

# Industry Spotlight: Design & Architecture

If you want to play a role in shaping the cities and towns of tomorrow, the Design and Architecture industry holds many opportunities. The latest data from SEEK Employment Trends shows job ads are on the rise and experts say creative talent is in high demand.

As the urban population continues to grow across Australia's major cities, quality of life will become a greater focus. Sydney's population, for example, is inching towards 5 million, and Melbourne's is [expected to double](#) by 2031. New figures from the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning, show that Victoria will need another 2 million homes to accommodate the 10 million people projected to be living in the state by 2050 and beyond.

'We're seeing growth in demand right across the industry,' says Cloak. 'I don't see it slowing down any time soon.'

Design and Architecture professionals will play an increasingly vital role in promoting the livability of the spaces around us. SEEK data shows that job opportunities for the industry grew by 7% in November compared to the same time last and the average advertised salary was \$82,800. Scott Cloak, Principal Consultant at recruitment firm Design and Construct, says the industry is busier than ever. "I've worked in the industry since 1986 – first as an architect and now as a recruiter – and I've never seen it busier than it is right now," he says.

Cloak points to a strong correlation between Australia's burgeoning construction industry and the increasing demand for design and architecture talent. "There's a growth in multi-residential work, especially in Sydney and Melbourne," he says. "There are also some big infrastructure and urban regeneration projects. Sites like Barangaroo in Sydney have created a strong need for architecture and design talent."

- **Designs for life.** As our cities continue to grow, urban designers will help determine their quality and performance. Open green spaces will become

increasingly vital and greater public infrastructure will enhance city life.

Many of Australia's local city councils are engaging designers and architects to tackle the challenges of the future. Randwick City Council, for example, [recently invited](#) leading architects and urban designers from around the world to develop a vision for two of its town centres as a means of reinvigorating Sydney's inner east. Meanwhile, four of Melbourne's famous laneways will be undergoing a green makeover in the months ahead with living green walls, planter boxes and seating to make them even more inviting places to visit.

The increased focus on the quality of our city centres may explain the increase in job opportunities for urban design and planning, which rose by 63% year-on-year. SEEK job ads for landscape architecture also grew by 25% compared to the same time last year. "There is a strong link between the demand for landscape architects and the number of infrastructure projects underway in major cities," explains Cloak.

Job ads for architectural drafting roles were also up by 19%. "We tend to think of these roles as the foot soldiers of the team," says Cloak. "They are not running the projects and they're not dealing with clients, but they're the ones drawing up the plans."

While job ads for interior design roles were down by 3%, Cloak notes that demand for candidates in this area remains strong. "We haven't seen a decline in these roles," he says.

- **What are employers looking for?** Thihoa Gill, Human Resources Manager with leading Australian design studio NH Architecture, says that while creative thinking is essential, it's not the only prerequisite for a job in the industry. She explains that motivation, communication skills and a willingness to collaborate are also qualities in demand.

"The buoyancy in the market shows there are lots of positions that are tricky to fill, such as all-round architects with at least six year's experience and the ability to manage projects from concept to construction, as well as the ability to document throughout the process," she explains.

NH Architecture employs approximately 100 people in its Melbourne office and is responsible for award-winning designs such as the transformation of Margaret Court Arena, the design of the Melbourne Convention Centre (along with design partner Woods Bagot) and the creation of Melbourne's QV urban village.

Gill says the industry needs to be more competitive in attracting the best talent. "While there is plenty of opportunity in the industry, I find a lot of all-round

architects who are thinking of embracing a new journey often stumble in the process because their current employer will counter the offer with things such as a salary increase or additional benefits,” she explains. “This creates a situation where new employees become stuck between staying at their current job with additional benefits, and exploring new opportunities to grow and expand. This is where we need to be more competitive if we are to source and attract new talent. It’s also where a positive interviewing process is essential.”

As the growing population presents new challenges for our urban environments, the Design and Architecture industry will continue to play a vital role in shaping the places we live, work and play in the future. “We’re seeing growth in demand right across the industry,” says Cloak. “I don’t see it slowing down any time soon.”

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