

# TPO-NZILA REMIT

## AFFILIATE MEMBERSHIP

This remit seeks to provide Affiliate members with a pathway to Registered status.

### Background

The Institute currently has 42 Affiliate Members.

An Affiliate Member is a person who does not have an accredited degree in landscape architecture, but who has strong connections to the profession. Currently this category does not provide a pathway to Registration.

The key aspect is that the Affiliate Member does not have an accredited degree. There are many reasons why this may have occurred, and we have Affiliate Members who:

- ▶ Graduated from overseas universities that do not have a reciprocity agreement with TPO-NZILA;
- ▶ Have been caught up in changes in University courses that have resulted in the tests for Accreditation changing during the period in which an individual was studying;
- ▶ Have undertaken tertiary degrees (including Masters) in related fields but have drifted to landscape architecture during their careers.

The essence of the Affiliate Membership is that, despite an individual's education, they have a strong connection to the profession of landscape architecture – so strong that nearly all Affiliate Members are working in the field itself and have chosen landscape architectural practice as their primary career path.

On this basis, we consider that the full exclusion of any pathway to Registration removes both the institutes professionalism control mechanisms (there are no requirements for Affiliate Members to complete CPD and there has been no documented mentoring process), and is less than encouraging to people who want to be a part of our profession but have – for whatever reason – missed a specific pathway.

Therefore, this remit seeks to create a pathway for Affiliate members to achieve Registration.

Please note that this remit has been prepared and approved by Registered Members only. It is important to note that we have **not** contacted or involved Dr Bruno Marques, President of IFLA, in regard to this remit because we wanted to avoid any potential conflict-of-interest (Bruno is an Affiliate member of NZILA).

### Proposed Pathway

The standard Registration process requires individuals to achieve at least 135 weeks experience (typically 3-5 years) and follow a mentoring process. The process is very detailed and requires submitting of a portfolio demonstrating competence in at least two Practice Areas, in addition to core competencies across Professionalism, Legislation and Practice Management. To complete the process, the individual's portfolio must be signed off by a mentor, group

mentor and then be reviewed by the Registration Panel. As identified, the individual must also have completed a TPO-NZILA accredited degree.

We propose the following pathway to Registered status for Affiliate members:

- ▶ The individual must have completed a Bachelor's degree (or greater) – in any field;
- ▶ They must have at least 400 weeks of landscape architecture practice (typically 10 years) working in a role that would typically be filled by a graduate or Registered Member (at least four of which must be completed in Aotearoa New Zealand);
- ▶ Their experience must have been within a team and/or organisation that also includes at least one Registered member (or equivalent status member in other countries);
- ▶ They must follow the identical mentoring process as graduate members, including submitting a portfolio that is signed off by a mentor, group mentor and is reviewed by the Registration Panel.

### Primary Reasons

Section 1.2 of the TPO-NZILA constitution contains (amongst others) the following objectives:

- (a) Promote the profession of landscape architecture.
- (b) To raise the character and status and to safeguard and advance the interests of the profession of landscape architecture.
- (d) To support the study of landscape architecture and the related arts and sciences, including mātauranga Māori.
- (f) To promote appropriate and sustainable landscape protection, planning, design intervention and management.
- (h) To support the principle of kaitiakiatanga which considers the inherent responsibility that comes from whakapapa and the act of safeguarding and enhancing the mauri of the natural environment so that it can be handed down to future generations in a state that is good or better than the current state.
- (j) To increase the confidence of the community in the employment of professional landscape architects.

We think Affiliate members are unique and highly valued members of TPO-NZILA. Although they don't meet the gateway test for full membership, they still show enough of a commitment to these (and other) objectives that they have aligned themselves with the institute. In many cases, they are working in a field so closely associated with ours, that the wider public are unlikely to know any difference.

On this basis, we consider it time to provide such people with a pathway to be formally adopted and welcomed to TPO-NZILA.

### Key Considerations

The following provides a list of considerations that have shaped how we have developed the proposed pathway:

#### *IFLA Guidance*

We have spoken with various IFLA representatives.

James Hayter, immediate Past President, noted that IFLA is developing a similar pathway as a guideline and is considering an 8-year experience threshold. James noted that *“the notion of multiple pathways is now generally accepted”*. A lot of this thinking is driven by work IFLA is undertaking developing countries where traditional tertiary study pathways are more difficult to monitor.

Alex Martinelli, chair of the IFLA Education and Academic (EAA) Committee confirms James’ comments and adds that *“IFLA has no scope to determine individual countries’ pathways to recognise professionals”*. He says that this is something for each country to determine themselves, with the only critical factor to consider being cross-country *“mutual professional recognition”* (what we call “reciprocity”). Similarly to James, Alex cites the nature of the profession in developing countries and the requirement for IFLA to guide but not determine the correct path.

We further note that there are no requirements within the IFLA Constitution or Rule of Procedures that indicate requirements around accreditation requirements for membership. Objective 1.2 of the IFLA Constitution sets out to *“establish, develop and promote the highest standards of education”* but specifically notes that this is across *“the widest range of landscape architectural operations (including but not limited to planning, design, ecology, biodiversity, management, maintenance, culture, conservation and socio-economics)”*.

Importantly we note several IFLA member organisations have pathways for Affiliate (or non-accredited degree holders) to Registered Membership (or equivalent):

- ▶ Australia (AILA) has an *“Equivalence”* programme which *“exists for those professionals with recognised practice in landscape architecture who do not possess a qualification from an AILA accredited tertiary course”*. The requirements are for an equivalent level of tertiary study and at least **eight** years of working experience that is recognised by sponsors (the equivalent of our mentors).
- ▶ United Kingdom (LI) has a graduated process for acceptance into Associated Membership (their equivalent of our Registered Status) that provides different pathways for those with non-accredited degrees. This includes a pathway for a candidate with a Management or Science degree that requires at least **nine** years of relevant work experience.
- ▶ United States (ASLA) varies by state, but the California requirements are for *“any person, over the age of 18 years, who has had **six** years of training and educational experience in actual practice of landscape architectural work shall be entitled to an examination for a license”*. It further notes that *“a degree from a school of landscape architecture approved by the board shall be deemed equivalent to four years training and educational experience”*.
- ▶ Singapore (SILA) details various requirements for *“required experience”* that includes *“landscape architecture related university degree or equivalent and minimum of **ten** years working experience”*.

The pathways in the above countries are important to understand not just as examples but how they already affect our own pathways. Through our reciprocity process, it is technically possible that a New Zealander without an accredited degree could move to one of these countries, achieve professional recognition, and then move back to New Zealand and apply for Registered status through the reciprocity programme. By recommending ten years in our pathway we are ensuring that we leave open opportunities for mutual professional recognition with countries such as Singapore.

Additionally, it is worthy of noting that there are several IFLA member organisations who have no Registered (or equivalent) category, and are solely based on general membership (eg Japan, Philippines and many developing countries).

### *Other New Zealand Professional Institutes*

The key organisations we often align with have similar pathways for candidates with non-accredited degrees:

- ▶ NZ Planning Institute (NZPI) has two pathways to Full Membership. Pathway 2 is for those with a non-accredited degree and requires candidates to have at least **seven** years work experience in planning (two in New Zealand).
- ▶ The Registered Architects Board who oversee applications for membership to NZIA have a pathway for designers and technicians who do not have a recognised architectural degree. This includes undertaking a “**Qualifications and Experience Assessment**” before moving through the more traditional process for all candidates. The assessment is a panel decision tailored to each candidate.
- ▶ To become a Chartered Engineer you must “*have a Washington Accord-accredited qualification or **be able to demonstrate equivalent knowledge***”. The *equivalent knowledge* does not need to be in the form of a tertiary degree.

### *The NZILA Accreditation Programme*

It could be perceived that if there is a pathway for individuals to achieve Registration without having followed an TPO-NZILA Accredited Programme, then this could indicate to Universities that such accreditation is not required.

We don't think this would be the case. The pathway we are promoting is not something that would be attractive to a person starting their education as it requires a longer period of time to achieve Registered status than it would following a typical education/graduate/registration process. Businesses are also unlikely to hire individuals into landscape architecture roles if they have not gained an appropriate degree, unless there is a clear and valid reason to do so (such as they have values that strongly align with the profession or are deemed to have an education that is of equivalent value). Essentially, we see this pathway as catering to individuals who have drifted towards landscape architecture over a longer period of time, rather than those who have set out on this career since school.

In our opinion, universities and businesses will remain having a significant interest in retaining the Accreditation process.

At the same time, this remit does not seek to challenge or undermine the Accreditation process. We see this as highly relevant and significant for the majority of people who seek a career in landscape architecture – our proposed pathway is for a small minority only.

### *Relevance of Tertiary Education*

Increasingly young people aren't immediately clear what career path they want to take. The number of options being presented can be overwhelming. However, people generally stick to their skills and values – it's more likely that someone with a geography or social sciences degree will drift to landscape architecture than perhaps an accountant.

We think that all degrees have relevance to a person's skill and interest. Primarily, university teaches people to learn and think – to experience and find their own paths. The fact that Affiliate members have found their way to TPO-NZILA indicates that, whatever their background, their values and ideals align with the profession. University has taught them to broaden their minds, and experience has given them relevant skills in landscape architecture.

Our proposed pathway requires this alignment to happen over an extended period of time, enough for the individual to become embedded in the way in which our profession sees and responds to the world.

### *Obtaining Sufficient Experience*

The pathway we are promoting requires the Affiliate member to have essentially worked as a landscape architect in a landscape architecture practice team and/or organisation. The experience requirement we are promoting is extensive – **ten years** – meaning that the individual would be widely exposed to the day to day requirements of the role of a landscape architect. The ten year period is longer than many other countries that have adopted similar pathways.

In addition, as identified, we consider that the Affiliate member already has aligned themselves to the values and objectives of the profession, indicating they are willing to learn and adapt.

### *Inappropriate Applicants*

It could be perceived that the pathway opens the gates for anyone to join NZILA. However, we think that the experience requirements outlined in our pathway will only be attractive to those who strongly align and want to work within our profession, and have shown this commitment through their work experience. There remains a requirement to work through the already established and successful NZILA mentoring process, including submitting a workbook to a panel for review.

### *Undermining Existing Registered Members*

We don't think that the pathway reflects on the existing membership in any way other than positively. It promotes a values-based approach to professional membership, allowing flexibility and inclusiveness to those individuals that are drawn to our way of thinking.

### **Requirements to Action**

To enable a pathway for Affiliate Members to achieve Registration requires the following changes to the TPO-NZILA constitution:

Section 2.3 of the TPO-NZILA Constitution requires the following changes (marked in red):

## **2.3 Qualification for membership**

The qualifications for election to the various categories of membership shall be as follows:

### (b) Registered Landscape Architect

(1) A person may be a Registered Landscape Architect by way of either:

- i. The **Registered Mentoring Programme** ... [no changes required]
- ii. Being an **Established Member** ... [no changes required]
- iii. *Being an **Affiliate Member** – Requiring them to have graduated with at least a Design, Urban Design or Planning related Bachelor's degree qualification, and to have*
  - a. *At least ten years (400 weeks) of landscape architectural practice; and*
  - b. *At least four years' experience in an Aotearoa New Zealand based team and/or organisation that has included at least one Registered Landscape Architect for the duration of this experience; and*
  - c. *Undertaken the Registered Mentoring Programme; and to have*

*d. Passed the Institute's examination.*

*iv. Reciprocal Membership ... [no changes required]*

**and**

*v. Complete CPD Requirements ... [no changes required]*

No changes to following clauses in this section are required.

Additional subsequent changes will be required to the Registered Member Guide, but these do not need to be considered or actioned within this remit. Any such changes can be actioned by the Registration Committee in accordance with the revised constitution, and it is understood that a review of this document is currently in progress.

We note that there were other alternatives to how this pathway could be added/included in the constitution, but our recommendation is for a dedicated clause so that it is clearly separated from the Graduate and Established member pathways.

#### **Supported By:**

This remit is supported by the following Registered members:

- ▶ Shannon Bray, Registered Fellow, Past President
- ▶ Stephen Brown, Registered Fellow, Past President
- ▶ Jacky Bowring, Registered Fellow (NZILA Advocacy Panel)
- ▶ Rebecca Ryder, Registered Fellow
- ▶ Megan McBain, Registered
- ▶ Daniel McEwan, Registered
- ▶ Nikki Smetham, Registered
- ▶ Josh Hunt, Registered
- ▶ Ashleigh Ward, Registered (NZILA Accreditation Panel)
- ▶ Brooke Mitchell, Registered (NZILA CPD Working Group)
- ▶ Mike Thomas, Registered (NZILA Accreditation Panel)