



# Australian Institute of Landscape Architects

## Strategy 2015 – 2020



Australian Institute  
of Landscape Architects <sup>®</sup>

# The Next Five Years: AILA's Future Strategy 2015-2020

In 2015, the Australian Institute of Landscape Architects (AILA) is a dynamic body of 2200 members. As we look ahead to the 50th anniversary of our organisation in 2016, we are also planning for the coming 5 years.

AILA's role is to serve the mutual interests of our members and the profession. To do so, we strongly advocate for: quality design and planning of outdoor spaces; healthy communities; and considered stewardship of the landscape.

## Key External Challenges and Opportunities

AILA is at a pivotal point in its evolution. Our future is bright; the ambitions of our members strong and focused. It is imperative that the strengths gained through recent growth in membership and revenue are used to advance members' ambitions for the organisation.

As we press onwards into the next five years, we have prepared the AILA Strategy for 2015-2020. With this shared vision, we will steer a forward-looking agenda that goes towards our aspirations for AILA to sustain people and place.

In framing the AILA Strategy 2015-2020, it is important that we appreciate the setting in which we operate and the challenges and opportunities this poses to achieving our ambitions.

### External Challenges

1. Landscape architecture has a low public profile. Few people understand how we are shaping Australia's future.
2. Landscape architects have had a limited capacity to influence policy and legislative change.
3. The profession is often undervalued by the built environment industry.
4. Enrolments in university landscape architecture courses are low, resulting in funding cuts to programs.
5. We face competition from other professionals in areas where we are the most qualified to practice.
6. Professional associations are changing and with them member expectations for services, engagement and accountability.
7. The International Federation of Landscape Architects (IFLA) lacks leadership, influence and a strategy for advancing the interests of the profession.

With our members, we anticipate and progress leading positions on issues of concern in landscape architecture. Alongside government and allied professionals, we endeavour to improve the design, planning and management of the natural and built environment.

We also provide our members with advocacy, training, recognition and a forum to share knowledge, ideas and action.

### External Opportunities

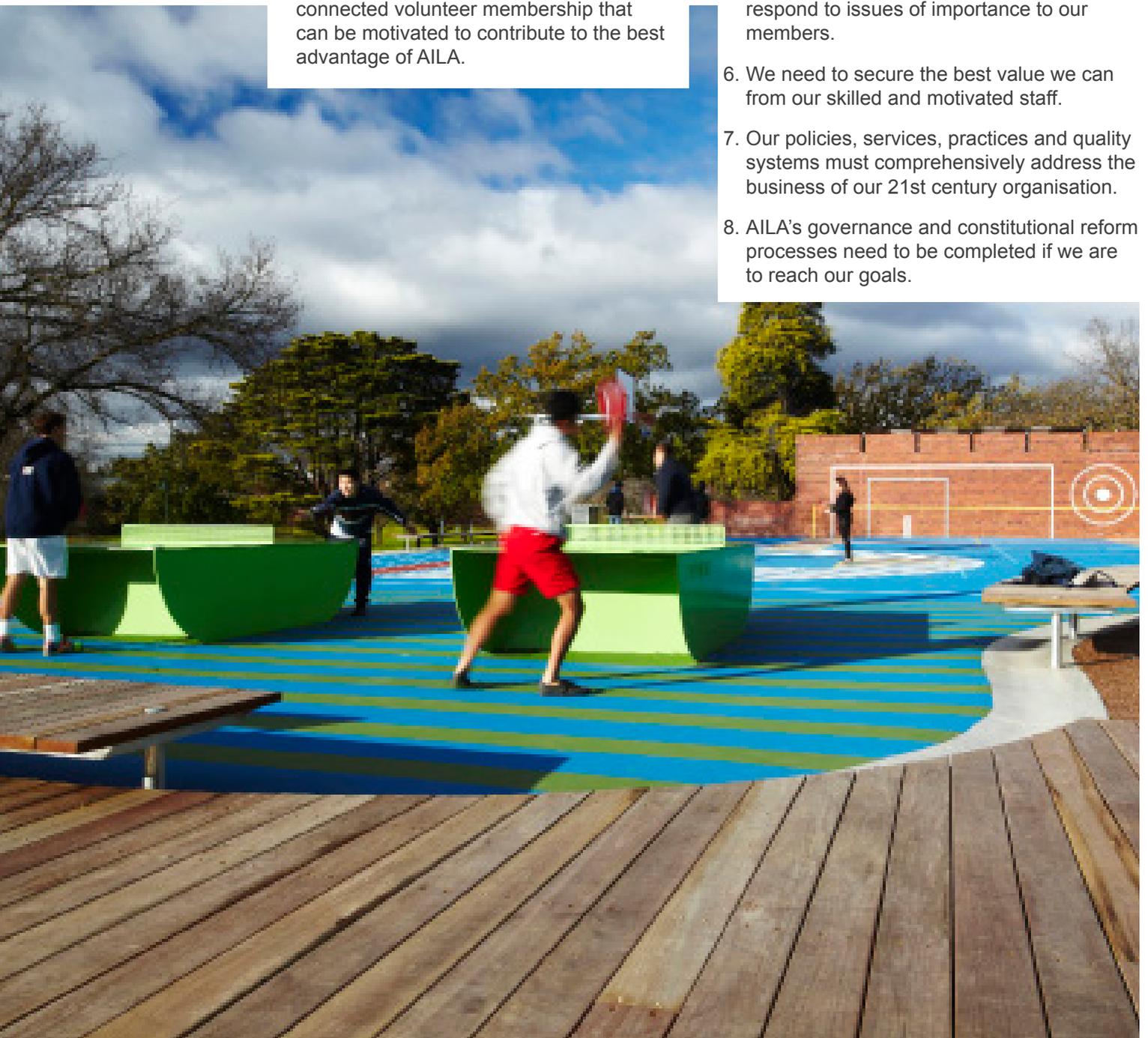
1. Our membership is energised and ready to speak with a strong voice on issues it cares about.
2. AILA is poised to address the community's growing awareness of the built environment and the value of open spaces.
3. Members are skilled in addressing the interrelationships between human health and healthy environments.
4. Community engagement in planning and design processes is growing, with social media as a powerful tool of choice.
5. Landscape architecture's profile is advancing globally.
6. The desire and requirement for evidenced based research and design is mounting.
7. There are significant opportunities for increased collaboration with international colleagues through new technologies.

## Key Organisational Challenges

1. AILA's capacity to deliver quality member services and strategic innovation is limited by its resources.
2. We need a constitution and an organisational structure that will support AILA's strategic objectives.
3. Our policies and decision-making systems need to clearly articulate AILA's brand and values.
4. Our membership is diverse with differing expectations of what AILA needs to deliver on their behalf.
5. We have a knowledgeable and well-connected volunteer membership that can be motivated to contribute to the best advantage of AILA.

## Key Organisational Opportunities

1. The potential of our passionate membership is there to be grasped.
2. There is a momentum for continued transformation of AILA in support of members and the profession.
3. Core principles for AILA and the profession should be at the heart of our thinking and actions.
4. We must reap the capacity of our membership to advance a stronger advocacy platform.
5. AILA requires clear, transparent and suitable decision-making delegation to respond to issues of importance to our members.
6. We need to secure the best value we can from our skilled and motivated staff.
7. Our policies, services, practices and quality systems must comprehensively address the business of our 21st century organisation.
8. AILA's governance and constitutional reform processes need to be completed if we are to reach our goals.



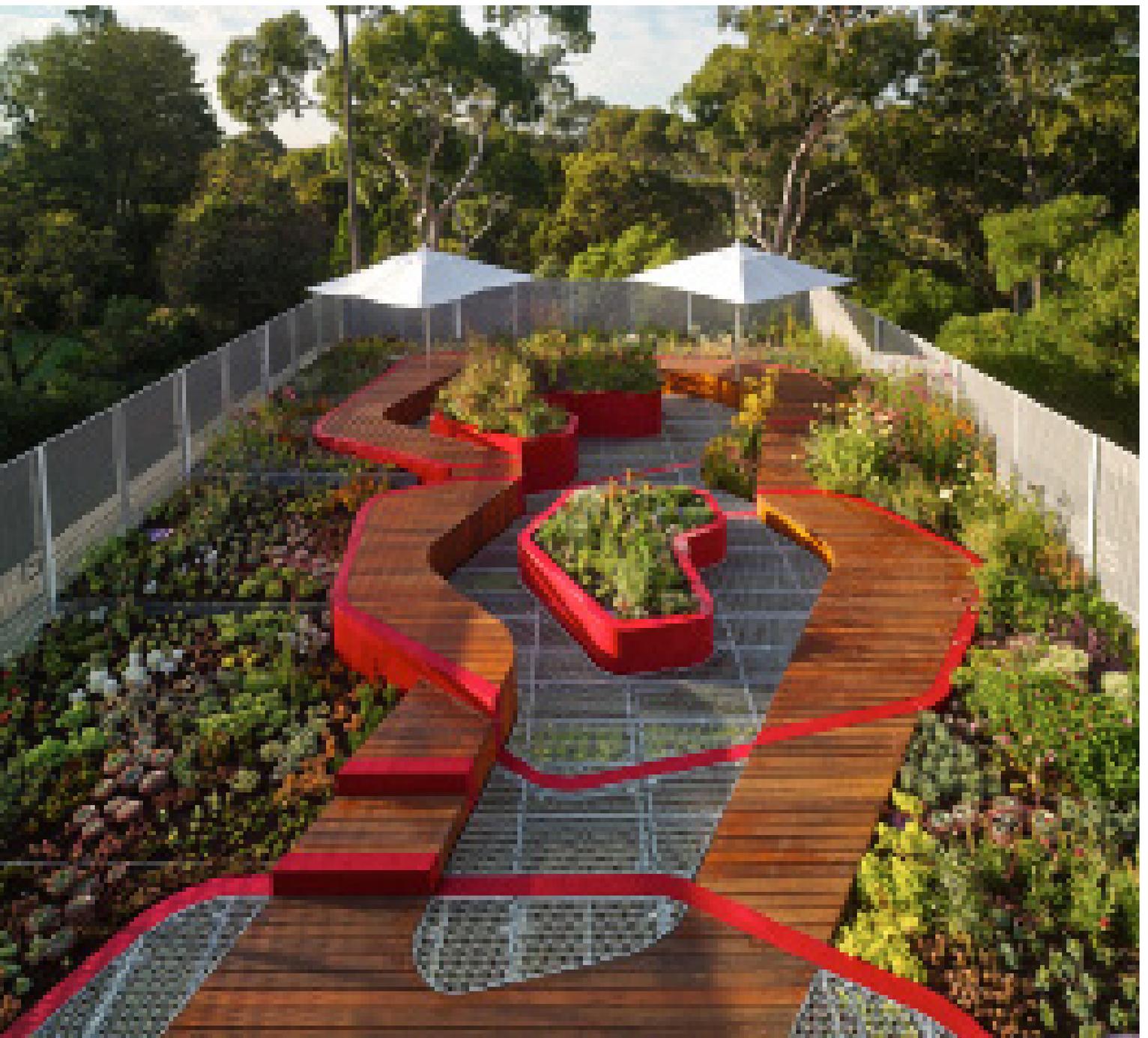
# Strategy 2015-2020

The AILA Strategy 2015-2020 is structured around four spheres of action:

1. Growing the membership base.
2. Building the profile of the profession.
3. Advocating to government.
4. Ensuring a sustainable AILA.

These spheres reflect the challenges and opportunities of our operating environment and respond to AILA's strengths and weaknesses as understood through recent member surveys.

Burnley Living Rooftops – HASSELL.  
Image: Peter Bennetts.



# 1. Membership Growth

## Targets:

- **retain 90% of our membership**
- **increase our membership to 4000 by 2020**
- **deliver programs of value to current members and aspiring landscape architects**

AILA maintained a steady growth in membership for 50 years. In the past year, we have nearly doubled our numbers to reach 2,200. The challenges now are to retain the members we have by recognising and delivering on their needs; and to attract new candidates by understanding and providing what they are looking for.

Growth in membership is constrained by the number of qualified landscape architects in the pool of candidates. To achieve our target, the membership needs to be broadened beyond our base of Registered Landscape Architects.

## The things AILA will do:

### *RETAIN 90% OF OUR MEMBERS*

We will keep the members we have by:

- » involving them in the development of meaningful policies and programs through participation in standing committees, taskforces and working groups;
- » ensuring transparency in decision-making;
- » executing good governance; and
- » stimulating members to aspire to positions of leadership in the profession and our organisation (Council and State Chapter Executives).

### *RESTRUCTURE AND GROW THE MEMBERSHIP BASE*

- » We will broaden the membership base by creating new membership pathway(s) that enable participation by non-Registered Landscape Architects; while
- » maintaining a rigorous registration process for those seeking a 'registered' status.

### *EXPAND AILA FRESH*

- » We will invest in AILA Fresh through programs targeted to the needs of emerging landscape architects, the future leaders of the profession.

### *PROMOTE HIGH SCHOOL MEMBERSHIP*

- » AILA will develop compelling programs aimed at inspiring high school students to embrace landscape architecture as a career.

### *ENHANCE OUR CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM*

- » We will develop a national policy and framework for the delivery of high quality, accessible CPD programs.
- » We will draw on existing CPD opportunities provided by allied associations and invest in the delivery of our own high quality, online CPD.
- » We will mentor and support State Chapters in the delivery and alignment of CPD.

### *PROVIDE STRONG SUPPORT TO PRACTICES*

- » We will develop a suite of supporting services to assist landscape architects with their practice.

### *GENERATE A ROBUST ACCREDITATION PROGRAM*

- » AILA will work in collaboration with the universities to develop an accreditation program that generates high calibre graduates.

### *DELIVER INSPIRING MEMBER COMMUNICATIONS*

- » AILA will deliver relevant and inspiring content through improved member communications and our website.

## 2. Building the profile of the Profession

### Targets:

- **growth in the industry**
- **greater enrolments in university landscape architecture programs**
- **enhanced profile of the profession in the general and industry media**

There is significant opportunity to expand the influence of AILA by enhancing the profile of the profession. Government, industry, stakeholders and the community all need to understand the contributions we make to the places we work. This will be achieved where we enter the media debate about matters affecting the built and natural environment in an effective manner. As we do, our influence will grow and so too will the numbers of people seeking to become landscape architects through study at our universities.

### The things AILA will do:

#### *SHAPE INSPIRED NATIONAL PUBLIC RELATIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS CAMPAIGNS*

AILA will develop and execute a National Communications Strategy that creates a positive perception of landscape architecture by demonstrating the success of our work.

#### *ORCHESTRATE AN ANNUAL FESTIVAL OF LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE*

AILA will showcase the profession's role in the planning and design of the built environment by staging an annual Festival of Landscape Architecture. The Festival will:

- » draw on AILA's message platform on current issues but be specifically framed around its own communications strategy;
- » offer a rich program that is attractive to members and engages with stakeholders and other built environment professionals;
- » deliver high quality professional development;
- » incorporate 'fringe' events; and
- » engage with sponsors to support the event and its messages.

#### *CONDUCT A COMMUNITY PARK CAMPAIGN*

AILA will establish a national campaign to highlight the importance of parks and open space to the community's health. The campaign will:

- » encourage communities, councils and schools participation in the design, planning and construction of a local park;
- » celebrate the finalists and winners in each State at the Festival of Landscape Architecture during a public event;
- » be formulated around a campaign-specific communications strategy;
- » engage with other built environment professions and AILA's sponsorship partners to deliver specialist input and financial and material support; and
- » involve university programs and students.

#### *REVISE THE NATIONAL AWARDS PROGRAM*

AILA will review and revise the awards program to ensure it rewards excellence and can be celebrated in a manner readily profiled in the media.

## *REVIEW LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE AUSTRALIA*

AILA will evaluate the efficacy of LAA as a vehicle for promoting the work of landscape architects and propose the best value-for-money option(s) for the use of media to deliver its messages.

## *CONDUCT A HIGH SCHOOL AWARENESS CAMPAIGN*

AILA will develop and execute a national campaign to attract high school students to landscape architecture as a career.

The National Arboretum Canberra - Taylor Cullity Lethlean,  
Tonkin Zulaikha Greer. Image: John Gollings.



# 3. Advocating to Government

## Target:

- **successful advocacy around issues of concern**
- **government recognition of the value of well planned and designed landscapes.**

AILA has invested significant resources in the development of national policies across a range of areas. At the forefront of these investigations are climate change and green infrastructure. The next step is to extend the scope and influence of this good work through advocacy for its inclusion in government policy, legislation and funding programs. At the same time, we must assign resources to the development of new policies and advocate on behalf of our ideas through government engagement, expanded media profiling and participation in public debates.

## The things AILA will do:

### *REFINE AND EXPAND OUR POLICY PLATFORM*

- » AILA will continue to work through its committee processes to review and develop our policies on issues of concern.
- » Our advocacy will be supported by a minimum of 30 'position statements' across AILA each year.
- » We will support research and the dissemination of its findings through our National Education Committee.
- » We will hold an annual Research Summit to highlight the contributions of members to the examination of critical issues in the natural and built environment.

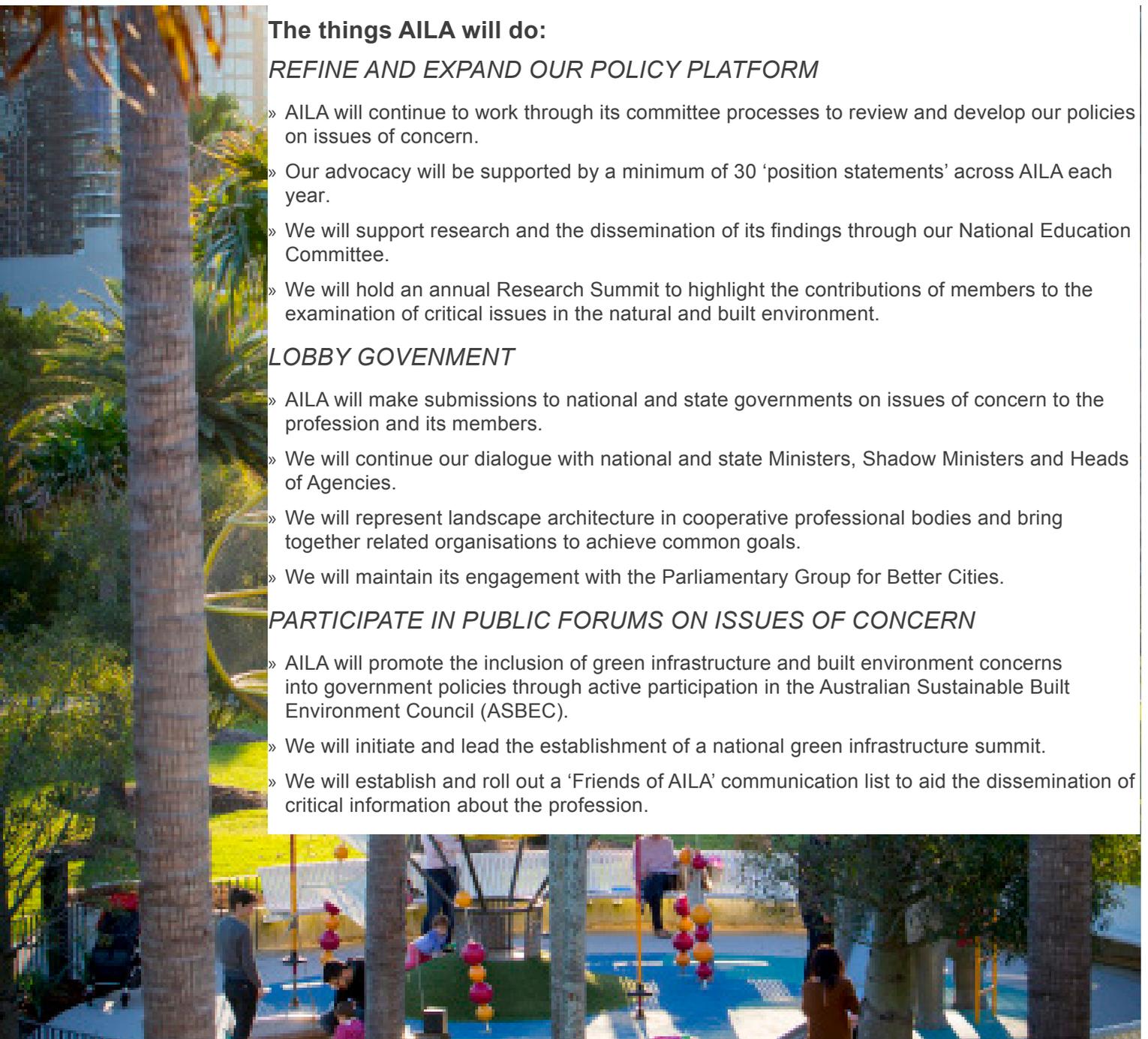
### *LOBBY GOVERNMENT*

- » AILA will make submissions to national and state governments on issues of concern to the profession and its members.
- » We will continue our dialogue with national and state Ministers, Shadow Ministers and Heads of Agencies.
- » We will represent landscape architecture in cooperative professional bodies and bring together related organisations to achieve common goals.
- » We will maintain its engagement with the Parliamentary Group for Better Cities.

### *PARTICIPATE IN PUBLIC FORUMS ON ISSUES OF CONCERN*

- » AILA will promote the inclusion of green infrastructure and built environment concerns into government policies through active participation in the Australian Sustainable Built Environment Council (ASBEC).
- » We will initiate and lead the establishment of a national green infrastructure summit.
- » We will establish and roll out a 'Friends of AILA' communication list to aid the dissemination of critical information about the profession.

Prince Alfred Park and Pool - Sue Bamsley  
Design, Neeson Murcutt Architects, City of  
Sydney, Image: Brett Boardman.



## 4. Ensuring a Sustainable AILA

### Target:

- **maintain a stable financial platform**
- **provide solid governance**
- **develop strong policies and procedures**

AILA's operating environment is complex – corporate legislation, financial management and human resources policies affect our ability to succeed as a member services body. Over the past two years, we have made notable improvements to our operations and governance framework. It is essential that we continue to formulate improved processes and policies to support the organisation's growth and to deliver on our mission to support people and place.

### The things AILA will do:

#### *MEET OUR LEGAL REQUIREMENTS AS A CORPORATION*

- » AILA will meet industry benchmarks for financial performance and reporting under the guidance of the Board, our staff and the Finance, Risk and Audit Committee.
- » We will instigate delivery of the policies and procedures needed to be an outstanding member-based organisation.

#### *MAINTAIN A SOUND FINANCIAL FOOTING TO SUPPORT OUR PROGRAMS*

- » AILA will deliver the constitutional and governance reforms needed to increase membership and revenue growth.
- » We will achieve a base target of \$300,000 per annum from national corporate sponsors.
- » Our Council (board) will evaluate the risks to our financial performance and take the necessary measures to mitigate and/or eliminate uncertainties.

#### *SUPPORT AND DEVELOP OUR STAFF*

- » AILA will initiate sound staffing structures to meet the objectives of the organisation while empowering our staff to achieve their own life goals.

Halpin Way, Settlers Square and Pop-up Park - Aspect Studios. Image: Andrew Lloyd.

