

# PIA National **PlanTech** Vision

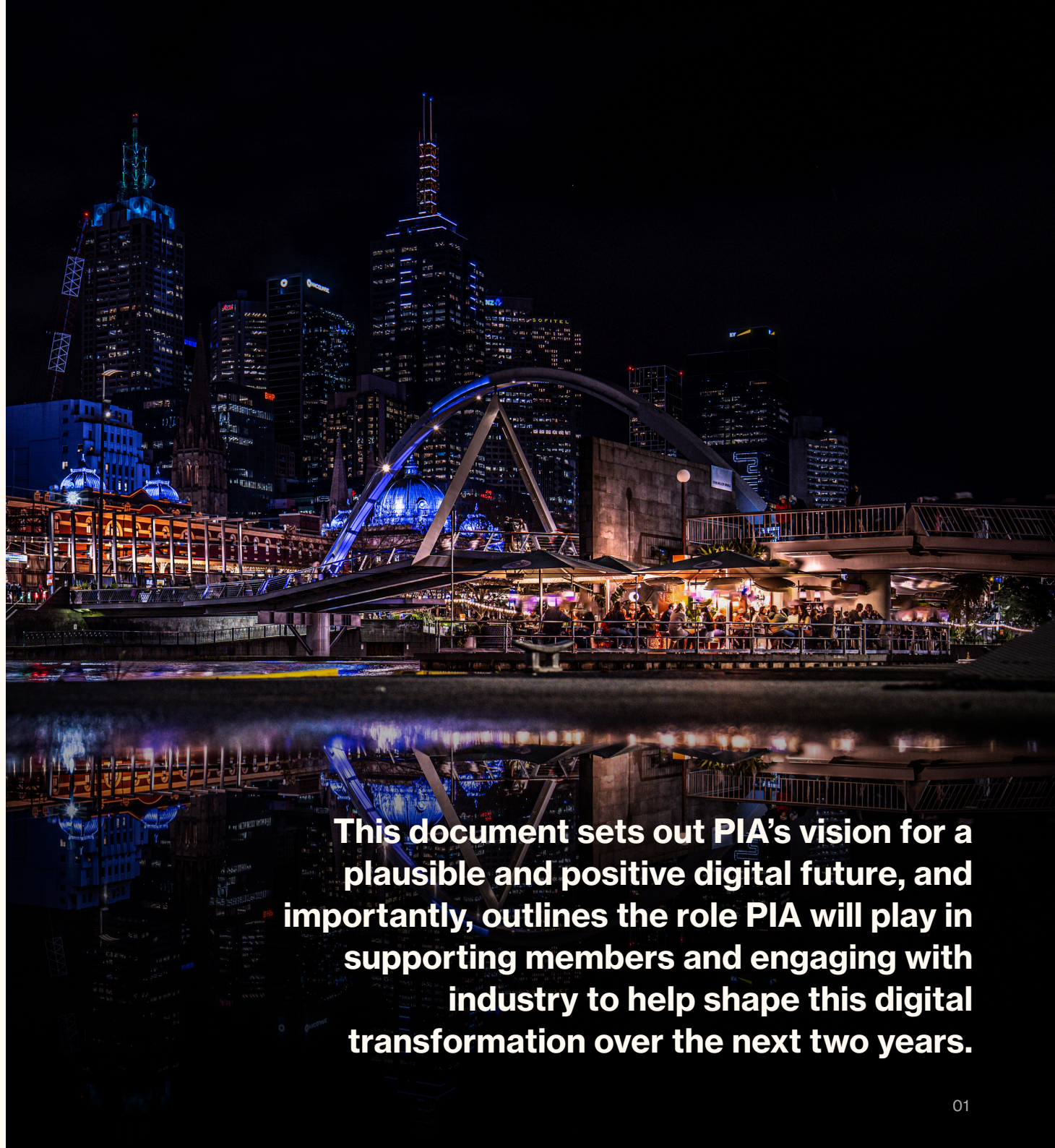
2026 - 2027



Digital technologies offer enormous opportunities to improve outcomes, streamline processes, and enhance the role of planners in delivering better communities.

The Planning Institute of Australia (PIA) is committed to helping planners navigate the rapid technological changes affecting the profession. Realising this potential, however, requires PIA to be active participants in change.

Planners need the skills and judgment to assess which technologies add value, align with good practice, and serve community needs, and PIA must have a voice in shaping and designing these solutions.



**This document sets out PIA's vision for a plausible and positive digital future, and importantly, outlines the role PIA will play in supporting members and engaging with industry to help shape this digital transformation over the next two years.**

# 1. Future Practice

Digital technologies are a trusted, everyday part of planning practice. Planners have access to reliable and fit-for-purpose digital tools that enhance their work, rather than replace it. Planning portals and other administrative systems work seamlessly. Planners have easy access to the right data at the right time, supporting decisions that are evidence-based, yet attentive to the political, social, and local context. With the help of technology, monitoring and evaluation are embedded, creating feedback loops that help planners adapt and improve policy over time.

Digital technologies like the ongoing evolution of AI, help streamline processes and speed up decisions, but efficiency does not come at the expense of thoughtful, high-quality outcomes for communities and the environment. Technology is used to make planning processes more transparent and to broaden participation. Communities have the tools they need to play a meaningful role in shaping the places they live, work, and care for.



# 2. Where We Are Now

Rapid technological change, especially in AI, is opening up new possibilities for the planning profession, but we are still only at the beginning of understanding how to apply these tools effectively. Adoption so far has been uneven, with limited strategy, underinvestment in data foundations, and varied levels of capability and readiness across the sector.

This period of change offers an opportunity to shape how digital tools are used in planning. With the right support, the profession can strengthen its foundations, build skills, and use innovation to improve outcomes. The following sections outline how PIA will help the sector navigate this transition.



## 3. PIA's Actions

PIA is committed to shaping a future-ready and inclusive profession, with a focus on equipping planners for a digital future, including the transformative role of AI.

PIA's central focus is on raising the profile and understanding of PlanTech amongst the planning profession, and this section outlines the key actions PIA will take to help realise the positive future for digital planning.

Organised under three themes—Professional Development, Policy and Advocacy, Networks and Partnerships—these actions align with PIA's advocacy, support members, and strengthen the profession's ability to respond to the challenges and opportunities ahead.

### 3.1. Professional Development

#### Objective:

Planners and key partners have the knowledge and skills to apply digital technologies to deliver better outcomes.

#### PIA's roles:

Oversight and accreditation of tertiary education programs; Delivery of annual conferences; Delivery of continued professional development activities; Facilitator of peer-to-peer knowledge sharing.

#### Actions:

- **PD 1** – Embed Core Competencies: Finalise the PlanTech Core Competencies and embed across accreditation, professional development and industry practice.
- **PD 2** – Plan Tech Seminar Series: A structured series commencing in 2026 and evolving over time to deepen learning outcomes.

## 3.2. Policy and Advocacy

### Objective:

Planners and key partners have the knowledge and skills to apply digital technologies to deliver better outcomes.

### PIA's roles:

Oversight and accreditation of tertiary education programs; Delivery of annual conferences; Delivery of continued professional development activities; Facilitator of peer-to-peer knowledge sharing.

### Actions:

- **Policy and Advocacy 1** – National Conversation on Planning and AI: Lead a national conversation on planning and AI, anchored by a national statement that sets principles for use across the profession.
- **Policy and Advocacy 2** – National Planning and Housing Data Benchmarks: Articulate the essential data requirements for good planning across Australia, establishing benchmarks to inform future policy and advocacy initiatives.
- **Policy and Advocacy 3** – Update Guidance Documents: Review, and refresh or retire PIA PlanTech guidance materials in light of latest research and developments in AI.
- **Policy and Advocacy 4** - Integrating PlanTech Across PIA's Policy Work: Strengthen connections between the National PlanTech Committee, PIA policy staff, and state and national policy committees to ensure PlanTech is embedded across all policy initiatives.

## 3.3. Networks and Partnerships

### Objective:

Strong networks and partnerships are in place, expanding the reach and impact of digital planning efforts

### PIA's roles:

Form strategic alliances with partner organisations and research bodies; create opportunities for connection and collaboration

### Actions:

- **Networks and Partnerships 1** – Strengthen Strategic Partnerships, including with International Institutes: Formalise partnerships with sister institutes internationally to share best practices, co-host events, and deliver joint projects that strengthen global knowledge exchange on PlanTech.
- **Networks and Partnerships 2** – Urban Data Network: Support the Urban Data Network as a member-run community of practice for planners working with data and technology.
- **Networks and Partnerships 3** – PlanTech Initiatives Mapping: Crowdsource and maintain mapping project to identify key players, trends, and opportunities in the PlanTech sector, informing partnerships and advocacy initiatives.

**For more information**

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