

Pro Bono Planners Australia has been established as a company by limited guarantee to act as a conduit through which members of the Planning profession can support domestic and international projects on a pro-bono basis without financial gain while maintaining the highest professional standards

A manifesto has been drafted (see below) and initial Board has been established to make a start. It is envisaged that a talent bank of professional Planners from the private and public sectors will be established to contribute to the public good by providing communities with access to the Planning profession whilst supporting opportunities for career development and expansion.

Supporting Pro Bono Planners Australia will provide Planning firms with the opportunity to further develop and enhance their corporate social responsibility credentials, individual Planners to enhance their practice and Planners from the academic sector and their students will be given practical learning opportunities with real life work experience.

Feedback from the sector is welcome as we move to the next stage of operation - developing policies and processes, engaging pilot cases and registering with Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC).



OUR MANIFESTO

*Pro-bono is a Latin word most often used in a legal context which means Legal work performed for the public good or in the public interest on issues of broad community concern or with significant impact on disadvantaged or marginalised groups.
(Butterworths Australian Legal Dictionary)*

Why Pro Bono Planning?

In Australia, the broader community is largely unfamiliar with the planning processes and rarely interacts with these processes, leaving them unprepared to respond to planning projects that may have significant impact on their lives or the environment. Equally, community and not-for-profit organisations may require specialist assistance to navigate the planning system for their own projects or require specialist assistance in response to disasters.

Within an international context, the Planning system is well-established in Australia, with excellent professional support frameworks. Australian planning expertise can be utilised on a pro bono basis to share and exchange knowledge, assist professional development and programs alongside international counterparts.

Pro Bono Planners Australia is a not-for-profit organisation and registered charity that encourages and facilitates the planning profession to commit a portion of their capacity for the public good within Australia and/or overseas.

What we do

The focus of Pro Bono Planners Australia is the practical delivery of expert planning support on the ground in the public interest where it would otherwise be lacking. It does not replace government responsibility or seek to compete with the private profession.

Nor would its role be to compete with established policy forums such as PIA. Rather, planners and allied professionals with pro-bono public interest experience would become more equipped to contribute to such forums; drawing on their experience working for the public good.

An important role of Pro Bono Planners Australia will be to partner with domestic and international organisations to facilitate the input of professional planners on the ground to places on the planet where their expertise will be of greatest assistance to local communities. In this way we envisage the possibility of a vibrant “planners without borders” ethos amongst the Australian Planning Profession.

Who is involved

Pro Bono Planners Australia provides opportunities for Australian planners to “give back” and receive the rewards of working pro bono:

- Retired planners with deep knowledge and capacity to continue to practice
- Student planners who can be mentored by an experienced planner on an interesting pro-bono project
- Planners who wish to extend their experience in sectors and settings other than what their “normal day job” provides
- Opportunities for individual professional development, to meet and work on projects that make a difference.
- Organisations, such as consulting firms can register capacity and will see the advantages of establishing their profile in the pro bono space.
- A conduit for firms interested in activating a Corporate Social Responsibility program.

Pro Bono Planners include Urban and Regional Planners and allied professionals.

The advantages to a private planning firm which decides to become involved will include:

1. An enhanced capacity to attract and retain high quality staff.
2. A record of pro bono commitment as evidence of corporate integrity when tendering for contracts.
3. The firm would be publicly acknowledged by PBPA for its support.
4. The firm’s name will be indelibly linked to the achievements which they helped to create.

How we work

Pro Bono Planners Australia is a conduit to connect members of the community who are attempting to deal with a public interest planning issue or seeking assistance with projects

of public benefit and do not have the resources to access professional support with planning professionals.

Community groups or individuals seeking assistance with public interest cases or projects will register and must meet criteria to engage with the service.

Volunteer Planners will register and be matched with cases as they arise, depending on availability and expertise. For community projects, a small project group may be formed to deliver the service. The primary relationship will be between the client and the planner/planning team who is providing the service. The service provided will be without charge but in all other respects governed by the professional and ethical responsibilities which professional planners will be familiar.

For pro bono work in Australia, it is expected that professional indemnity insurance to cover the work performed will be the responsibility of the planner or participating firm. Ways will be discussed to involve interested government planners and students in this opportunity.

For International projects, Australian planners can register their interest and be referred by Pro Bono Planners Australia to either opportunities through established international volunteering programs or other initiatives as invited by overseas partners.

What next?

An interim Board has been established to define the structure and purpose of Pro Bono Planners Australia.

As an initial step to achieving its vision, we are seeking to understand views about this initiative and receive expressions of interest from private planners, retired planners, academics, planning firms, government planners and student planners and allied professionals who are interested in becoming involved, either as a member of the Board or interested in registering as a volunteer.

Please complete the attached [survey](#) to give us your views and/or express interest in knowing more about this initiative.

Alternatively, contact via email at contact@probonoplanners.org.au or 0459774624.

We thank you for your support:

Lucinda Peterson MPIA – Director

Chris Loorham – Director

Michael McCarthy - Director

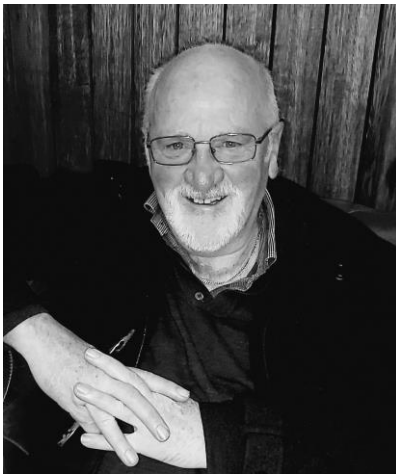
ACN 671 335 872

ABN 82 671 335 872



Lucinda Peterson MPIA

Lucinda is an international development professional and urban and regional planner with over 25 years' experience in planning and development across local government, and the private and NGO sectors. Lucinda's work history includes senior executive roles in Local Government Urban and Environmental Planning and Heritage, as well as a Member of Heritage Council of Victoria and over 10 years as a Sessional Member at Planning Panels Victoria. She has volunteering and professional experience working in Australia and South Asia, currently working with teams across the Pacific, Asia and Africa through the Australian Volunteers Program.



Michael McCarthy

After 20 years' senior management experience in service delivery and marketing roles in the tertiary education sector, Michael McCarthy obtained postgraduate qualifications in environment and planning. He then worked for 15 years at executive and management levels in local government responsible for strategic and sustainable development in a regional context. Michael, in his roles as Director of Western District Planners, is currently providing project management consultancy to local government and strategic and statutory planning services to the broader community.



Chris Loorham

Chris is a former environmental lawyer who headed the Victorian Environment Defenders Office during its foundation years (1995-98). Chris's legal background is based on commitment to social justice including working with the Aboriginal Legal services in Victoria and Northern Territory, landmark Federal government environmental enquiry and social security appeals tribunal. He re-qualified as a planner in 2009 and has held senior management roles in regional Local Government. Chris currently runs a planning and conflict resolution consultancy based in Port Fairy.