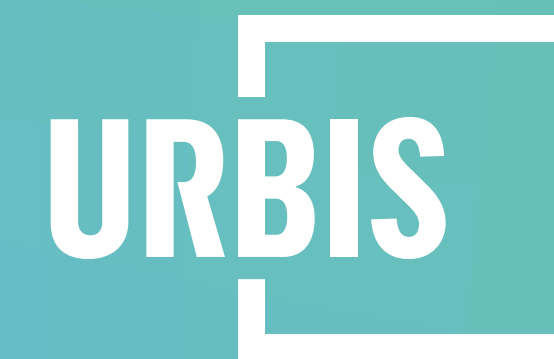


MISSION FIT
CITIES



CREATING CITIES FIT FOR THE FUTURE

How to enhance global competitiveness
A FUTURE STATE PUBLICATION



MISSION FIT CITIES

CREATING CITIES FIT FOR THE FUTURE

How to enhance global competitiveness

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WHY CITIES MATTER MORE THAN EVER

As the world begins to understand the impact of Covid-19, it's our cities that offer us the greatest potential for growth in a post-pandemic future. That is, if we can craft a vision and strategy that's globally aware as well as nationally responsive.

While Australia might be known for its landscape and lifestyle, our cities are the single most important and productive asset we have. How they are positioned for future success — against each other and like-cities globally — is paramount.

In less than a year, we've seen enough change in technology, geopolitics and public health worldwide to warrant asking the question — what will the next generation of successful cities look like?

While several of our cities are seen as successful and valuable today, the markers of this success are always changing. At the same time, other cities are moving more quickly to take up opportunities and forge new global positions.

In short, Australian cities can't afford to be complacent or rest on their place-making laurels. We may be well-positioned to lead the world in some areas, but it's also likely we'll have to work harder in future to achieve sustained global competitiveness.



Cities that succeed in a post-pandemic future may not be the ones that are succeeding today — and the markers of that success, whether today or in the future, may also have shifted.



SO HOW CAN WE ASSESS WHAT THE FUTURE WILL LOOK LIKE?

With or without a pandemic, many of the issues alive for cities today remain the same across the world. What has changed, is the pace and trajectory around how these issues have been woven into the common consciousness and acted upon.

We need to plan for our long-term success, rather than a post-pandemic recovery.

While Covid-19 has been a lightning rod for a range of public health and wellbeing issues, other mega trends remain — there's a global call for action on climate change, social inequity, rapid urbanisation and improved infrastructure in cities worldwide.

The desire for a positive society across the globe is only growing in insistency. At Urbis, we want to help build successful cities, within Australia and within a network of global alliances with cities worldwide.

WE SET OUT TO ANSWER THREE QUESTIONS THROUGH MISSION FIT CITIES

1

What makes a city fit for the future?

2

What are the characteristics of successful next generation cities?

3

How can we design a framework that measures relative fitness between Australian cities and relevant external benchmarks?

CITIES MATTER MORE THAN EVER. BUT THEY WON'T ALL SUCCEED EQUALLY IN THE FUTURE.

So how are our cities positioned?

STRENGTHENING AUSTRALIA'S POSITION IN A GLOBAL CIRCUIT OF CITIES

While our research measures the future fitness of Australia's major cities against each other, in reality our cities are competing globally. Our future strengths and weaknesses need to be viewed in a global context too.

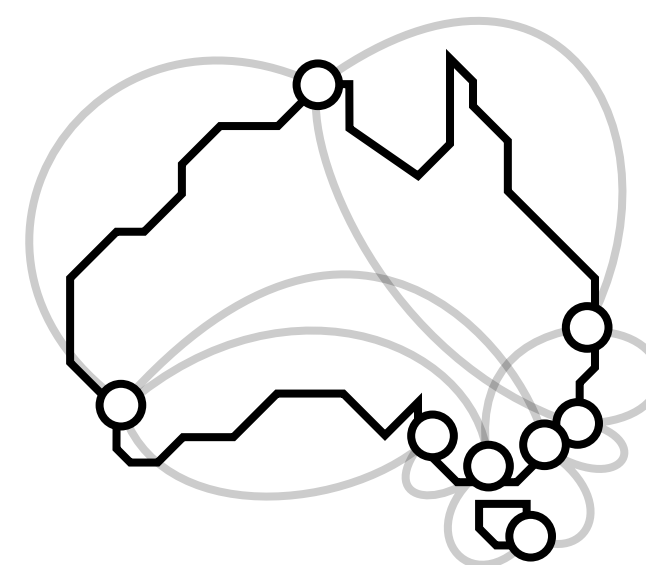
Some circuits are complementary — we have more to share and gain by understanding these cities than we have to lose. Others are our competitors, cities hunting for resources we hope to develop.

What if we stopped competing and comparing cities within Australia? What if we worked together to compete with circuits of cities, talent and investment throughout the world?

We spend a lot of time worrying about whether we're competitive on a national scale, when really, we need to position ourselves more broadly. It's worth considering how Australia might benefit from positioning its cities as a national ecosystem.

Through the strengths and blind-spots revealed by this research, it is possible to imagine Australia as a cooperative ecosystem of cities, each with its own economic specialisation, provided we can cooperate and develop a collective strategy.

CREATING CITIES FIT FOR THE FUTURE — How to enhance global competitiveness
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A COOPERATIVE ECOSYSTEM OF CITIES

DARWIN

Gateway to Asian trade and indigenous tourism

BRISBANE

Gaming and technology

PERTH

Energy and resources innovation

MELBOURNE

Events, culture, bio medical

SYDNEY

Financial and professional services

ADELAIDE

Food tourism and innovation

HOBART

Natural resource management

CANBERRA

Government and policy

HOW WILL AUSTRALIA FARE IN THE FUTURE

In Australia, we live in comparative safety. We have a benign climate, incredible opportunities and great natural assets. But perhaps because we haven't needed to, we're not known for working overly hard to intensively develop our urban experience or our knowledge-economy.

Now in recession, and with an ageing population, Australia faces the harsh reality that every day, we are becoming incrementally less economically productive in terms of our contribution to gross domestic product (GDP) per capita.

At the same time, there's increasing pressure to pay for and provide better infrastructure and social equity, as well as care for an ageing population, with the proportionate number of people contributing to productivity diminishing.

We may not be at a crisis point, but it's not hard to imagine these things will intersect at some point in the future. When they do, Australia's lifestyle proposition and the quality-of-life we enjoy could be under threat.

The pandemic offers us an opportunity to take stock and strategically set new wheels in motion. If we respond well, as individual cities and an ecosystem of specialist cities, it could be what gives us the impetus to develop and define our global position.



A PANDEMIC LESSON FOR AUSTRALIA

The pandemic has heightened the impact of international students on Australia's economy and the lives of our major cities, both in the fees they pay and our ability to attract and retain talent.

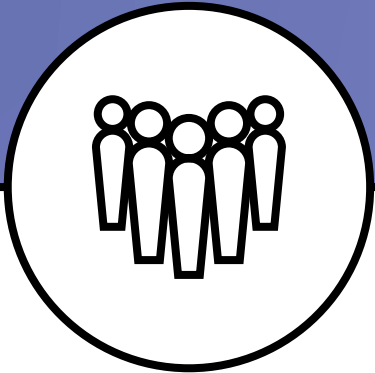
With closed international borders, our reliance on a domestic market becomes problematic. We need international students to diversify our labour pool — without them, we'll have a critical shortage of key skills in cities within five to seven years.

We need to make the most of every graduate we put through our education system, to ensure we attract talent and build local expertise within our cities today and into the future. It's a singular issue with multi-faceted consequences.

The Mission Fit Cities scorecard combines a rigorous and integrated set of metrics which have been selected to predict how a city will perform in the future, based on the strengths of its foundations today. It has been informed by our Generation 6 Cities research which explores the challenges our cities face and the factors that will underpin their future competitiveness, resilience and liveability.

People and **Planet** are fundamental to future success. If we cannot support the environmental resilience of our cities, then they cannot grow; equally if a city has a weak **People** score it cannot progress socially or economically. **Positivity** and **Power** focus on the themes of confidence and leadership, they suggest the importance of both building momentum and having the collective capability to harness it.

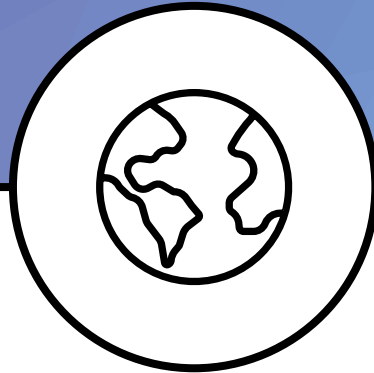
Place is an important mediator of city experience, supporting inclusion, identity, wellbeing and knowledge share: it is essential to the talent agenda and a key investment in growing **Performance**.
A city has many systems and the future success of the city will depend on the extent to which these systems are balanced and integrated: in practical terms the success of one factor will influence the performance of the other five. We need to understand that investment in key areas can create significant improvement across the scorecard.



PEOPLE

Talent, skills and social capital

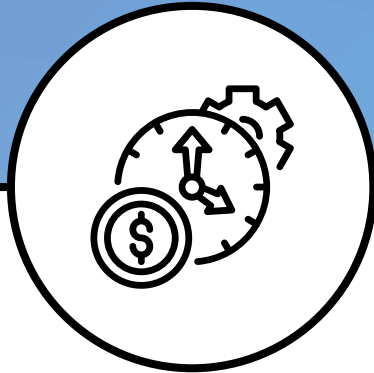
- Diversity
- Talent
- Equity
- Social capital



PLANET

Ecological resilience sustainable behaviour

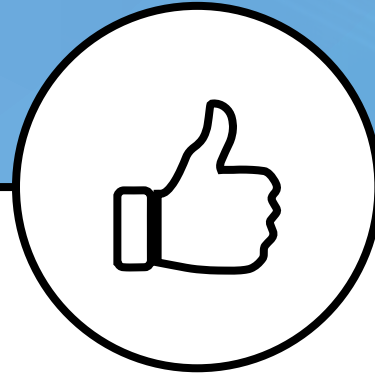
- Air quality
- Renewables
- Water security
- Vulnerability to natural disasters
- Tree cover



PERFORMANCE

Economic growth and development

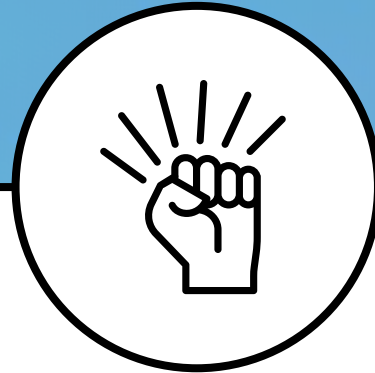
- GRP and GRP per capita
- Knowledge and innovation
- Start up/scale up ecology
- Infrastructure investment



POSITIVITY

Confidence and city brand

- City brand
- Business confidence
- Visitor economy
- CBD vitality



POWER

Governance and leadership

- Institutional arrangements
- Democratic participation
- Long range vision



PLACE

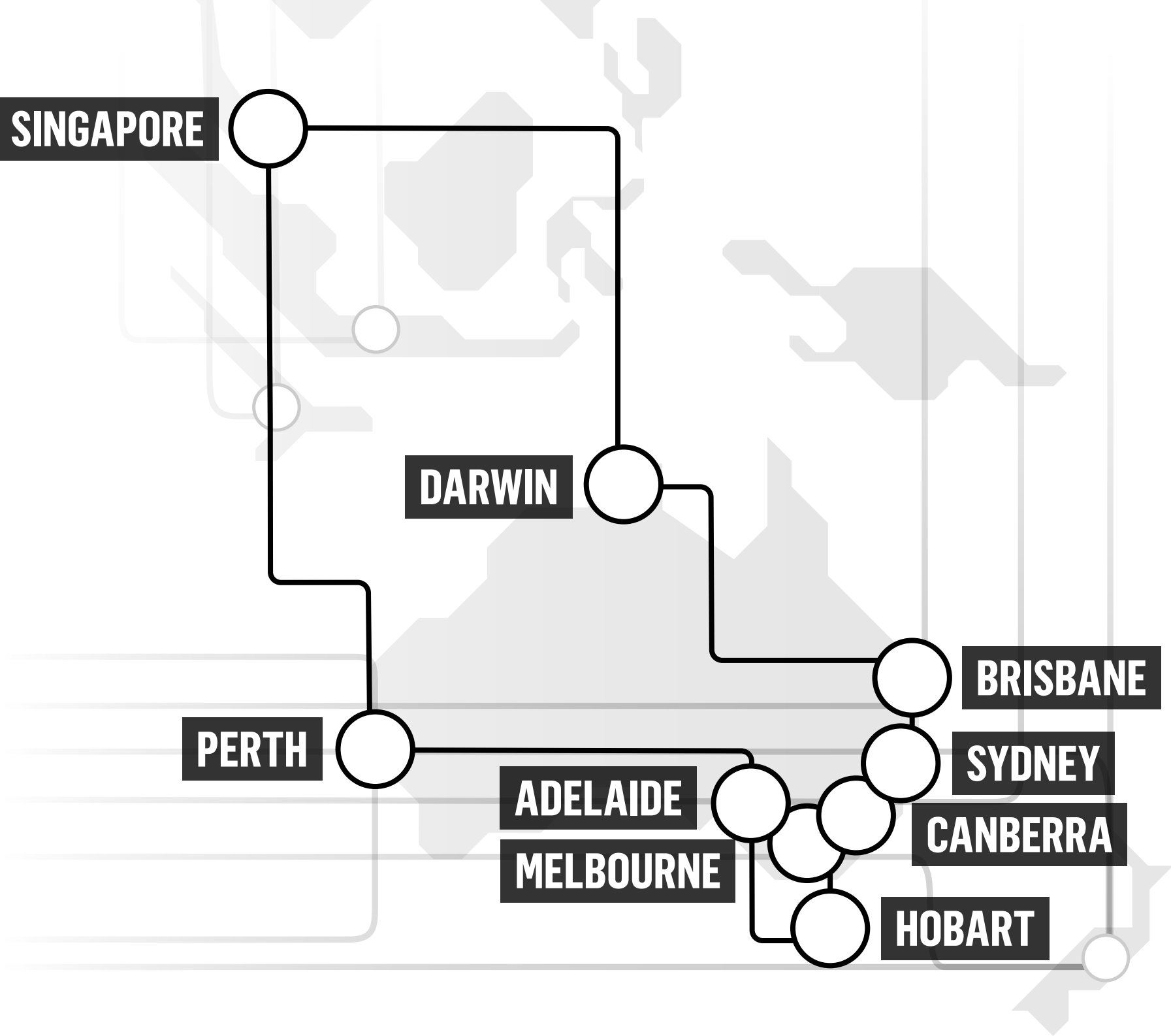
Public realm, vitality and culture

- Cultural depth
- Evening economy
- Walkability and streetscape
- Public open space
- Events program

FIVE FOCUS CITIES — STRENGTHS, CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Here we've focused on four major Australian cities —
Melbourne, Sydney, Brisbane and Perth.

We have also taken a close look at Singapore
- a city-state neighbour with a gold standard
Mission Fit score which we can aspire to.



MELBOURNE

Melbourne's city brand and international success has been reinforced by its powerful cultural and creative industries sector — securing the future resilience and continuing vitality of this sector should be seen as a competitive advantage and prioritised.

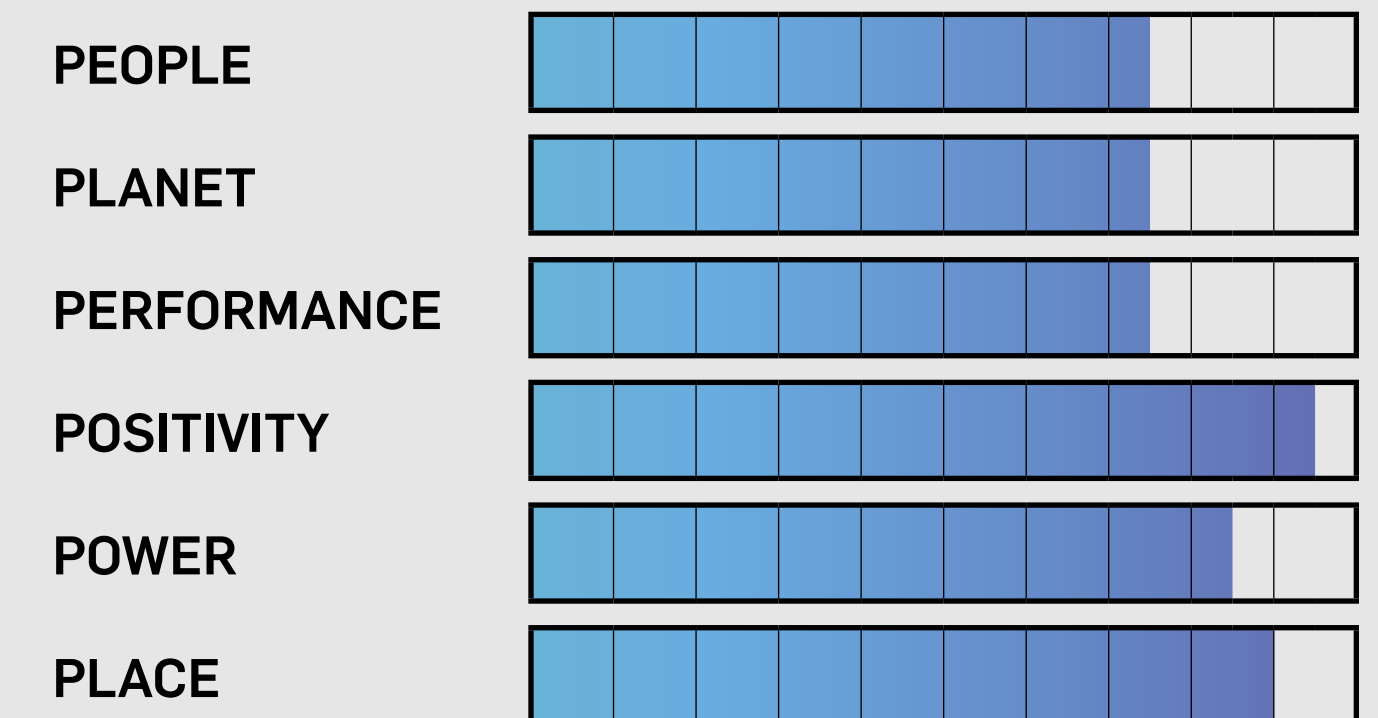
KEY STRENGTHS

- ✓ Melbourne has benefitted from **sustained population growth** and has a **diverse multicultural community** which brings vitality to its community life.
- ✓ It benefits from a **strong knowledge and creative workforce** but requires additional focus on STEM graduates.
- ✓ The metropolitan area enjoys one of the **highest rankings for renewable energy investment** per capita and is effectively managing the proportion of journeys to work by car due to its legacy transport infrastructure — with further investment underway to extend the network.
- ✓ The city has one of the **highest performing innovation and start up sectors nationally** and is gaining international attention in this regard, its solid manufacturing base means the city is less reliant on domestic imports.
- ✓ **Iconic place brand** with a depth and breadth of cultural and creative opportunity for producers and consumers.

OPPORTUNITIES TO WORK ON

- » Across the metro area, it will be increasingly important to **address social inequality and wellbeing**, reducing the intensity and concentration of vulnerable population cohorts.
- » **Housing stress** is pervasive in Melbourne, escalating house prices have impacted affordability for home buyers.
- » Attention to **air quality and urban cooling** will be increasingly important in maintaining well-being and quality of life.

SUCCESS FACTORS



**MISSION
FIT SCORE 82%**

SYDNEY

Sydney is Australia's top performing innovation sector and currently has a strong start up/spin-off scene. Increasing access to venture capital and expanding support to scale-up businesses will be needed to ensure ecosystem resilience and maintain Sydney's ascendant position in future.

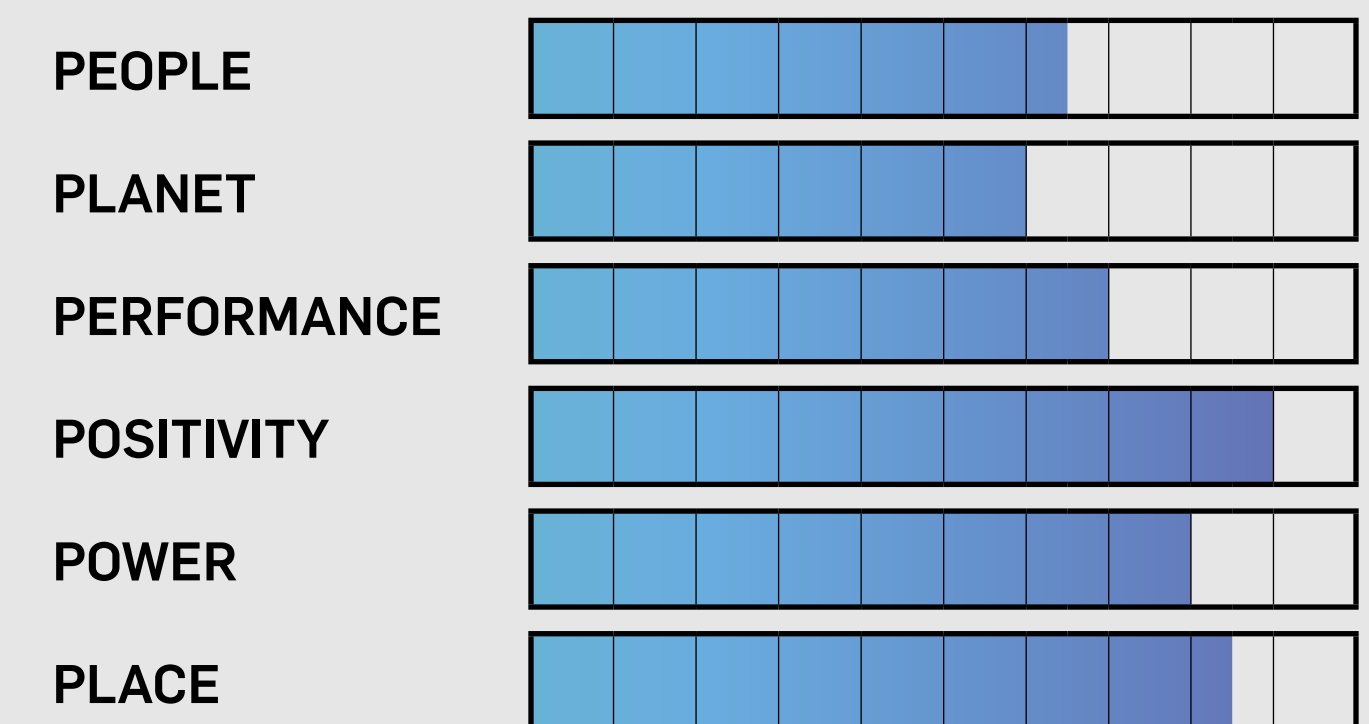
KEY STRENGTHS

- ✓ A **culturally diverse, talented community with high educational attainment** and a younger population base.
- ✓ Sydney is supported by **two of the world's top ranked universities** but ought to orientate its graduate profile towards a larger STEM cohort to ensure future talent pipeline.
- ✓ Strong city brand and identity which is reflected in its **positive tourism market** but a need to reduce reliance on natural assets or icons and build a more diverse and intense urban experience.
- ✓ **Strong investment in metropolitan-wide public transport** which will underpin future productivity gains and increase equity of access to employment opportunity.
- ✓ The city enjoys a good credit rating and remains **attractive to overseas business** and capital investment.
- ✓ A **growing entertainment and event scene**, with an emerging local talent pool that should continue to be nurtured and celebrated.

OPPORTUNITIES TO WORK ON

- » While there's been ongoing investment in environmental performance and a commitment to extending the public transport network, attention to **air quality and urban tree canopy** is important to future quality of life and wellbeing.
- » **Human resilience** is a work in progress with significant community cohorts across the metropolitan area vulnerable to economic shocks.
- » There's a need to increase the proportion of the population working in high growth sectors, including **health and clinical care**.
- » Recent work will enrich the **evening economy** of the city and expand beyond the traditional food, beverage and nightclub offer to extend culture and creative opportunities.

SUCCESS FACTORS



**MISSION
FIT SCORE 75%**

BRISBANE

A city growing in confidence with an urban lifestyle experience that works for local people and attracts visitors — planned investment in precincts, including Howard Smith Wharves, Queen’s Wharf, South Bank and Victoria Park will consolidate its appeal and quality of life.

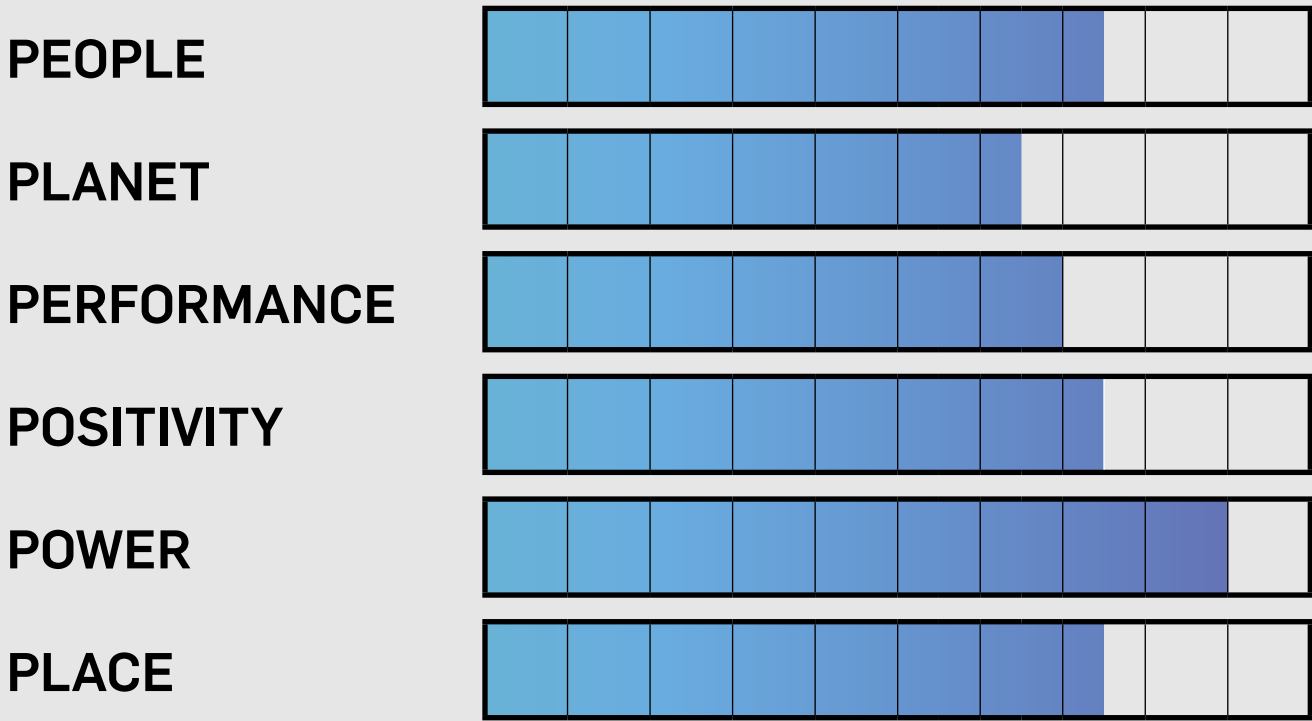
KEY STRENGTHS

- ✓ Contemporary Brisbane has a **highly educated and creative workforce** with a strong cohort of STEM graduates relative to Sydney. With more attention paid to retaining talent, the city can power a new economic agenda.
- ✓ Journeys to work by car are low comparative to other state capitals and investment in **Cross River Rail**, together with improved cycling infrastructure, will consolidate this advantage.
- ✓ There's a **high concentration of urban tree canopy** (more significant than Sydney or Melbourne) and increased investment in **green open space** across the city.
- ✓ The fundamentals driving innovation and productivity are strengthening and **further investment in skills** that matter will continue to drive growth in gross regional product.
- ✓ Brisbane is on the cusp of a city transformation, with a growing city brand based on an **attractive lifestyle proposition and wave of green investment**.

OPPORTUNITIES TO WORK ON

- » Extend **support for start-up, scale-up and spin off businesses** to enable their long-term growth in the city.
- » Improve **housing affordability** and choice to reduce levels of rental stress.
- » Reduce reliance on domestic imports and **expand local manufacturing base**.

SUCCESS FACTORS



MISSION
FIT SCORE **76%**

PERTH

It's time for Perth to grow up and assert a more confident city brand, leveraging the positive momentum that's been created by its relative pandemic resilience, together with strategic investments in civic, civil infrastructure and the vitality of it's CBD.

KEY STRENGTHS

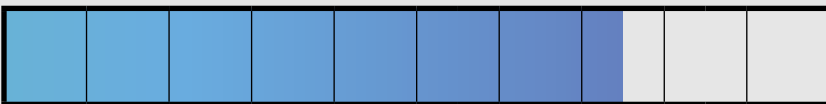
- ✓ Perth has experienced sustained growth and **internationalisation** in its resident population. While its educational attainment levels could be strengthened, it has a **high proportion of STEM graduates fuelling its state-wide economic success**.
- ✓ Sustained investment in **urban mobility** will continue to decrease the share of journey to work trips made by car and improve air quality over time.
- ✓ The focus on **urban appeal and place experience** across the city is paying dividends — a lively festival scene, focus on laneways and new cultural infrastructure, including the Museum of Western Australia, have extended the recognised natural asset base.
- ✓ There's a **strong local identity**, sense of place and community spirit that is highly differentiated and could be further leveraged.

OPPORTUNITIES TO WORK ON

- » Perth needs to continue its focus on a **sustainable city shape** — its resiliency would also benefit from further increasing the renewable energy profile per capita.
- » Despite a high proportion of the workforce being employed in top performing gross value add sectors, Perth urgently needs to focus on **economic diversification** and build its knowledge sector. Projects like the Henderson industry incubator and the increasing connectivity between knowledge nodes are anticipated to support this outcome over time.
- » Domestic and international visitor markets could be further developed and capitalise on **place-based infrastructure investment** including Elizabeth Quay and the Optus Stadium located in Burswood.
- » Capitalise on the **investment in METRONET** to create new urban places in the landscape of the city.

SUCCESS FACTORS

PEOPLE



PLANET



PERFORMANCE



POSITIVITY



POWER



PLACE



MISSION
FIT SCORE **71%**

SINGAPORE AS AN INTERNATIONAL BENCHMARK

Singapore, home to our Cistri business, emerged from our research as the future-focused international marker. One of our nearest neighbours and a city-state with which Australia enjoys a strong relationship and a rich exchange of knowledge and ideas.

With a population of 5.6 million, Singapore has a similar footprint to Sydney and Melbourne and is relatable to us in size; it has also had a clear strategy driving its success since 1958.

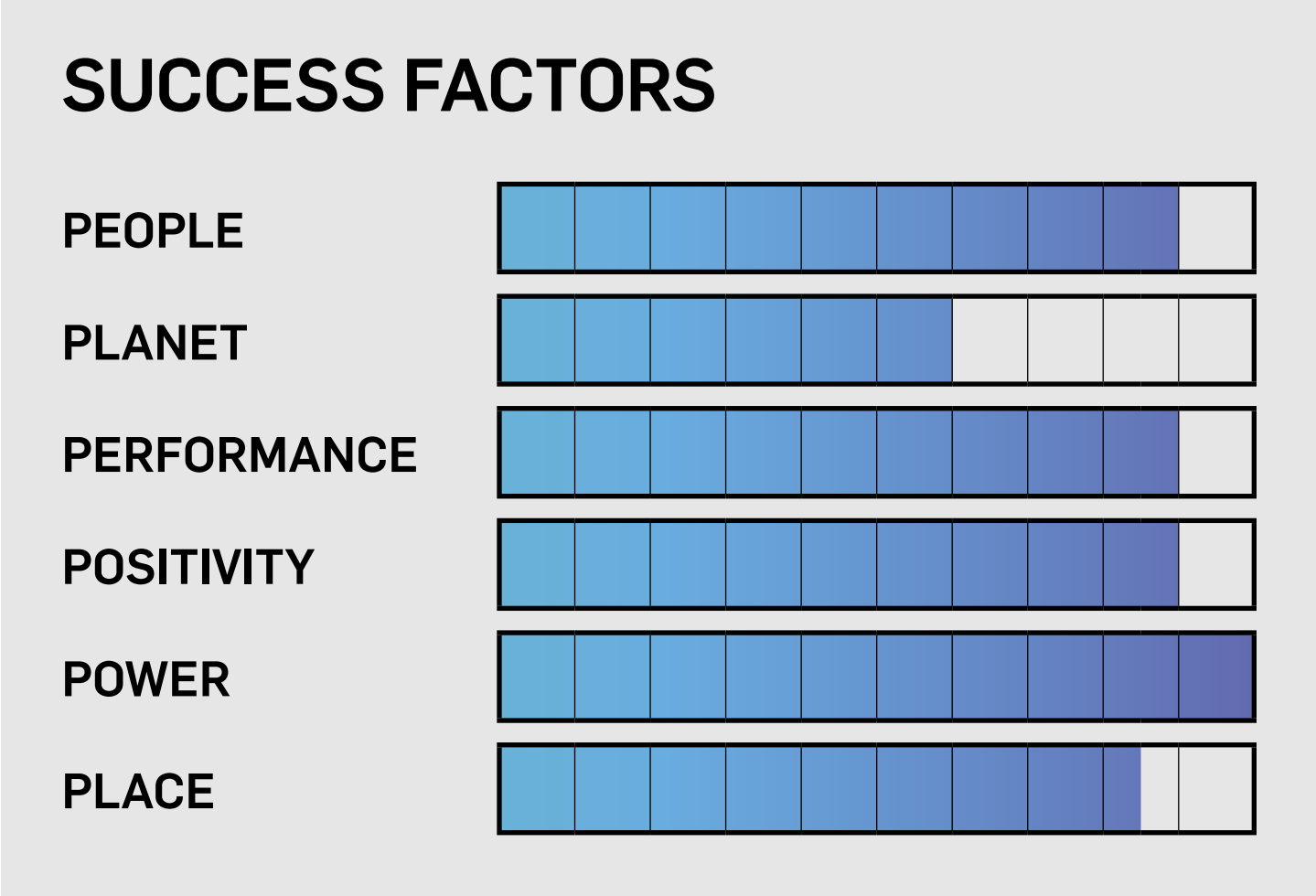
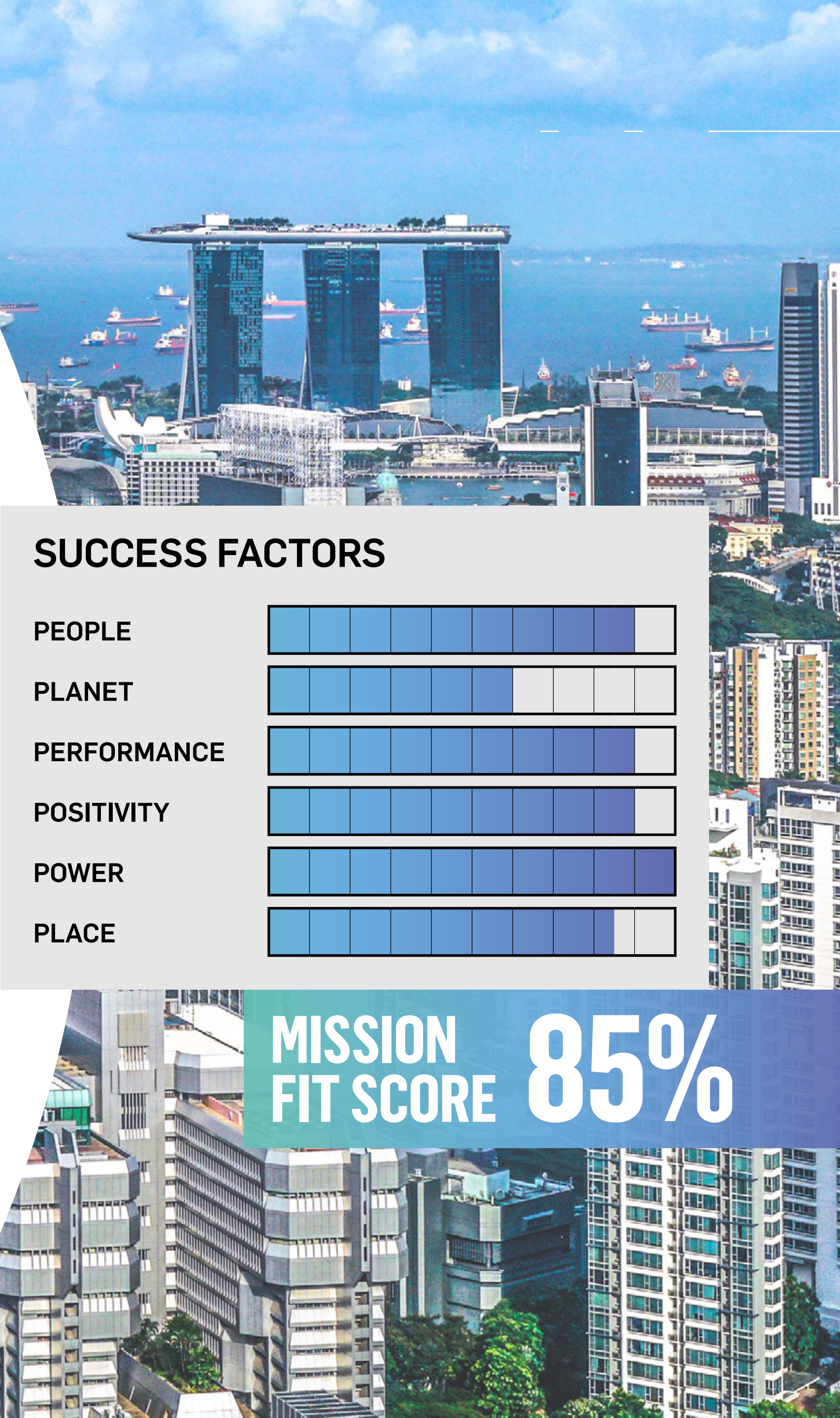
Whilst Singapore may not come out as the strongest performer against all success indicators, Australia can learn from the city's focus on optimising human capital and consequent Mission Fit Score.

KEY STRENGTHS

- ✓ Singapore's core strength is its **highly educated knowledge-oriented workforce** and co-ordinated national approach to skills development — attractive to expatriates, it has a resilient and future-focused talent pool.
- ✓ **Sustained growth in GDP** and strong productivity per capita, combined with long-term strategies to deepen and diversify the economic base.
- ✓ **Highly integrated approach to transport**, land use and economic development — enabling value creation, delivering agglomeration benefits and driving increased social equity and opportunity.
- ✓ Increasing focus on placemaking, public realm, culture and creativity which are **enriching the urban experience and lifestyle appeal**.

OPPORTUNITIES TO WORK ON

- » Challenges to **air quality and food security** are acknowledged and commitments to renewable energy and urban agriculture will support future resilience and wellbeing.
- » Continuing to celebrate Singapore's **authentic cultural identity** and build on grass roots community participation will further strengthen its international brand.
- » Maintaining the emphasis on precinct-based renewal with a **public realm focus** that fosters social and professional networking as a catalyst to knowledge sharing.



MISSION
FIT SCORE **85%**

A NEW FRAMEWORK FOR PREDICTING FUTURE SUCCESS

Each of the key themes — **people , planet, performance, positivity power, place** is supported by a set of indicators and measures. We have identified how each city fulfills relevant criteria, and the metrics by which we can measure a city's current actions.

The metrics that have been applied consist of 51 individually referenced data points, which are derived from accredited sources and updated annually. All but one has been independently sourced — making the data unimpeachable.

The scorecard itself provides a score for each of the themes as well as an overarching prediction of future fitness; in this way we are able to identify the strengths that an individual city has to leverage as well as the areas that it may need to support further. It offers deep and actionable insight to state governments, city authorities and the private sector as we work towards building globally competitive Australian cities for the future.

Our research captures where cities are today, where they might be falling behind and where they can potentially take the lead if they were to capitalise on an opportunity.

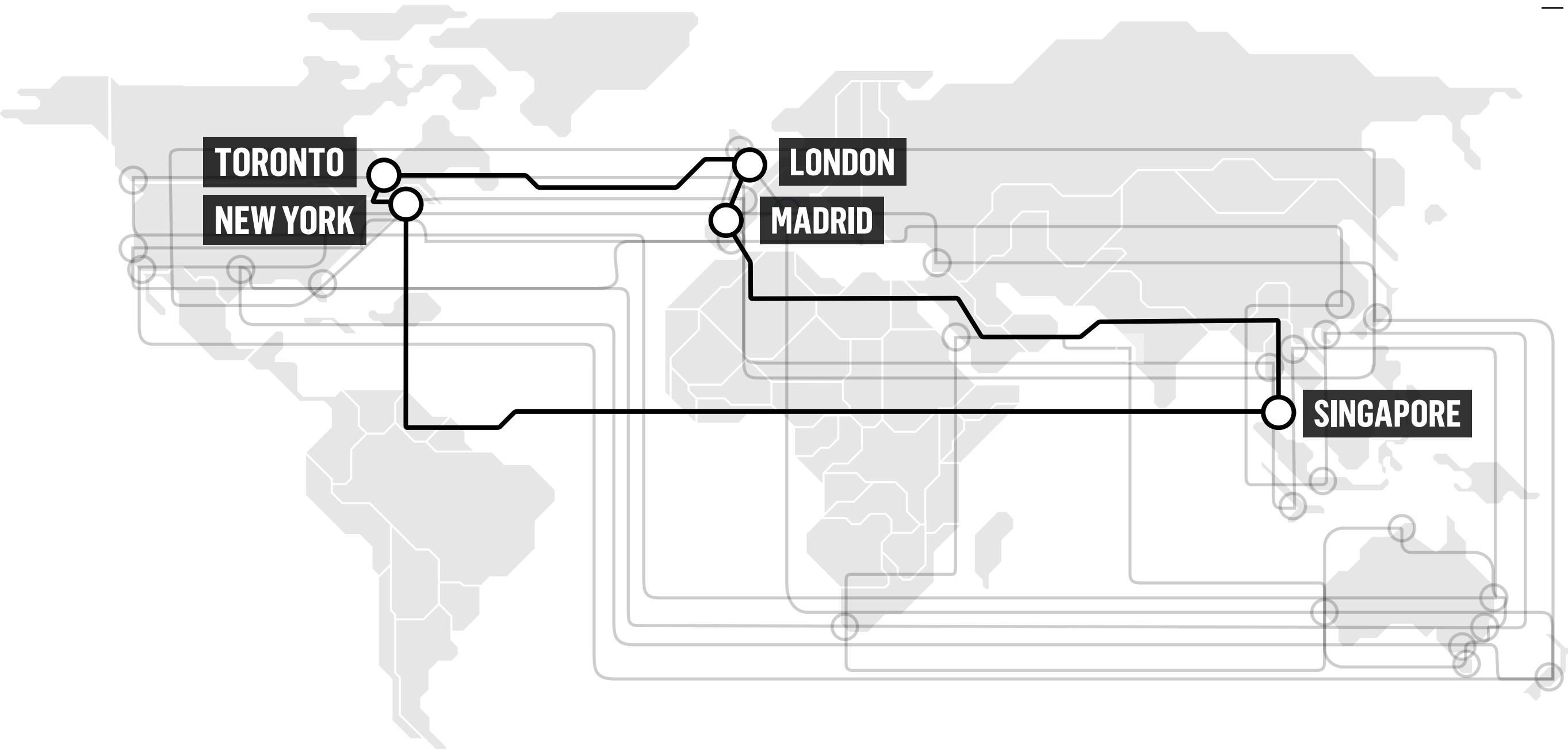


A city is a system and it's a system of systems — such complexity requires an equally comprehensive framework to correlate and understand the resilience of the system and how these variables might interact in the future.

COMPETITIVE CITIES STORMING AHEAD

Cities succeeding today — like Singapore — made bold decisions 20 years ago that set them up for the success they now enjoy. For our continued growth, and to protect the lifestyle we enjoy, we need to make bold decisions of our own.

In addition to the full Mission Fit Cities scorecard for Singapore, we've also examined four international cities capitalising on their strengths as well as facing serious challenges in the future.





NEW YORK

MISSION
FIT SCORE **75%**

At the top of the global tree for much of the last century, New York faces increasing competition for economic dominance (Performance). With human capital of growing importance, it needs to focus on fostering local skills and reducing reliance on inter-state and international talent (People).

Dense public transport networks enable economic agglomerations here and drive the innovation wins associated with the city's high performing knowledge and innovation sector. At the same time, there's an over reliance on legacy infrastructure nearing the end of its lifecycle or capacity (Performance).

Air quality and urban heat island effects pose a challenge to the wellbeing and quality of life in this city (Planet), while affordability and inequality in wealth distribution are leading to significant cohorts of vulnerable populations distributed across the five boroughs.

While the city never sleeps there's still room for improvement in the quality, if not the vitality, of New York's urban realm (Place).



While the city never sleeps there's still room for improvement in the quality, if not the vitality, of New York's urban realm.



MISSION
FIT SCORE **77%**

TORONTO

One to watch, Toronto is coming to our attention through the increasing strength of its city brand (Positivity) and economic growth (Performance).

Restructuring its economy towards knowledge and professional services, together with exponential innovation-based growth, has positioned the city for a strong economic future — supported by a highly educated and diverse local talent pipeline (Performance and People).

The growing urban vitality and appeal of the city is increasingly attracting international talent, who are also drawn to the international connectivity of the city and its growing green and lifestyle credentials (Planet and People).

At the same time, there's an urgent need to increase the public transport network to the north east of the city to further improve productivity and quality of life.



The growing urban vitality and appeal of the city is increasingly attracting international talent.



MISSION
FIT SCORE **79%**

MADRID

A rising European star gaining economic and lifestyle momentum (Positivity). This city is leveraging the benefit of its dense network of local and global connections to build its presence in the international business and tourism arenas.

Investment in scientific and cultural capability and production supports its rapid advancement in innovation, entrepreneurship and creativity — strong foundations for a competitive future economy (Performance).

The suburban growth patterns of the modern city are enabled by public transport which is decreasing travel to work times and extending access to educational opportunity and therefore equity.

The quality of urban realm is encouraging — cultural depth and creativity is strong and has received sustained investment leading to a sector with young talent and energy (Place).



This city is leveraging the benefit of its dense network of local and global connections to build its presence in the international business and tourism arenas.



MISSION
FIT SCORE **81%**

LONDON

An established city and economic heavy weight, London's future success will be driven by its sustained investment in transport, digital infrastructure, innovation ecologies and urban vitality.

A city rich in cultural experience and creativity, London has a vibrant evening economy and is rich in respected educational institutions (Place and Positivity).

Scoring well in terms of the talent and diversity of its population, like many cities London could grow its STEM based graduates to ensure a talent pipeline aligned with future employment needs and reduce reliance on international talent (People).

Innovation and start up infrastructure combined with first mover confidence are igniting new economic opportunity, while investment in transport connectivity has created a wider labour market catchment and increased territorial cohesion.

There has been a sustained investment in improving environmental performance and urban resilience (Planet).



Innovation and start up infrastructure combined with first mover confidence are igniting new economic opportunity.

WE NEED TO START TODAY

The pandemic has taught us that we can't necessarily rely on open borders. It's likely we may have to learn to be more self-reliant in future — and able to do more with less. Now is our chance to steer our cities and nation towards future success.

Globally, other cities are working faster, harder and with greater intentionality to create their next generation of cities, seizing upon opportunities and investing in the potential to become leaders in different spheres.

We now have an idea of where we need to grow our Australian cities — and insight into the consequences if we fail to act.



Vision without action is merely a dream. Action without vision just passes the time. Vision with action can change the world.

Joel A Barker



We would love to talk to you about next steps for your city.
Speak to one of our Future State Directors.



JAMES TUMA

E jtuma@urbis.com.au

M +61 408 718 454



KATE MEYRICK

E kmeyrick@urbis.com.au

M +61 421 055 333



NATHAN STRIBLEY

E nstribley@urbis.com.au

M +61 401 188 597