



SIBA is the leading association representing the **Spatial Industries**

Ms Eva Rodriguez
2026 Agenda Team
Via email

Re 2026Agenda – SIBA response to draft Action Plan

Dear Eva

Thank you for seeking our feedback on the draft action plan. From our point of view, the 2026Agenda is a seminal initiative for positioning the spatial industry in the rapidly transforming global landscape. The breadth of consultation and analysis undertaken by the project team is commendable, and for an incoming CEO and board, this body of work presents an optimal context for shaping our organisation.

This submission is a collaborative body of work from the SIBA board, membership and staff. Our response is structured across three themes:

1. General statements providing a context for our response
2. Our alignment with the actions (appendix)
3. Our next steps

General statements

- It is becoming clear that the diverse organisations representing the spatial sector each exist to service a unique set of needs, and it is at the intersections of our respective charters that the opportunities for collaboratively strengthening our industry are greatest.
- SIBA welcomes the ability to leverage the 2026Agenda to help us improve the alignment of our business activities with our charter of market development (as uniquely different from research and professional development).
- A new way of working together will certainly be the outcome of the suggestion of merging SIBA and SSSI, regardless of exactly how that relationship unfolds. Formally suggesting that the work of both groups be reviewed in the context of each other has already started several beneficial discussions, as we seek to understand what differentiates and what binds us. The same will likely hold true as we review our activities in the context of our relationships with other representative bodies in the industry.
- SIBA has a clear role to play in ensuring that emerging businesses and their advocates are connected to the broader spatial community. These connections offer a two-way exchange with emerging customer needs and how they are being met.



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- In some areas, burgeoning innovation is wreaking havoc with regulation and we also have a responsibility to ensure the business environment continues to evolve. We need to contribute to effective governance, and also to the development and implementation of workforce planning and development strategies that are appropriate to an industry and economy in transition.
- There is a need to advocate for the value of spatial professionals as equals in rigour and specialisation as our peers in allied disciplines such as engineering, law, science, finance and trades, for example. Perhaps this is part of a skilling requirement for industry; perhaps an advocacy task, perhaps both.
- Most importantly, the gaping hole in spatial advocacy is a unified statement about the industry's relevance in the broader economy. This includes capability, contribution to GDP, and job creation. The 2026Agenda has gone some way to address this, however on reflection, the vision statement for the 2026Agenda really needs to be clearer about the change it seeks to embody in this regard.

Our next steps

Having just concluded the merger of SIBA with SIBA QLD (Spatial Qld) and more recently SIBA and GITA, we are currently undergoing an extensive internal planning process. The timing of the 2026Agenda is fortuitous.

We will be developing and implementing our 3-year strategy and associated plans over the coming months. During this time, our specific actions related to the 2026Agenda will become more concrete.

We welcome dialogue with the 2026Agenda team and other stakeholders on an ongoing basis, and particularly as we work through this process.

Once again, I thank you for the opportunity to comment directly on the Action Plan. I look forward to the next stage.

Warm regards

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Deanna Hutchinson'.

Deanna Hutchinson
Chief Executive Officer



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Appendix 1 – Our alignment with the actions

SIBA will directly address:	SIBA will seek to collaborate regarding:	SIBA will seek to be involved in:
<p>B2. Create nation-wide location innovation ecosystems that allow entrepreneurs, start-ups and researchers to access real-world data with 'sand-pits' for fast prototyping and development of business expertise to facilitate the transition from idea-to-commercialisation</p> <p>B3. Establish and grow relationships between the spatial sector and the venture capital industry and growth funds</p> <p>B5. Undertake a pilot exercise with one jurisdiction that is already offering an innovative procurement program so that the benefits of the new procurement approach, using spatial and location examples can be showcased</p> <p>C1. Grow relationships with peak industry bodies from the priority growth sectors (B1)</p> <p>C2. Arrange for the spatial peak bodies and their members to specifically target conferences and forums in the priority growth sectors (B1) and to ensure a spatial presence</p> <p>C3. Develop and run an awareness campaign promoting the benefits to the economy and society provided by location-related technologies, ensuring the message and language are accessible to the Australian public</p> <p>C4. Regularly publish information about the size, composition, impact and value of the spatial sector in Australia</p>	<p>B1. Conduct systematic analyses of problems and challenges in priority sectors, and their value chains, that can be solved with location technologies and services.*</p> <p>B4. Publish information about existing programs and organisations that can support the export of products and services from Australia-based spatial businesses</p> <p>B7. Implement a pilot international sponsorship program for recruitment of spatial professionals who can accelerate Australia-based innovation</p> <p>B8. Promote the adoption of the use of digital location information in legislation and progressively replace the use of analogue map-based information in current legislation</p> <p>C5. Create a Location Youth Engagement Program targeting spatial and STEM graduates and young professionals</p> <p>C6. Re-purpose the Locate Conference to: 1) include streams specifically focused on the priority growth sectors (B1) to promote cross-sectoral participation, 2) report on progress with the implementation of this Action Plan, 3) seek advice on improvements and updates to the Action Plan</p> <p>D1. Develop a nation-wide, nation-building research agenda that sets out the major spatial challenges in the short, medium and long term</p>	<p>A1. Develop and publish a nation-wide framework and roadmap setting out all major public spatial infrastructure developments and supporting analytical capabilities for the next five years...</p> <p>A2. Prioritise the collection of, and access to, public datasets of national importance to focus investment and publish the plans for their maintenance, upgrading and availability</p> <p>A3. Complete the implementation of the development of the dynamic datum including the move to 3D</p> <p>A4. Publish the plan for future improvements to the National Elevation Data Framework</p> <p>B6. Create a program to develop and deploy low-cost dedicated Australian earth observation sensors and satellites to supply nation-critical data</p> <p>B9. When the time is right, develop a bid to create a Space and Spatial Growth Centre</p> <p>D3. Publish a plan setting out the incentives that will ensure the supply of industry-ready spatial PhDs for the next decade</p> <p>E1. Develop a strategic framework to coordinate management of education, training and capacity building (K1-12, TAFE and universities)</p> <p>E2. Implement a program of training offering up-skilling opportunities in spatial disciplines to existing employees in the workforce, including both technical and management streams</p>



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<p>E4. Establish and grow relationships with Regional Development Australia and the Regional Australia Institute to grow location-related regional capacity</p> <p>E6. Identify and facilitate the implementation of initiatives that will improve diversity in the spatial sector workforce</p>	<p>D2. Identify, implement and showcase at least one transformative R&D initiative for each priority growth sector (<i>B1</i>)</p> <p>D4. Publish information on available mechanisms and benefits that can reward businesses that invest in spatial R&D</p> <p>F1. The two peak bodies (SSSI and SIBA) to form one spatial organisation</p> <p>F2. Align strategies and roadmaps of representative organisations in the spatial sector</p> <p>F3. Prepare and publish a single explanatory statement of the roles of the key peak bodies across the spatial sector and how they complement each other</p>	<p>E3. Develop and facilitate a spatial professionals exchange program across government, business and academia</p> <p>E5. Design and implement a nation-wide action plan to mitigate the forecasted shortage of surveyors and geospatial specialists in Australia over the next 10 years</p>

* The high priority growth sectors are: **transport, agriculture, health, defence and security, energy, mining and emerging industries**. We recommend including infrastructure more generally and natural resources/environment.