



Introduction

Thank you for your interest in the Director, Architecture and Urban Design role with the Office of the Queensland Government Architect.

This Success Profile has been developed to provide context and insight into the opportunity, including the environment in which the role operates, the nature of the work and the capabilities required to succeed. It is intended to complement the formal position description by offering a clearer understanding of the role in practice and the expectations associated with it.

The Director, Architecture and Urban Design is a senior advisory role with whole-of-government reach. It offers a rare opportunity to influence the quality of Queensland's built environment at scale, shaping public buildings, precincts and places through early intervention, sound judgement and design leadership.

The work of the Office of the Queensland Government Architect sits at the intersection of design, policy and delivery. Advice is provided in complex, often high-profile environments where decisions carry long-term public consequences and must balance ambition with pragmatism. Success in this role is not measured by personal authorship or project ownership, but by the quality of outcomes enabled through influence, trust and advocacy.

This Success Profile outlines:

- The context in which the Office of the Queensland Government Architect operates
- The nature of the work and challenges associated with the role
- The capabilities, judgement and leadership approach sought in successful candidates

We encourage you to take the time to review this information carefully. If you have not already done so, please [visit](#) for further details on how to submit your application.

We look forward to supporting you throughout this process. Should you have any questions, please contact Ashleigh McMillan on 07 3305 5800

Ashleigh McMillan

Client Partner
OnTalent



Glasshouse Theatre, South Brisbane
Blight Rayner + Snøhetta
Image Credit: Leah Lang

Office of the Queensland Government Architect

The Office of the Queensland Government Architect (OQGA) provides design leadership to the Queensland Government to support better outcomes in the planning, design and delivery of the built environment.

The office operates as a whole of government function. It works across agencies, portfolios and sectors to influence the quality of public buildings, infrastructure, precincts and places. Its work spans architecture, urban design and the public realm and touches housing, health, education, transport, cultural infrastructure and regional development across Queensland.

OQGA does not own projects or control budgets. Its role is advisory. The value of the office lies in the quality of its judgement, the clarity of its advice and the trust it builds with decision makers. The team is often engaged at the earliest stages of projects, before scope, procurement and delivery pathways are fixed. This is where thoughtful design input can have the greatest impact on long term outcomes. The operating environment is complex. Projects are frequently high profile and politically sensitive. Timeframes are often compressed and priorities can compete. In this context, OQGA plays an important role as a steady and credible voice. The office helps agencies work through trade offs and make decisions that balance ambition, feasibility and public value.

The work requires a practical understanding of how design quality intersects with policy, planning, funding and delivery systems. Advice must be clear and accessible to non-design audiences, including senior executives, Ministers and cross-disciplinary teams. The office works collaboratively with government agencies, local governments, industry and the design profession to support outcomes that are place-responsive, resilient and enduring. Through design reviews, strategic advice, policy contributions and advocacy, OQGA contributes to shaping Queensland's urban legacy.

Queensland Urban Design Principles (QDesign)

The work of the Office of the Queensland Government Architect is underpinned by the Queensland Urban Design Principles, known as QDesign.

QDesign provides a clear and consistent set of principles to guide the design, development and delivery of buildings, streets, parks and public spaces across Queensland. It articulates the values and qualities that support well designed, liveable and sustainable places and establishes a shared language for design quality across government, industry and the community.

QDesign is relevant to projects of all scales and locations. It is intended for use by design practitioners, government agencies, decision makers and those involved in procurement and assessment processes. The principles support alignment between policy intent, project briefing, design development and review, helping to clarify expectations and improve the quality of outcomes over time.

Rather than prescribing solutions, QDesign sets out nine principles that guide good decision-making. These principles emphasise climate responsive design, respect for local place and character, working with natural systems, creating connected and people focused streets and spaces, supporting diverse and adaptable development, and leading by example through collaboration and engagement.

Within OQGA, QDesign plays an important role as a reference point for advice, advocacy and design review. It supports early conversations with agencies and project teams and provides a common framework for discussing design quality in environments where priorities, constraints and perspectives can differ.

For the Director, Architecture and Urban Design, QDesign is a practical tool as well as a statement of intent. It informs how advice is framed, how design quality is assessed and how discussions are guided toward better long-term public outcomes. Confidence in applying the principles with judgement, flexibility and context is central to effectiveness in this role.



Harvey's James Street, Fortitude Valley
Twohill and James,
Christopher Frederick Jones

QDesign Manual



Princess Street, Bundaberg East
Cox Architecture

Image Credit: Department of Housing and Public Works

Queensland Government Architect

Leah Lang Queensland Government Architect

Leah Lang is the Queensland Government Architect and leads the Office of the Queensland Government Architect (OQGA) within the Department of Housing and Public Works.

An award-winning registered architect and Fellow of the Australian Institute of Architects (FRAIA), Leah brings more than 25 years of experience across architecture, urban design and city shaping roles. She is recognised for her ability to work at the intersection of design, policy and delivery, and for providing clear, trusted advice in complex and high-profile environments.

Prior to her appointment as Queensland Government Architect, Leah served as Gold Coast City Architect, where she provided city-wide design leadership and oversight of major civic, infrastructure and precinct-scale projects. Her work supported sustainable growth, improved public realm outcomes and the delivery of significant cultural and transport infrastructure.

As Queensland Government Architect, Leah's remit is to provide whole-of-government design leadership, advocacy and strategic advice to improve the quality of public buildings, precincts and places across Queensland. She works across government, industry and the community to influence better outcomes early in project and policy development, including state-significant initiatives and long-term legacy opportunities.



Leadership Team



Anthony Matheson

Anthony Matheson is the Director in the Office of the Queensland Government Architect (OQGA), where he provides leadership in urban design strategy and design review practice across Queensland Government agencies. He brings more than 30 years of experience in urban and regional planning, working across statutory and strategic planning, urban design, regional growth and city-wide strategies in both local and state government contexts.

In his role at OQGA, Anthony facilitates design review processes and provides urban design advice on key projects and policy development. He advocates for high-quality design outcomes that enhance the prosperity, livability and sustainability of cities and towns throughout Queensland.



Peter Nelson

Peter Nelson is a Director within the Office of the Queensland Government Architect, where he leads design strategy with a focus on innovation, delivery and modern methods of construction.

Peter has been closely involved in advancing state-led design initiatives that respond to housing need, construction capability and design quality, including demonstration projects and large-scale programs exploring modular and prefabricated delivery.

In his role, Peter works across government and industry to support design-led approaches that improve build quality, speed of delivery and long-term value.

Success Competencies

Success in the Director, Architecture and Urban Design role relies on strong professional judgement, credibility and the ability to operate effectively in complex government environments. While candidates may come from different backgrounds, those who succeed share a common set of capabilities that enable them to influence outcomes without formal authority and improve decision-making over time.

Core Competencies

Strategic design judgement

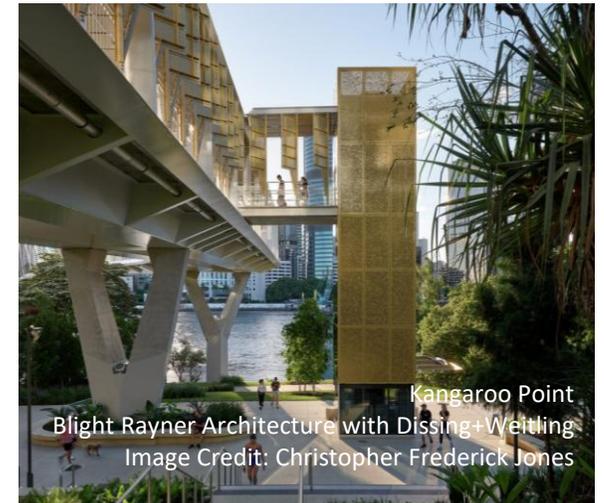
Applies sound judgement to complex architecture and urban design matters, balancing design ambition with policy, planning, funding and delivery realities. Understands how decisions made early shape long-term outcomes and provides advice that is clear, defensible and focused on public value.

Influence and senior advisory capability

Operates as a trusted adviser to senior executives and Ministers. Influences outcomes through credibility, timing and insight rather than position. Is comfortable being the sole design voice in the room and can engage constructively in sensitive or contested discussions.

Clear communication and translation

Communicates complex architecture, urban design and city shaping issues clearly and persuasively to senior executives, Ministers and non-design audiences. Tailors messages to context, understands what matters to decision-makers and presents advice in a way that supports informed choices. Handles sensitive conversations with professionalism, clarity and confidence, particularly where priorities, risk and public scrutiny intersect.



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Kangaroo Point
Blight Rayner Architecture with Dissing+Weitling
Image Credit: Christopher Frederick Jones

Success Competencies

Core Competencies Continued

Whole-of-government perspective

Works across portfolios, agencies and sectors rather than within a single delivery context. Understands government processes and decision making environments and can adapt advice to different policy, organisational and political settings. Builds productive relationships with government agencies, industry, local government and the design profession. Values multidisciplinary perspectives and contributes to a collaborative, respectful working culture.

Early-stage visioning and systems thinking

Focuses on early-stage visioning, master planning, briefing and design review, where intervention has the greatest impact. Thinks at multiple scales and understands the cumulative effects of projects on cities, regions and communities.

Integrity

Demonstrates professionalism, discretion and sound judgement in the use of influence. Operates effectively under pressure, manages competing priorities and adapts to changing circumstances while maintaining a focus on quality outcomes.





Ideal Candidate Profile

The Director, Architecture and Urban Design is a senior design professional with experience operating beyond individual project delivery and an interest in shaping better outcomes at scale through advice, influence and early intervention.

The ideal candidate brings a strong foundation in architecture, complemented by experience in urban design and city-shaping work. Their career has involved complex projects or programs where design quality is influenced by policy, planning, funding and delivery considerations. They understand how early decisions shape long-term outcomes and are able to balance design ambition with feasibility, risk and public accountability.

They are comfortable operating at a senior advisory level and have experience engaging with executives, boards, elected officials or senior stakeholders in complex environments. They are able to communicate clearly on architecture and urban design matters and to frame advice in a way that supports informed decision-making by non-design audiences. Their credibility is built through thoughtful analysis, sound judgement and clear communication.

The role suits someone who can work across portfolios, agencies and sectors rather than within a single organisational or project context. They bring an understanding of government processes, or the capability to navigate them effectively, and can adapt their approach to different policy, organisational and stakeholder settings. They are able to work independently while remaining collaborative and respectful of diverse perspectives.

The ideal candidate brings confidence and professional maturity to their work. They are comfortable contributing to complex or sensitive discussions, offering considered perspectives and building trust with stakeholders over time. They care deeply about design quality while remaining pragmatic. They understand the realities of public sector decision-making and are able to provide advice that supports better outcomes within real-world constraints, while maintaining a focus on long-term public value.



Mary's Place, Dalby
Blight Rayner with Western Downs Regional Council
Image Credit: Scott Burrows

HAPPY DAYS. LOVE

Director, Architecture and Urban Design

The Director, Architecture and Urban Design is a senior advisory role within the Office of the Queensland Government Architect, reporting directly to the Queensland Government Architect.

The role provides architecture and urban design leadership across Queensland Government, working with agencies, industry and the community to influence the quality of public buildings, precincts and places. It operates with whole-of-government reach and focuses on early-stage engagement, where sound judgement and design leadership can meaningfully improve long-term outcomes.

This is not a project delivery or design management role. Success is achieved through advice, advocacy and influence, supporting better decision-making across policy development, planning, project visioning and design review processes.

The role requires the ability to operate independently, often as the sole design voice in senior discussions, and to engage confidently with executives, Ministers and multidisciplinary stakeholders on complex and sensitive matters.



Main Street, Barcaldine
M3architectcure and Brian Hooper Architect (architects in association) with Barcaldine
Regional Council
Image Credit: Jon Linkins

Director, Architecture and Urban Design

Core responsibilities

The Director, Architecture and Urban Design is responsible for:

- Providing senior architecture and urban design advice across whole-of-government policy, precinct planning and major project pipelines
- Acting as a trusted adviser to the Queensland Government Architect, senior executives and Ministers on city-shaping and design-related matters
- Shaping early-stage project visioning, master planning and briefing to embed high-quality design outcomes before projects enter procurement and delivery
- Leading and participating in design reviews for government and selected private sector projects
- Contributing to the development of design policy, frameworks, guidance and reference documents that influence public and private development outcomes
- Championing design excellence and supporting advocacy activities, including forums, reviews, awards and engagement with the design community
- Building and maintaining productive relationships with government agencies, local governments, industry and professional bodies
- Representing the Office of the Queensland Government Architect in senior forums, panels and external engagements as required
- Supporting the delivery of OQGA priorities, including state-significant initiatives and long-term legacy opportunities



 [Position Description: Director, Architecture and Urban Design](#)

Why this work matters

The Office of the Queensland Government Architect exists to support well-designed, healthy and sustainable environments that shape Queensland's urban legacy.

The work of the office reflects the Queensland Government's recognition that design quality plays an important role in public outcomes. Architecture and urban design influence health and wellbeing, access and inclusion, economic productivity and the long-term resilience of cities and regions. The advice provided through OQGA contributes to how public buildings, precincts and places are planned, designed and delivered across housing, health, education, transport, cultural infrastructure and the public realm.

This role offers the opportunity to contribute to matters of genuine public significance. The Director, Architecture and Urban Design works on city-shaping and state-significant initiatives, providing advice that informs policy, planning and project decision-making. Engagement occurs early, where design thinking can meaningfully influence direction before decisions are constrained by procurement, budgets or delivery pathways.

The role operates at the centre of government, working alongside senior peers across agencies and disciplines. This includes collaboration with senior executives, policy and planning leaders, infrastructure and delivery specialists, and leaders within the design profession and industry. The work is characterised by considered discussion, professional respect and a shared focus on achieving better outcomes for Queensland.

People drawn to this work are often motivated by the opportunity to contribute their expertise in service of the public interest. The role values sound judgement, integrity and collaboration, and offers the chance to apply architectural and urban design leadership to decisions that have long-term impact on Queensland's cities, towns and communities..



Glasshouse Theatre, South Brisbane
Blight Rayner + Snøhetta
Image Credit: Leah Lang



Brisbane Skyline
Anthony Matheson

Our Process

At OnTalent, we specialise in partnering with purpose driven organisations to identify and secure exceptional leadership and we are pleased to be working with the Office of the Queensland Government Architect on this recruitment project.

Our approach is deliberate, strategic and people centred. Every step of our process is designed to ensure alignment between candidate capability and organisational purpose. From understanding the culture and objectives of our clients to engaging and assessing talent in a considered and thorough way, we don't cut corners.

We are deeply committed to creating inclusive and equitable recruitment experiences. Our process is built to reduce bias and support diverse representation at all stages. We will work closely with you to ensure we are able to create an inclusive, fair and accessible pathway for you throughout the process. We encourage all candidates to discuss their individual circumstances with our team at any time.

Our recruitment process is built to deliver results that last.



Neville Bonner Bridge, Brisbane
Grimshaw (architects in association) with WSP
Image Credit: Raphael Benari

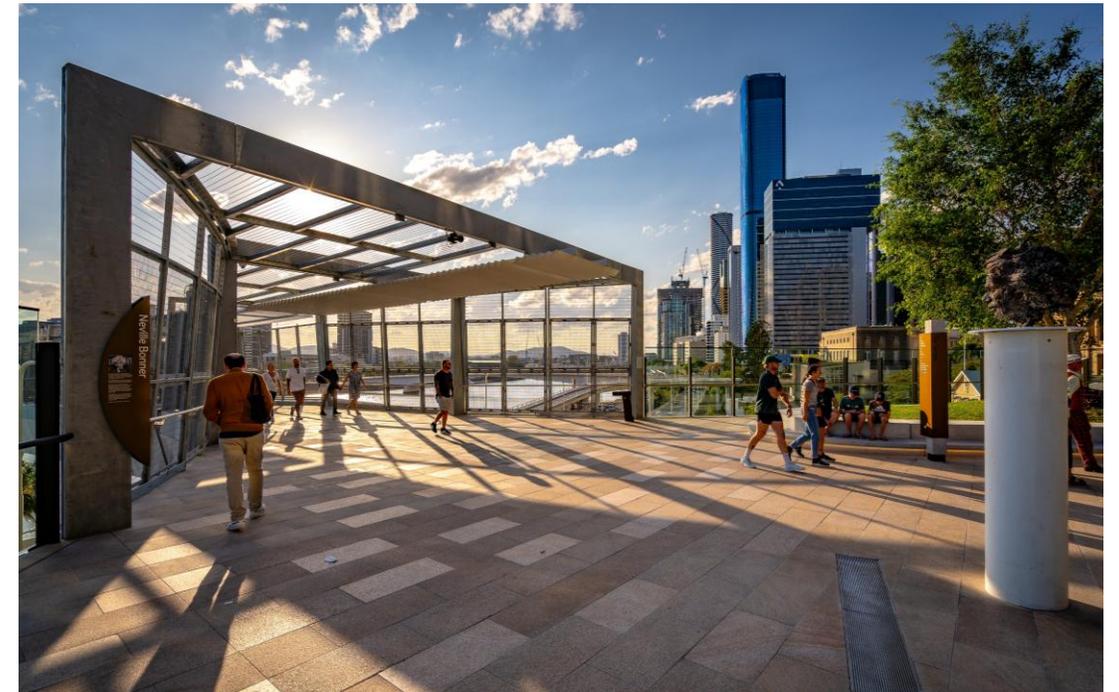
OnTalent Commitment

OnTalent is committed to providing exceptional levels of service to our clients and candidates alike.

Our commitment is to 'Connect People and Purpose' and we take this seriously.

Our core service standards for this project will include:

- All candidate calls returned on the same day.
- All client requests actioned in the same day.
- All applicants to be given an outcome within five working days.
- All interviewed candidates to be given verbal feedback.
- All reports to be tailored and accurate and delivered on time.
- Interviews coordinated so that candidate's privacy is a priority with no candidates seen by other candidates.
- All candidates to be prepared and briefed for panel interviews.
- All panel members fully briefed prior to interviews as to format, questions, and candidate profiles.



Neville Bonner Bridge, Brisbane
Grimshaw (architects in association) with WSP
Image Credit: Scott Burrows, Ethan Rohloff

If you have questions about this role, please reach out to one of the team below.
We welcome your application via the apply button on the [OnTalent Website](#).

Ashleigh McMillan
Client Partner
OnTalent
07 3305 5800

