

Sightline 2026

Learning Outcomes & NSCA Competency Mapping

For Continuing Professional Development (CPD) — Registered Architects

Event Details

Event: Sightline 2026 — A Design Intelligence Briefing

Presenter: Dana Tomić Hughes, Founder & Editor, Yellowtrace

Duration: Half-day (approximately 2.5 hours of educational content)

Sydney: Tuesday 10 February 2026 — University of Sydney

Melbourne: Thursday 12 February 2026 — RMIT

CPD Points: 2 Formal CPD Points

CPD Category & Framework

This event qualifies as Formal CPD under the National CPD Framework for Architects. Formal CPD requires structured learning with assessment or significant interaction, which this event delivers through post-session assessment.

Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this event, participants will be able to:

1. Apply a framework to evaluate and distinguish meaningful design signals from market noise and fleeting trends.
2. Analyse how cultural and technological forces — including algorithmic media and AI — are reshaping design practice and client expectations.
3. Identify emerging design directions across six interconnected territories, developing observation skills and critical filters applicable to practice.
4. Develop strategic positioning and brand-building approaches to articulate design intent and communicate value to clients.
5. Integrate global design intelligence from key international events (Milan, Copenhagen) into local practice contexts.

NSCA Competency Mapping

This event addresses the following Performance Criteria from the 2021 National Standard of Competency for Architects (NSCA), within **Unit 2: Project Initiation and Conceptual Design:**

NSCA Reference	Performance Criteria & Relevance to Sightline
PC18	<p><i>Be able to apply creative imagination, design precedents, research, emergent knowledge and critical evaluation in formulating and refining concept design options, including the exploration of three dimensional form and spatial quality.</i></p> <p>Relevance: Sightline provides structured analysis of global design precedents and emerging movements through Dana's field observations from Milan Design Week, 3 Days of Design Copenhagen, and studio visits worldwide. The 'signal vs noise' framework supports critical evaluation of design information.</p>
PC26	<p><i>Be able to undertake site, cultural and contextual analysis as part of preliminary design research.</i></p> <p>Relevance: Session 1 examines how cultural forces — algorithmic media, AI disruption, and economic shifts — are reshaping design contexts. This analysis equips participants to understand the broader cultural landscape informing their project work.</p>
PC28	<p><i>Be able to draw on knowledge from building sciences and technology, environmental sciences and behavioural and social sciences as part of preliminary design research and when developing the conceptual design to optimise the performance of the project.</i></p> <p>Relevance: Session 2 covers 'Collective Wellbeing' — wellness shifting from self to community, designing for belonging across workplace, retail, and third-space typologies — directly addressing behavioural and social sciences in design.</p>

Session Structure

Session 1: Current State + Field Report

A diagnostic analysis of the contemporary design landscape, examining the cultural and technological forces creating homogeneity in design output. Includes field observations from Milan Design Week, 3 Days of Design Copenhagen, and other key events.

Key content:

- The 'Great Flattening' — algorithmic sameness and its impact on design distinctiveness
- A 'signal vs noise' framework for evaluating design information
- Depth, rigour, and a distinctive point of view as competitive advantages in an AI-disrupted landscape
- Attention, imagination, and authorship as capacities to protect in an AI-disrupted landscape
- The shift from output to input: references, filters, point of view, and brand

Session 2: What's Emerging

Mapping six interconnected design territories with project examples. These territories serve as tools for observation and filters for discernment — helping participants develop their own critical perspective.

Six Design Territories:

- Anti-Mass Aesthetics — quality-driven responses to generic aesthetics
- Nostalgia Remixed — historical references reinterpreted for contemporary contexts
- Neo Materiality — material innovation and craft-forward approaches
- Cultural Narratives & Place — place-based design, cultural identity, and connection to heritage
- Collective Wellbeing — wellness shifting from self to community; designing for belonging across workplace, retail, and third-space typologies
- New Frontiers — human imagination expanded by technology into previously unimaginable territory

Assessment Method

Formal CPD requires assessment or significant interaction. This event uses a post-session digital quiz to verify participant understanding of key concepts.

- 10 multiple-choice questions covering content from both sessions
- Passing threshold: 70% (7/10 correct answers)
- CPD certificate issued upon successful completion

Provider Information

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Document prepared in accordance with the National CPD Framework for Architects and the 2021 National Standard of Competency for Architects (NSCA).