

Publication: Architects' Journal
Date: 16 April 2009

Architects wanted down under

Australian states to sponsor working visa applications from UK architects

Jobless UK architects are being encouraged to start a new life in Australia, where a continuing skills shortage and a major public-sector investment package has opened up the jobs market for emigrant architects.

The Emigration Group, which helps UK nationals to resettle overseas, told the AJ this week that several Australian states, including Western Australia, South Australia and Queensland, are prepared to sponsor working visa applications for UK architects. State sponsorship effectively fast-tracks visa applications, which can otherwise take well over a year.

Paul Arthur, director of the Emigration Group, said: 'The UK construction industry is at an all-time low and I would urge architects to consider opportunities down under. The construction industry in Australia remains more buoyant than in the UK.'

'The profession remains one of the top roles in demand,' he added.

UK recruitment consultants specialising in architecture agreed that architects in Australia had been much in demand, but warned that things had slowed down a little recently.

'We have got work for architects in Australia in specific sectors such as healthcare and

education, and we have noticed that some smaller practices seem to be doing OK, but things have slowed down a bit because of the global downturn,' said Peter Browne, director of recruitment consultant SIV.

Del Hossain, managing director of recruitment consultant Adrem, added: 'Is there a skills shortage? Are they recruiting architects in particular? Do they want to increase the population? Yes, they do.'

But Hossain, too, warned caution. 'There are not necessarily stacks and stacks of jobs [in Australia] just at the moment.'

Damian Arnold