2025 National Placemaking Benchmarking Survey

Survey Guidelines

Welcome to the 2025 UniSA National Placemaking Benchmarking Survey! These guidelines are designed to support participating local governments in completing the 2025 Placemaking Benchmarking Survey. They outline key definitions, provide further detail on the survey questions, and describe the common methodologies used to ensure reliable and comparable results across different contexts.

Not every question in the survey has a corresponding guideline. Some questions are considered self-explanatory, and respondents can complete these based on their existing knowledge or standard practices. For questions that do have guidance, we have included clarifications based on the feedback and queries received from councils participating in previous surveys.

If you have any questions about the survey or its content, please feel free to contact olly.townson@unisa.edu.au.

For the 2025 Placemaking Benchmarking Survey, data should be based on a **2024-25 financial timeframe** unless the question specifies other timeframes.

Index 1 – Place character
1.3 Accessibility: Walkability (Walk score) *Walk score can be accessed through Walk Score website at https://www.walkscore.com/* If the website doesn't give you a score for one suburb rather than the whole of the Council area, you can use the average score of the townships. Or you can provide scores for multiple places where the council is focused for placemaking or where open spaces are located. We will combine the scores to calculate the mean score.

Index 2 – Operational budget
2.1 Total Operational budget for Placemaking/place management **2.2 Facility maintenance operational budget** **2.3 Operational budget on new assets or upgrades** Operational budget: Any 2024/25 budget allocated for place management and placemaking activities, including staffing. **Facility maintenance operational budget** & **Operational budget on new assets or upgrades**: These **exclude** buildings such as libraries, community centres etc., but **include** infrastructure like playgrounds, public toilets, gardens, parks and bike roads and footpaths around the public open spaces and mainstreets.

Index 3 – Human Resources

3.3 Number of FTE (full-time equivalent) employees in the Festival and Events team

If your council doesn't have a team of festivals and events team, any FTE that is dedicated to events and festivals across the council can be included in the count. They don't need to be part of a dedicated events and festivals team; they may have other responsibilities as part of their role.

Note: Full-time equivalent (FTE) staff should be calculated based on a 38 hour work week. Include ALL permanent and casual staff, full-time and part-time staff.
Example: If your part-time and casual staff hours total 84 hours per week average, this equals 2.2 FTE staff (84/38 = 2.2)

Index 6 – Environmental Sustainability

6.1 Number of trees (total)

Each council may have a different method for counting trees. The most common approach is through LiDAR.

6.3 Percentage (%) of Heat Island to the total area (based on urban heat maps)

Heat mapping data is not state-wide or national-wide data. For SA, you can find more information at https://data.environment.sa.gov.au/Climate/Data-Systems/Urban-Heat-Mapping/Pages/default.aspx. Please do not provide data if heat mapping data is not available to your council.

Index 7 – Place activation: Events

Definition of 'major events'

Regarding the major events, we don't have a specific definition for 'major events' in this study, as we recognise that what qualifies as a 'major' event can vary significantly depending on the context. For example, major events in metro councils may differ greatly from those in regional councils in terms of size, visitor numbers, and investment, even though they are still considered major and significant in their respective areas. With this in mind, we encourage you to consider events that are classified as major and significant to your council when thinking about major events for this study.

7.3 Number of major events – cultural events
7.4 Number of major events – sporting events

7.5 Number of major events – community events

Regardless of whether the event was initiated, organised, delivered or only funded by the council, please provide a breakdown of the genres of the events held in your council area.

7.9 Total funding allocation for major festival and events team

This question asks about the budget for event funding. How much did you fund/sponsor for events?

7.10 Number of council grant recipient events

Number of grassroots events that received council sponsorship funding or grant.

Index 8 – Place activation: Others

Examples of public arts in this project are murals, sculptures, stobie pole art, installations, monuments etc., that contribute to the overall aesthetic and identity of a place.

8.2 Number of collaboration public arts projects in the last 5 years (2020/21 financial year – 2024/25 financial year)

The 'collaboration public arts projects' refers to public arts projects that are not initiated by councils, but are instead partnered with and co-funded by other stakeholders, or funded solely by external parties. The public arts that are commissioned and funded directly by the council are covered in the first question of Index 8 – 'Number of Public arts commissioned by Council'.

Please complete your survey by the 28th November 2025.

Confidentiality: CERM PI® operates within established university protocols to ensure the security and privacy of sensitive information. Individual data is confidential to each council and will only appear in the report specific to that council.

For further information or assistance please contact us

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