

### INFRASTRUCTURE NSW STATE INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY 2022

Infrastructure NSW have released a 20-year infrastructure strategy which provides recommendations to the NSW Government on long-term infrastructure priorities. Many of the recommendations align with Consult Australia's policy priorities as detailed below.

#### ADVOCACY HIGHLIGHTS



##### Diversifying project pipelines and improving transparency

Infrastructure NSW recommends *'that the State's priorities over the next 20 years involve a different mix of projects than the past decade, as the focus on megaprojects should give way to a combination of smaller and medium-sized projects, in many cases delivered in stages as multi-year programs.'*

This recommendation aligns with our policy priority **smarter pipeline of projects** which advocates for pipeline diversity to enable sector-wide productivity, create a dynamic workforce, and increase regional participation. Additionally, a diverse pipeline of projects would enable small to medium businesses greater access to government projects.

Infrastructure NSW has also recommended the publishing of pipelines for *'major asset maintenance, upgrade and renewal opportunities as part of the NSW Major Projects Pipeline, and promote the use of innovative, outcome-based asset management service contracts.'* Part of Consult Australia's advocacy on **smarter pipeline of projects** includes the need for transparency of the upcoming projects so industry can predict, prepare, and plan the resources required to meet demand and all parties can benefit from increased productivity. Consult Australia therefore welcomes this recommendation.



##### Harnessing the power of data and digital technology

Infrastructure NSW have dedicated a chapter of the Strategy to *'harness the power of data and digital technology.'* The recommendations on adopting *'the use of digital technology in infrastructure planning, delivery and operation'* align with our policy priority **digital by default**.

Consult Australia calls on governments to embrace digital tools such as data sharing during projects, digital project controls, using digital tools to manage projects risks and delivering building information modelling (BIM) and/or digital twins of assets. Infrastructure NSW have also called for the adoption of spatial digital twins, BIM and digital planning.

We also welcome the recommendation to *'build capability across government asset managers to accelerate adoption of digital engineering tools'* as we continue to advocate for governments to prioritise digital so that industry has the confidence to invest in digital.



##### Improving skills and capabilities

Infrastructure NSW have recommended the development of *'new skills and capabilities required for infrastructure projects, and widen opportunities for communities to participate through targeted actions in training and employment initiatives.'* This recommendation links in with our advocacy on **thinking smarter about skills** particularly as the Strategy focuses on collaboration with *'the construction industry to co-design training for projects from entry level to project management.'*

Consult Australia welcomes opportunities to work with governments to think smarter about skills and invest in a range of initiatives to tackle the existing capacity issues. This includes opportunities to increase capacity through training programs for the existing skilled migration workforce and the upskilling of mid-level candidates.

Further, Consult Australia welcomes the recommendation by Infrastructure NSW for the development of *'agreed methods to encourage innovation in project procurement and delivery'* as this will enable greater utilisation of new and emerging skills in our industry as well as improve industry capacity to meet current and future complex challenges.



#### Early engagement on risks

Infrastructure NSW have recommended *'early engagement on risks, scope and design solutions, and open book approaches'* as well as *'early engagement with industry on commercial viability and program deliverability (including market sounding) to inform options.'*

These recommendations encourage a **go slow to go fast** approach to projects, where the emphasis in project development is placed on preliminary due diligence to enhance project outcomes. Consult Australia continues to advocate for governments to adopt a go slow to go fast approach to projects as the investment of time and resources upfront can reduce projects risks and increase industry productivity.



#### Enhancing commercial skills

Consult Australia welcomes the recommendation by Infrastructure NSW for *'training and development for infrastructure delivery agencies, particularly in the areas of commercial skills for large projects (bidding, pricing, contract administration, procurement, evaluation) and Project, Program and Portfolio leadership.'*

Enhancing commercial skills and understanding of project stakeholders will set a foundation for the adoption of more collaborative forms of contract and procurement practices. Making **collaboration as culture** can reduce costs and resources throughout the project lifecycle, uplift productivity and increase opportunities for innovation. This will also assist government clients to demonstrate **Model Client** behaviour

### NEXT STEPS

Consult Australia invites members to provide feedback on the [NSW State Infrastructure Strategy 2022](#) and welcomes any opportunities to work with the NSW Government to realise the recommendations identified above.

## CONSULT AUSTRALIA GLOSSARY



### De-risking for delivery

*This means identifying ways to de-risk the market to reduce the level of disputation and therefore burden on professional indemnity insurance. The aim is to bring some balance back to the professional indemnity insurance market.*



### Collaboration as culture

*This means embracing and embedding collaboration as the cultural norm in contract design and tendering approaches. The aim is to reduce the imbalance between contracting parties and provide a more collaborative, productive environment with all parties focussed on successful project delivery.*



### Go slow to go fast

*This means investing time at the start to define project deliverables and aspirations ensuring best practice in due diligence. The aim is to deliver better projects and minimise cost and time over-runs that currently mar projects, particularly infrastructure projects.*



### Smarter pipeline of projects

*This means adopting and supporting an approach to the pipeline of projects that provides certainty to the industry and increases accessibility for small to medium businesses. The aim is to deliver benefits to productivity (both industry and government), workforce planning and regional participation.*



### Digital by default

*This means driving innovation by committing to and pushing for digital investment at all stages and on all projects so businesses, particularly small businesses, have the confidence to do the same. This will deliver benefits for both government and industry.*



### Thinking smarter about skills

*This means thinking more broadly about the skills challenge. We need a range of initiatives to tackle the deepening skills shortage in engineering and related professions. The aim is to maintain world class design, engineering and advisory services for Australia and boost productivity by job growth and high employment participation.*



### Striving for a mentally healthy industry

*This means championing model behaviours to support the vitality of our industry. The aim is to ensure we have sustainable businesses with healthy and productive people at the heart.*



### Model Client

*This means embracing all of the reforms above and is further defined in Consult Australia's Model Client Policy.*