking	Masterplanning Safety: The Strategic Decisions That Shape Behaviour, Perception and Risk Codee Ludbey, Core42	Using Flood Risk Evidence to Drive Transformative Recovery in Indigenous Communities Ryan McNeilly Smith MPIA, Meridian Urban and Upendo Kowero, Plan Locally	The Canberra Congress that Launched the Institute 75 years ago Professor Robert Freestone RPIA (Fellow), UNSW	The Planning Renaissance: Why This Decade Will Define Our Profession James Mant MPIA, Spero-ai			
12.00 PM - 12.30 PM	BUILD - Beyond Zoning: Why Feasibility Drives Development Dr Anthony Burton MPIA, City and Environment Directorate ACT Government	The Future Form of TODs - What is the big deal with 5 minutes?!! David Barnard, Tract Consultants	Integrating Hazard, Socio-Economic Disadvantage and Accessibility into a Lot-Scale Climate Vulnerability Index for South East Queensland Dr Heather Shearer MPIA, Griffith University	Planning the National Capital Under Self-Government Richard Johnston MPIA (Life Fellow)	Planning in 2040: Adaptive Leadership for a Disrupted Future Daniel Cavallo RPIA (Fellow), Cumberland City Council and Romina Cavallo, GHD			

12.30 PM - 1.30 PM LUNCH WITH EXHIBITORS

12.30 PM - 1.30 PM	PIA PlanTech National Conversation AI in Planning <i>Lunchtime Session. Room: Murray</i>
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PLENARY 2
Royal Theatre, National Convention Centre Canberra

1.30 PM - 2.10 PM	John Duguid, Auckland Council <i>Keynote Address</i>
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2.10 PM - 3.00 PM	Planning the Long View Choices, Trade-offs and Responsibilities Ben Rimmer , Director General, <i>Housing Group Treasury</i> Emeritus Professor Barbara Norman MPIA (Life Fellow) , Urban and Regional Planning, <i>University of Canberra</i> , and Honorary Professor ANU Sue Schwartz FAICP , President, <i>American Planning Association</i> Seija Wellington MPIA , Principal, <i>Arup</i> Panel sessions facilitated by Amy Wilkins MPIA , Emerging Planner Director, <i>Planning Institute of Australia</i>
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3.00 PM - 3.30 PM AFTERNOON TEA WITH EXHIBITORS

CONCURRENT 2 / WORKSHOP 2

SESSION TYPE	CONCURRENT 2A Housing and Innovation	CONCURRENT 2B Turning Plans into Places	CONCURRENT 2C Country, Climate + Resilience	CONCURRENT 2D Planning for a Changing Nation	CONCURRENT 2E The Future of the Profession	WORKSHOP 2 Country, Climate + Resilience	PIA YARNING SPACE First Nations Knowledge and Planning
ROOM	Exhibition Hall	Menzies	Nicholls	Royal Theatre	Bradman	Murray	Fitzroy
3.30 PM - 4.00 PM	Central Coast Housing Strategy: A Strategic Planning Sprint in Regional Tasmania Daryl Connelly PIA (Assoc.), <i>Tasmania's Central Coast Council</i> and Nikki Hill MPIA, <i>Colliers Urban Planning</i>	Giving Active Recreation a Sporting Chance Dan Ferguson PIA (Assoc), <i>Swinburne University</i>	Country, Partnerships and Resilience: Lessons Learned for Planners from the Victorian Goldfields World Heritage Nomination Trevor Budge AM MPIA (Life Fellow), <i>Consultant</i>	Planning for a Continent of Cities: Long-range Scenarios for Australian Urbanisation Dr Julian Bolleter and Professor Robert Freestone RPIA (Fellow), <i>The University of Western Australia</i>	Game-Changing Visual Futures: A radical redistribution of who creates and controls renderings of the future Nick Kamols MPIA, <i>Queensland University of Technology</i>	From Engagement to Relationship: A Practical Caring for Country Workshop for Planners Gregory Andrews, <i>Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure</i> <i>*Limited places available, must be pre-registered to attend</i>	PIA is providing a dedicated Safe Yarning Space for Congress delegates - a culturally respectful and inclusive environment to support First Nations knowledge sharing, reflection, and open conversation throughout Planning Congress.
4.00 PM - 4.30 PM	Planning Beyond the Border: Rethinking Regional Planning at the ACT-NSW Interface Ingrid Shelton RPIA, Chris O'Dell MPIA and Melanie Krzus RPIA, <i>Gyde Consulting</i>	From Games to Gains: Leveraging the Green and Gold Runway to 2032 Across Australia Dyan Currie AM RPIA (Life Fellow), <i>Dyan Currie & Associates</i>	"Country" as the Central Organising Principle for Climate Adaptation Dr Toktam Tabrizi, <i>Western Sydney University</i>	Housing, Homes and Homelessness Aiko Syafari PIA (Assoc), <i>DevelopmentWA</i> , Emily Robertson PIA (Assoc.), <i>City of Subiaco</i> and Keyon Yang MPIA, <i>City of Swan</i>	AI and Planning: Beyond the Hype, from Pattern Books to Playbooks George Giannakodakis MPIA (Fellow), <i>PointData & InfraPlan</i>		
4.30 PM - 5.00 PM	Beyond Rezoning: Delivering Liveable Neighbourhoods Katherine Sundermann, <i>Monash University</i> and Professor Andrew Butt MPIA (Fellow), <i>RMIT University</i>	From Mapping to Planning to Growing - How Housing Policy Continues to Shape Australian Cities Oliver Bowering, <i>id</i>	Things Ain't What They Used To Be - Stepping it up, in planning for climate and energy resilience Laura Little, <i>Department of Transport and Planning, Victorian Government</i>	The Implementation Of Informal Urban Art in Residual Urban Spaces Maia Cavendish MPIA, <i>Logan City Council</i>	Planning Policy - What Will Actually Get Built? Using the Urban Policy Model to Support Strategic Planning Decisions Benjamin Russ MPIA and Will Harmer PIA (Assoc.), <i>PointData</i>		

6.00 PM - 10.00 PM	Planners Take Over Verity Lane Market Hall, Verity Lane, Canberra <i>Tickets available for purchase here</i>
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7.30 AM REGISTRATION								
PLENARY 3 Royal Theatre, National Convention Centre Canberra								
8.30 AM - 8.40 AM Welcome to Country								
8.40 AM - 8.50 AM Master of Ceremonies, Tim Ross Welcome and Opening Address								
8.50 AM - 9.30 AM Simon Kuestenmacher, The Demographics Group Keynote Address								
9.30 AM - 10.20 AM Leading Change Heads of Planning George Cilliers MPlA, Chief Planner and Executive Group Manager, <i>Statutory Planning Division, City and Environment Directorate</i> Kiersten Fishburn, Secretary, <i>Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure</i> Peta Harwood MPlA, State Planner and Deputy Director-General, <i>Department of State Development, Infrastructure and Planning</i> Kathy Bonus RPIA (Fellow), Chief Planning Advisor at Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage Panel session facilitated by Nicole Bennetts RPIA, <i>Planning Institute of Australia</i>								
10.20 AM - 11.00 AM MORNING TEA WITH EXHIBITORS								
CONCURRENT 3 / WORKSHOP 3								
SESSION TYPE	CONCURRENT 3A Housing and Innovation	CONCURRENT 3B Turning Plans into Places	CONCURRENT 3C Country, Climate + Resilience	CONCURRENT 3D Planning for a Changing Nation	CONCURRENT 3E The Future of the Profession	WORKSHOP 3 Planning for a Changing Nation	PIA YARNING SPACE First Nations knowledge and planning	HEART FOUNDATION WALKSHOP
ROOM	Exhibition Hall	Menzies	Nicholls	Royal Theatre	Bradman	Murray	Fitzroy	Offsite
11.00 AM - 11.30 AM	Growth Strategy Implementation in South Australia Seija Wellington MPlA, Arup and Brett Steiner MPlA, Department for Housing And Urban Development	A Planning Paradox: Canberra, Australia's National Capital Rachel Jackson, GML Heritage	Rethinking Urban Planning for Regenerative Places Clare Mayberry, Tract Consultants	Planning For Growth for a Region Under Pressure - Lessons from Planning and Design in South Australia Orr Niv Shallev and Tim Pearson MPlA, Arup	Designing With, Not For: Comparing 2D, VR and AR Co-Design with Older Residents for Age-Friendly Parks Dr Zinan Chen, Tract Consultants	Is This the End of the Open Space Culture in Australia? Jo Noesgaard MPlA and Aliza Levy, SGS Economic and Planning <i>*Limited places available, must be pre-registered to attend</i>	PIA is providing a dedicated Safe Yarning Space for Congress delegates - a culturally respectful and inclusive environment to support First Nations knowledge sharing, reflection, and open conversation throughout Planning Congress.	The Heart Foundation is offering 90 minute Walkshops. This is a great opportunity to find out more about their evidence-based Healthy Active by Design resources for planning and design outcomes which support heart health. Join us for a walk in the neighbourhood of the Convention Centre where you will be guided through a practical activity to help you apply the Heart Foundation's active living principles in your projects. Hosted by The Heart Foundation <i>*Limited to 20 places, must be pre-registered to attend</i> Registration Now Open
11.30 AM - 12.00 PM	Myth vs Reality: Planning in 2026 Andrea Breen, GVP <i>Government Solutions, Objective</i> , John Duguid <i>Manager Central Area Planning of Auckland City Council</i> and Chris O'Dell, Gyde Consulting	The Silent Hum: How EVs are Redefining the Traditional Sounds of the Street Sophie Gittins, Stantec	Restoring Country through Indigenous Knowledge: Creative Pathways to Country Centred Planning Associate Professor Liz Cameron and Edna Grigoriou, Department of Planning, Housing And Infrastructure	From Planning to Impact: City of Swan's Sustainable Growth Story Ian Humphrey MPlA, City of Swan	Riding the Waves of Change with New Digital Consultation Tools Fiona McKenrarley, Sunshine Coast Council			
12.00 PM - 12.30 PM	Guiding Planners Through Digital Transformation: PIA's PlanTech Program Dr Claire Daniel MPlA, Chair - PIA National PlanTech Group	A Progressive Vision for Our National Capital Dr Erin Brady PIA (Assoc.) and Karen Doran, National Capital Authority		Jacka Small Footprint Housing - an SLA Demonstration Precinct Rob Henry, DNA Architecture	CATS Redefining the SA Planning Ecosystem Nadia Gencarelli MPlA and Saba Adil Malik MPlA, Department for Housing Urban Development			
12.30 PM - 1.30 PM LUNCH WITH EXHIBITORS								
CONCURRENT 4 / WORKSHOP 4								
SESSION TYPE	CONCURRENT 4A Early Career Research Poster Session	CONCURRENT 4B Turning Plans into Places	CONCURRENT 4C Country, Climate + Resilience	CONCURRENT 4D Planning for a Changing Nation	CONCURRENT 4E The Future of the Profession	WORKSHOP 4 The Future of the Profession	PIA YARNING SPACE First Nations Knowledge and Planning	
ROOM	Exhibition Hall	Menzies	Nicholls	Royal Theatre	Bradman	Murray	Fitzroy	
1.30 PM - 2.00 PM	To celebrate our fellow Emerging Planners (EPs), join us for the Early Career Research Poster Session There will be several early career poster presentations, followed by a Q+A and a casual networking opportunity to meet fellow EPs and industry peers. This session is a great opportunity to not only hear about research being undertaken across the country, but also meet fellow congress participants! Don't miss this chance to be inspired and get to know the future of our profession!	AI-Driven Planning: From Wildfire Recovery to Regulatory Reform - How Australia's eCheck Technology is Transforming Development Approval Dr Benjamin Coorey, Archistar	Reimagining Washpool Creek: A Blueprint for Resilient Regional Renewal Stuart Tedford, Tract Consultants	Housing Trend Tracker: Is Planning Really the Cause of the Housing Crisis? Scott Walker MPlA and Jack Richardson, Boroondara City Council	Inspiring the Young Planners with a Business Idea to Assist Australia's Planning Reforms and Housing Targets Haven Barr PIA (Assoc.), Gyde Consulting		PIA is providing a dedicated Safe Yarning Space for Congress delegates - a culturally respectful and inclusive environment to support First Nations knowledge sharing, reflection, and open conversation throughout Planning Congress.	
2.00 PM - 2.30 PM			Cooler Cities Through Smarter Data: Tackling Heat Stress with Foot Traffic Data Stephanie Miller PIA (Assoc.), Veitch Lister Consulting	Charging for Development Rights: a Vision for Housing Affordability Grounded in Walter Burley Griffin's Economic Philosophy and Canberra's Distinctive Approach to Land Value Capture Dr Tim Helm, Prosper Australia	The "Plan-demic": Cures for a Planner Shortage Dyan Currie AM RPIA (Life Fellow), Dyan Currie & Associates and Greg Vann RPIA (Life Fellow), Urban Mentors Collective			
2.30 PM - 3.00 PM		How Planning and Design Decisions Influence Development Cost and Deliverability James Barwood, EESI	Improving Shade Provision for UV Protection from the Australian Sun: Free Resources to Assist Planners Elizabeth King, Cancer Council NSW and Jan Falding RPIA (Fellow), NSW Shade Working Group	Smart Tech for Planners: Urban Technology and the Public Realm Dr Nathaniel Bavinton, Urbis				
3.00 PM - 3.30 PM AFTERNOON TEA WITH EXHIBITORS								
PLENARY 4 Royal Theatre, National Convention Centre Canberra								
3.30 PM - 4.20 PM AI in Planning: Hype, Help or Hazard? Bonnie Shaw, Chief Innovator in Residence at the Municipal Association of Victoria, MAVlab Professor Chris Pettit MPlA, Scientia Professor and Director of the City Futures Research Centre, UNSW Sydney Michael Comminos MPlA, Expert reviewer for Infrastructure NSW and Adjunct Senior Research Fellow at UNSW, Astrolabe Group Dr Claire Daniel MPlA, Urban Planner and Technologist, Chair of PIA's National PlanTech Advisory Committee Panel session facilitated by Tina Perinotto, Editor and Publisher, The Fifth Estate								
4.20 PM - 4.50 PM Hannah Ferguson, Cheek Media Keynote Address								
4.50 PM - 5.00 PM Matt Collins MPlA Congress Close								
6.30 PM - 11.00 PM PIA Planning Congress Gala Dinner Main Hall, Parliament House								