# The Digital Planning Directory (AU)

digitalplanningdirectory.au

AN INDEPENDENT, INDUSTRY-LED RESOURCE FOR DIGITAL SOLUTIONS TRANSFORMING PLANNING PRACTICE IN AUSTRALIA.

BRIEFING PACK
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NEON.URBAN
DIGITAL URBAN PLANNING ADVISORY

# executive summary

The Digital Planning Directory is an independent, curated resource that helps the planning sector find, understand and trust the digital solutions reshaping the profession. It is being established by NEON.URBAN as a private-sector advocacy initiative, inspired by the Digital Task Force for Planning in the United Kingdom and its Digital Planning Directory, and built for the Australian marketplace.

The Directory does one thing no procurement portal or government register does. It puts the vendor in front of the camera. The centrepiece of every vendor listing is a recorded video presentation and a structured interview, conducted by NEON.URBAN, that lets each provider explain what they do, show how the solution works, and answer the questions a planner or a procurement lead would ask.

This turns a static list and marketing material into a living library of credible, comparable and watchable solution profiles. It is discovery for buyers, and a platform for the market.

The platform will launch in January 2027, with expressions of interest for the first intake open now.



# 1. about the directory

## ENHANCING CAPABILITY AND CAPACITY TO PLAN

The Directory is an online resource that profiles the organisations and solutions serving digital planning in Australia. Providers are organised by capability so users can move quickly from a need to a shortlist of credible solution options.

The Directory is structured around clear planning capabilities, which will include for example:

| CAPABILITY AREA | WHAT IT COVERS |
|---|---|
| **Plan-making and Policy** | Local plan preparation and drafting; policy analysis and consistency checking; evidence base management; spatial strategy and scenario modelling; viability and housing need assessment; plan visualisation. |
| **Land and Site Assessment** | Land availability and capacity assessment; site suitability and constraints analysis; land supply and suitability; site identification and appraisal; development feasibility. |
| **Pre-application and Application Submission Services** | Guided digital application services; eligibility and rules-based checks; permitted development and lawful use logic; dynamic forms and fee calculation; document upload and source validation. |
| **Application Processing and Management** | Application management and workflow automation; application triage; validation and registration; document and records management; task allocation and tracking; report and decision drafting. |
| **Assessment and Decision Support** | Automated policy matching and retrieval; material considerations analysis; precedent assessment; constraint and standards checking; recommendation drafting. |
| **Consultation and Community Engagement** | Online consultation portals; statutory notification and publicity; 3D and immersive proposal visualisation; representation management; consultation and sentiment analysis. |
| **Data, Standards and Interoperability** | Legacy document and map digitisation; data extraction and structuring; standardisation to data specifications; spatial data publishing; APIs and system integration; data quality assurance. |
| **Monitoring, Compliance and Enforcement** | Condition monitoring and discharge; infrastructure charges/contribution management; enforcement case management; housing and development delivery monitoring; change detection. |
| **Registers, Publication and Transparency** | Public planning registers; application search and discovery; decision notice publication; open data access; transparency and audit trails. |
| **Insights, Performance and Reporting** | Performance dashboards and management information; statutory returns and reporting; analytics and business intelligence; benchmarking; service and productivity insights. |

Note: These capabilities are indicative only and will likely evolve as the Directory grows over time. It is also the intention that the Directory will serve other city-shaping professions adjacent to urban planning, such as transport and mobility, landscape architecture, economic development and architecture and urban design.

# about the directory

## RECORDED PRESENTATIONS AND INTERVIEWS

Text profiles tell a user what a vendor claims. Video shows them the solution and the people behind it. And while most vendors offer client-facing one-on-one demos, which are an important part of the (pre) procurement process, having demos of multiple vendor solutions in one place, which can be viewed anytime without constrained calendar scheduling, enables easier market capability scanning.

Each validated provider is captured through:

- A solution presentation: A 20min structured walkthrough of the problem the solution addresses, how it works, and the evidence behind it
- A structured interview: A 15min interview using a consistent set of questions asked by NEON.URBAN, so users can compare like-for-like across the Directory.

Recording takes place during scheduled sessions as part of the onboarding process. The result is a consistent, high-trust body of content that is dynamic.



# 2. the problem it solves

## CURATING, VALIDATING, PRESENTING

Digital tools are moving faster than the planning sector can absorb them. The result is a noisy, fragmented market where good solutions are hard to find and harder to trust. And customers need good information to help shape their procurement processes, in a way that ultimately works well for customers and vendors alike.

There are four frequent challenges that NEON.URBAN has identified, which the Directory has been built to solve:

1. Buyers unable to differentiate between mature capability and marketing. A polished website is not evidence of a working, deployed and effective solution
2. Vendors sometimes struggle to be seen. Smaller and newer providers with strong products can sometimes lack a credible channel to reach planning decision-makers
3. Knowledge is often locked in silos. What one council learns about a tool rarely reaches the next
4. Procurement often starts cold. Customers often begin market scans from scratch, repeatedly, and across jurisdictions.

The Directory helps address all four by curating the market, validating who is in it, and capturing each solution in a format that builds genuine understanding.

# 3. purpose and benefits

## A VISIBLE MARKETPLACE

The purpose of the Directory is to accelerate the responsible adoption of digital solutions in planning by making the market visible, credible and easy to navigate, in a way that is trusted by buyers and fair to vendors.

### For government and public-sector planning bodies

- A fast, credible starting point for market scans and early procurement research
- Confidence that listed providers have passed an independent validation process
- Video content that briefs busy teams far quicker than reading a dozen websites and PDF documents
- A neutral national resource that works across jurisdictions and levels of government
- Sector-wide visibility of what is possible, to inform policy and digital strategy.

### For technology vendors

- Enhanced visibility and credibility with the planning sector
- A level playing field, where inclusion is earned on merit, not marketing power
- A professional, reusable solution profile captured through a supported process
- Access to pitch days and a channel to decision-makers that is hard to build alone.

### For the profession and the sector

- A shared, trusted resource that lifts digital literacy across planning
- A transparent record of the state of the market that improves over time
- Faster diffusion of proven solutions between organisations and jurisdictions.

# 4. governance and integrity

## BUILDING A TRUSTWORTHY SYSTEM

The Directory’s value depends on trust, which will be maintained through published controls that make its independence clear and is accountable to both users and vendors.

The governance controls in place to ensure this happens, are outlined below:

| CONTROL | COMMITTMENT |
| --- | --- |
| **Published inclusion criteria** | The rules for getting listed are public, objective and applied consistently. |
| **Validation independent of any fee** | Whether a provider is validated is decided on merit and evidence. No commercial arrangements are in place, and no incentive accelerates or influences a validation outcome. |
| **Conflict-of-interest policy** | NEON.URBAN's advisory engagements are declared and managed. Where a potential conflict exists with a candidate vendor, an assessment is undertaken and the outcomes clearly published. |
| **Independent reference panel** | A small panel of respected, independent professionals will periodically review the criteria and the Directory's conduct. |
| **Editorial independence** | Interviews follow a consistent question set. Vendors do not get to script or approve the questions. The Directory will also contain both NEON.URBAN and vendor editorial, which will be clearly identified as such. |
| **No ranking, no endorsement** | The Directory validates and profiles. It does not rate, rank or recommend one provider over another. |
| **Transparent funding model** | The Directory openly discloses how it is funded, so users can assess any commercial interest themselves. |
| **Right of reply and correction** | Providers can correct factual errors in their profile. Users can raise concerns, which we log and address. |
| **Data and privacy governance** | Personal and commercial information is handled in line with the Privacy Act 1988 and the Australian Privacy Principles, with clear retention rules. |

# governance and integrity

## WHAT THE DIRECTORY IS, AND IS NOT

It is equally important to understand what the Directory is not. Below is a summary.

### THE DIRECTORY IS

- A validated, curated information resource
- A discovery and understanding tool for buyers
- A fair, merit-based shopfront for vendors
- An independent advocate for digital planning
- A neutral profile of each solution.

### THE DIRECTORY IS NOT

- A government-approved supplier panel
- A procurement or tendering platform
- A pay-to-play advertising channel
- A regulator, certifier or accreditor
- A rating, ranking or endorsement system.



# 5. marketplace engagement and vendor recruitment

## EVERYONE IS WELCOME

Vendors reach the Directory through open and curated channels. The aim is broad, fair reach, so the Directory reflects the real market rather than a select few.

### How vendors are found and invited

- Open expression of interest: Any provider can register and apply through a public form.
- Curated outreach: NEON.URBAN proactively invites credible providers identified through market scanning, sector networks and referrals, so strong but quiet players are not missed
- Partner and peer referral: Government partners, industry bodies and existing listed providers can nominate or refer potential candidates
- Category drives: Targeted campaigns to fill under-represented service areas, so the Directory stays balanced and comprehensive.

### Fair-access principles

- Anyone can express an interest. The opportunity to get listed is open to companies of all types and sizes, from start-ups to established firms, and third-sector organisations such as universities and non-profits. Everyone is subject to the same access opportunity
- Australian and international providers are welcomed, with a demonstrable ability to serve the Australian market
- The same evidence bar applies to everyone, regardless of profile or relationship.

# 6. vendor assessment and validation

## GETTING LISTED IN THE DIRECTORY

Validation underpins the Directory's credibility. It runs in two parts:

1. confirming the vendor is a legitimate, sound entity
2. confirming the solution is real, relevant, and mature enough to profile.

### Entity validation

The Directory verifies each provider is a properly constituted, identifiable legal entity able to trade in Australia. The Directory checks registration details against official sources, including the ABN Lookup and ASIC registers, and equivalent registers for overseas entities.

The following information will be verified as part of the process:

| INFORMATION REQUIRED | HOW IT IS VALIDATED |
|---|---|
| Registered legal name | ASIC / ABN Lookup |
| Australian Business Number (ABN) | ABN Lookup (active status, entity type) |
| Australian Company Number (ACN), where applicable | ASIC company register |
| Registered business name(s) | ASIC Business Names Register |
| Registered and principal place of business | Official register plus supporting evidence if needed |
| Year of registration and years trading | Register records |
| Company website and verified domain | Direct check and link testing |
| Overseas entities: home-country registration and Australian presence. | Equivalent official register, plus local ABN or partner where relevant. |

### Supplementary evidence

Where needed, but unlikely, NEON.URBAN may request a certificate of incorporation, proof of address, or current certificates of insurance (professional indemnity and public liability), and evidence of a data and security posture appropriate to public-sector use.

# 7. vendor assessment and validation

## ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

### Solution assessment

Beyond the entity, the Directory assesses whether the solution belongs in front of planning decision-makers. Assessment is qualitative and evidence-led, not a score.

Below are the criteria and responding information we look for:

| ASSESSMENT CRITERIA | WHAT WE LOOK FOR |
|---|---|
| **Relevance** | A clear, demonstrable application to Australian planning or urban development, mapped to a capability area within the Directory. |
| **Maturity** | Where the solution sits on a simple scale: concept, pilot, deployed, or scaled. Each solution is labelled as such, regardless of maturity level. |
| **Evidence of use** | Named deployments, case studies and/or client references that show the solution works in practice. |
| **Data and security** | Handling of data consistent with the Australian Privacy Principles; recognised security practice (for example ISO 27001) and, for government data, awareness of hosting, residency and IRAP considerations. |
| **Interoperability** | Alignment with relevant standards and the ability to work with common planning and spatial systems. |
| **Support and continuity** | Australian support arrangements and signals of the provider's viability and ability to sustain the solution. |
| **Best practice AI** | Alignment with ISO/IEC TR 24028 Information technology — Artificial intelligence — Overview of trustworthiness in artificial intelligence. |

The outcome of the assessment process will be one of three scenarios:

1. Validated and invited: Vendor meets the listing requirements; invited to a pitch day to record a solution profile
2. Conditional, additional information required: The listing requirements are not fully met, with specific gaps highlighted to close before proceeding
3. Not progressed: Does not meet the bar at this time, with feedback and the option to reapply as the solution matures.

Each applicant will be advised of the outcome, and where necessary, actions agreed.

# 8. vendor directory profile

## SOLUTIONS PRESENTED, IN AN INDEPENDENT WAY

Presentation sessions are being used to turn validation into content for buyers. All validated vendors are invited to a curated session to present their solution and sit for a structured interview; we record everything to a professional standard for the Directory.

### The presentation structure

Each vendor is invited to deliver a 30min presentation around the planning problem or function their solution supports, as well as showcasing the product features. This use-case-anchored format keeps profiles comparable and useful. The minimum to be addressed in each vendor's presentation includes:

- The use case: The planning or urban problem the solution solves, framed for a planning audience
- The solution: What it is and how it works, shown rather than told
- The evidence: Where it has been deployed and what changed as a result
- The planning fit: How it integrates with data, systems and the planning workflow
- The feedback: The good, and not so good, and how it helped enhance the product
- The future: Any product roadmap insights that can be shared publicly
- Mobilisation: How a planning organisation would get started with solution procurement and/or onboarding.

### The interview structure

This interview is the Directory's core value. After the vendor presentation, we conduct an interview. A consistent question set, asked by NEON.URBAN, lets Directory users compare providers on what matters to them. Typical themes include the problem and audience, proof of impact, data and security, pricing model and engagement approach, limitations and honest trade-offs, and where the solution is heading. Vendors answer live; they do not have the questions in advance.



# 9. what does this all mean for government?

## PUBLIC MONEY, INVESTED WISELY

The Directory helps government partners access an independent resource without taking on the cost, probity load or perception risk of single-sourcing solutions from vendors. Because, let's face it, procurement can be unfavourable with emerging, innovative, and sometimes untested technology solutions. The Directory helps government buyers take some of the guesswork out of their procurement process and outcomes.

The Directory offers government (and private sector) clients:

- A credible head start: Market scans begin from a validated, 'watchable' base rather than a marketing brochure
- Probity distance: Because the Directory is independent and does not rank or endorse, engaging with it does not compromise procurement neutrality
- Sector intelligence: A clear, evolving picture of what the market can do, to inform policy and digital strategy (a benefit to all sectors, including the vendors themselves)
- A way to signal priorities: Partners can highlight challenge areas that shape future pitch-session themes, without picking suppliers.

In summary, NEON.URBAN curates, validates and profiles the market independently.

Government partners use the resource, share priorities, and make their own procurement decisions through their own processes. The line between the two is deliberate, and it is what makes the Directory trustworthy to both sides

No referral fees and no favourites. Just equitable access, transparency and quality information to enable better investment in planning technology.

# 10. ready to get started?

## THE PROCESS

The pathway to Directory inclusion and publishing is summarised below. The first intake of vendors will occur in November 2026, with the first version of the Directory live for use by late January 2027.

| STEP | WHAT HAPPENS | OWNER |
|---|---|---|
| **1. Expression of interest** | Provider registers and submits a short summary of their solution plus supporting details, using the NEON.URBAN online portal. | Vendor |
| **2. Entity validation** | EOI information is verified against official registers, and evidence is requested if needed. | NEON.URBAN |
| **3. Solution assessment** | Solution assessed against relevance, maturity and evidence checks. | NEON.URBAN |
| **4. Invitation and scheduling** | Validated vendors are invited to presentation and interview recording sessions. | NEON.URBAN |
| **5. Recording sessions** | Vendor presents and completes the structured interview; content is recorded. | Joint |
| **6. Profile drafting** | The recording is edited and the written profile drafted; the vendor checks facts and corrects errors only. | Joint |
| **7. Compliance and quality check** | Content, links and compliance with the Directory's terms are checked. | NEON.URBAN |
| **8. Publication** | The validated profile goes live in the relevant capability area in the Directory. | NEON.URBAN |
| **9. Announcement** | An announcement is made via LinkedIn of vendor inclusion in the Directory. | NEON.URBAN |
| **10. Review and currency** | Profiles are reviewed periodically to keep them accurate and current; vendors can supply new information for review and publishing; additional product/functionality recording sessions may be necessary as products evolve. | Joint |

# 11. more information

## THE DETAIL

Interested parties are invited to attend an online information session on Tuesday 6th October at 10:00am AEDT. This 1hr session will provide an overview of the Directory and an opportunity to ask questions and hear from others.

The first intake of vendor expressions of interest will then close on Friday, 30 October.

Presentations and interviews will be conducted between 16-27 November.

Should you have any questions, please use the contact details below.

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# thank you

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