

THANKS FOR THE CASH BUT WHERE'S THE SUPPORT?

Infrastructure spending is once again at the centre of the Federal Budget but delivery challenges go unaddressed.

Consult Australia's membership takes centre stage in Australia's economic prosperity as infrastructure spending continues.

Consult Australia is the industry association representing consulting businesses in design, advisory and engineering, an industry comprised of over 58,600 businesses across Australia who employ over 285,000 people in architectural, engineering, and technical services, and many more in advisory and business support.

Nicola Grayson, Chief Executive of Consult Australia, said, "Continued investment in infrastructure is welcomed, however we are disappointed that the Budget measures don't provide policy support to ensure that the systemic barriers to our industry's productivity are addressed. Allocating the money is easy but long-term structural reform must not be left in the too hard basket.

"We are delighted that the Commonwealth has listened and responded to the issues we've raised on behalf of our small business members by requiring Commonwealth projects agencies to limit the extent of pre-contract insurance and liability requirements to reflect sufficient risk sharing while not imposing unreasonable or disproportionate risk transfer that unduly restricts the number of suppliers who can bid. This is an excellent step in the right direction but we need to see the adoption of these measures across all Commonwealth funded projects in Australia."

Skills shortages and poor procurement practices in the delivery of infrastructure need to be addressed to ensure Australian taxpayers get the best return on this investment for our future economic, social, and environmental prosperity.

"We need Federal Government support to boost tertiary education in engineering and related professional occupations, we also need legislative and policy reforms to ensure that governments are model clients in procuring infrastructure. The Federal Government has missed the opportunity to signal its support for the health of the businesses large and small and the people they employ who will be critical in delivering the infrastructure spend." said Grayson.

MEDIA STATEMENT

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Consult Australia welcomes the investment in vocational education and training but highlights the need to boost investment in engineering and related tertiary education, noting that Infrastructure Australia found that there will be a peak public infrastructure workforce shortage of 70,000 engineers, scientists, and architects to 2025 based on the previous budget estimates.

“We need to think smarter about skills to create a vibrant workforce with the right capabilities and capacity to meet demands, with funding in place to support skilled migration, upskill those capable already in the community and strong policies to assist working parents.” Grayson said.

Consult Australia now looks to the Federal election and the appetite to commit to a suite of policies that will remove the barriers to productivity and innovation across our industry.

Consult Australia members provide solutions for individual consumers through to major companies in the private sector and across all tiers of government. The industry directly employs over 285,000 people in architectural, engineering, and technical services, and many more in advisory and business support. It is also a job creator for the Australian economy, the services we provide unlock many more jobs across the construction industry and the broader community.

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NOTES TO EDITOR

1. About Consult Australia

Consult Australia is the industry association representing consulting businesses in design, advisory and engineering, an industry comprised of over 58,600 businesses across Australia. This includes some of Australia's top 500 companies and many small businesses (97%). Our members provide solutions for individual consumers through to major companies in the private sector and across all tiers of government. Our industry directly employs over 285,000 people in architectural, engineering and technical services and many more in advisory and business support. It is also a job creator for the Australian economy, the services we provide unlock many more jobs across the construction industry and the broader community.

2. About Nicola Grayson

Nicola Grayson is the Chief Executive of Consult Australia. Nicola is responsible for implementing the organisation's strategy, building ongoing external relationships, and for leading Consult Australia's advocacy and government relations agenda on behalf of members.

Nicola is a member of and former chair of the International Federation of Consulting Engineers (FIDIC) Risk, Liability, and Quality Committee. In Australia she chairs the Australian Sustainable Built Environment Council's Urban Resilience Task Group and sits on numerous government forums representing the Consult Australia membership. Nicola is the Convenor for Consult Australia's Champions of Change leadership group for gender diversity and inclusion, a member of the Champions of Change Coalition.

Nicola is a government relations specialist, and has represented industry associations in the United Kingdom, the European Union, and Australia. Nicola has worked across a range of sectors including general insurance, consumer finance, alcohol, and education, in addition to consulting engineering. She has an Honours Degree in Law from the United Kingdom and is a member of the Australia Institute of Company Directors.

3. For interview

For more information and to arrange an interview, please contact Nicola Grayson directly on +61499 878 839 or email nicola@consultaustalia.com.au.