

# BIM MANAGEMENT

Developed by:



Building  
Institute  
Aotearoa



**BUILT  
ENVIRONMENT  
CAREER  
STREAMS**

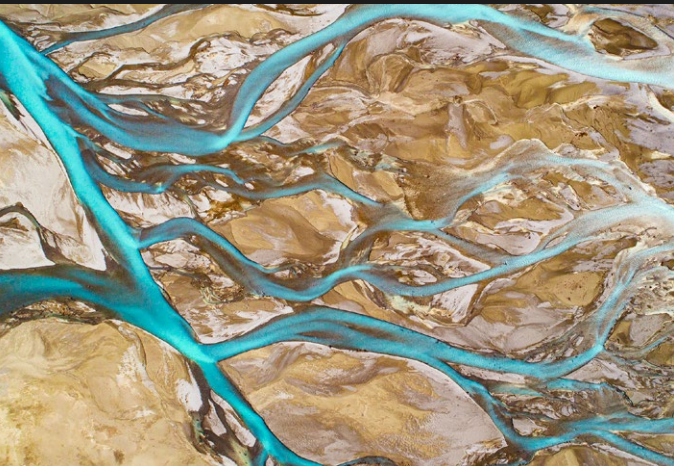
Ngā ara rerekē o te ao  
hanga taiao

He ara whiria  
A braided river



## CHOOSING THE RIGHT CAREER STREAM FOR YOU

Inspired by Aotearoa New Zealand's many braided rivers, this helpful guide has been created for anyone entering or changing careers in the construction industry. Like a river, your chosen career stream may twist and turn throughout your career, but all streams can lead to rewarding and impactful roles – enabling you to make a tangible impact on New Zealand's built environments.



# BIM MANAGEMENT

This guide gives you an overview of the opportunities and expectations within independent Building Information Modelling (BIM) management – including typical career pathways, key skills required, what the role looks like day-to-day, and how to get started.

### Independent BIM specialists span digital delivery across complete building lifecycles:

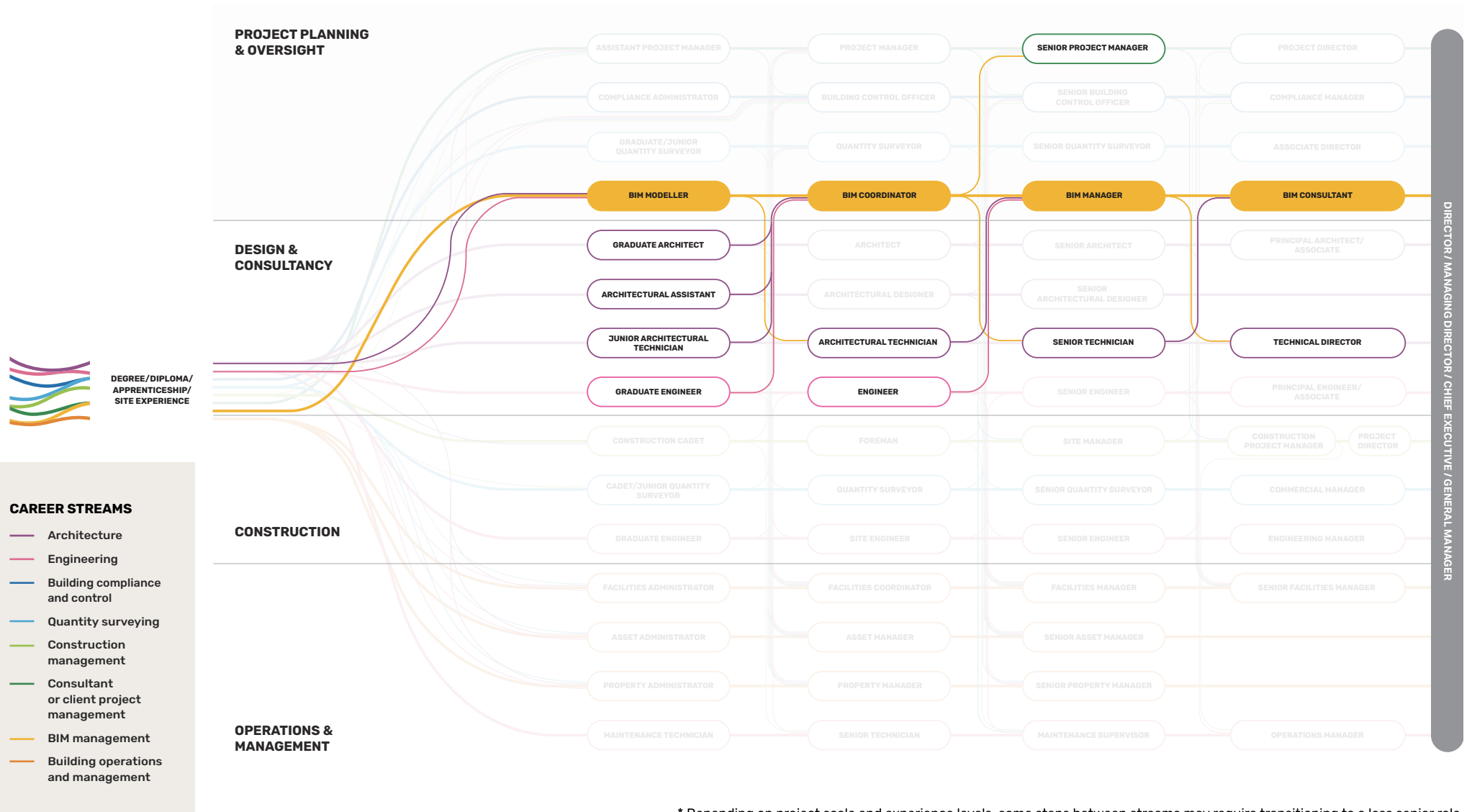
- Strategic digital planning and BIM execution plan development for client organisations
- Model coordination and integration between design disciplines during design phases
- Implementation and quality assurance of digital collaboration standards
- Construction delivery oversight and digital stakeholder coordination
- As-built model creation and digital twin development for ongoing building operations

**Independent BIM specialists** provide objective, client-focused digital delivery services. They represent the client's digital information interests throughout construction projects, coordinating between design teams, contractors, and stakeholders to ensure projects deliver accurate and appropriate digital models. They also focus on value delivery through improved coordination and information management for asset owners.

These roles combine strategic thinking, stakeholder management, and advanced technical expertise. They suit professionals who want to influence project direction through digital innovation, work with cutting-edge technology, and drive industry transformation. BIM managers need strong communication skills, diplomatic relationship management abilities and continuous learning commitment.



## BIM MANAGEMENT



## KEY PARTS OF THE ROLE

- **Cross-disciplinary digital coordination** – BIM processes and workflows involve multiple disciplines including architects, engineers, contractors and clients. You'll need to facilitate collaboration, coordinate requirements, and maintain digital standards.
- **Technology leadership and implementation** – You'll develop and implement digital strategies, select appropriate software tools, conduct BIM audits, and guide organisational transformation towards integrated digital delivery processes.
- **Complex stakeholder management** – Project teams can be quite diverse, with varying levels of digital maturity. You'll need diplomatic skills to manage relationships, resolve conflicts, and align different parties around common digital objectives.
- **Continuous learning and adaptation** – The digital construction landscape evolves rapidly, requiring constant technology updates, skill development, and adaptation to new software platforms, industry standards, and client requirements.
- **Business development and client management** – The digital construction landscape evolves rapidly. You'll need to stay up-to-date with new software platforms, industry standards and client expectations.
- **Project delivery under pressure** – You'll work to tight project deadlines with responsibility for coordination outcomes and deliverable quality, often adapting to different client software platforms and modelling standards across projects.

## ALTERNATIVE CAREER PATHS

**The digital skills developed in BIM management are highly transferable across the construction industry, offering:**

- **Movement between BIM roles** – Switching between independent consultancy, specialist BIM firms, or in-house roles within architectural, engineering or project management firms or other organisations with significant digital delivery requirements
- **Facilities and asset management** – Creating as-built models and digital twins that integrate with building management systems for ongoing operation
- **Design management** – Coordinating documentation management and quality assurance within contractor or consultancy organisations
- **Project management** – Embedding BIM strategies and digital engineering practices into traditional project delivery processes

- **Quantity surveying and commercial management** – Applying BIM and digital tools for estimating, cost management, and contract administration
- **3D scanning and reality capture** – Specialising in laser scanning, photogrammetry, and point cloud processing for existing buildings
- **Software and technology development** – Working with companies developing BIM tools or other construction industry software
- **Education and training** – Leading digital transformation education in tertiary institutions or professional development programmes

## SALARY BANDS\*

| BIM management              | BIM modeller        | BIM coordinator                 | BIM manager                     | BIM consultant        |
|-----------------------------|---------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------|
| <b>Minimum time in role</b> | 2-4 years           | 3-5 years<br>(destination role) | 4-7 years<br>(destination role) | (destination role)    |
| <b>Salary range</b>         | \$65,000 – \$75,000 | \$80,000 – \$100,000            | \$80,000 – \$140,000            | \$150,000 – \$180,000 |

*\*Salaries and time in roles is indicative only and can vary significantly based on experience, performance, firm size and structure, regional location, specialisation, and market conditions.*

## ROLE OVERVIEW

### KEY DAILY ACTIVITIES

- Coordinating model integration between disciplines, conducting clash detection meetings, and ensuring quality control across digital deliverables
- Developing and managing BIM execution plans, project documentation, and digital collaboration standards
- Selecting appropriate BIM software tools, implementing new technologies, and ensuring effective integration across project teams
- Providing technical training to project teams, mentoring staff on BIM workflows, and supporting clients through digital transformation processes
- Conducting BIM audits and compliance checks, overseeing model validation, and ensuring adherence to project standards
- Developing organisational BIM strategies, providing expert guidance on digital delivery approaches, and advising on technology investments

### WHERE YOU COULD WORK

**Independent consultancy** – Operating as sole practitioners or small specialist firms providing BIM services across multiple clients and projects

**Specialist BIM consultancies** – Working within dedicated digital delivery firms focusing exclusively on BIM coordination and digital strategy services

**Large multidisciplinary or design consultancies** – Providing BIM expertise within engineering or architecture firms, while maintaining independence from design decisions

**Client organisations** – Working directly for large property developers, government agencies, or infrastructure organisations with significant digital delivery requirements

**Technology companies** – Supporting BIM software developers, digital twin platform providers, or construction technology innovators

### WHO YOU'LL WORK WITH

Architects, engineers, quantity surveyors, construction managers, project managers, contractors, clients, software developers, technology vendors, facility managers, and senior organisational leadership across diverse project teams.

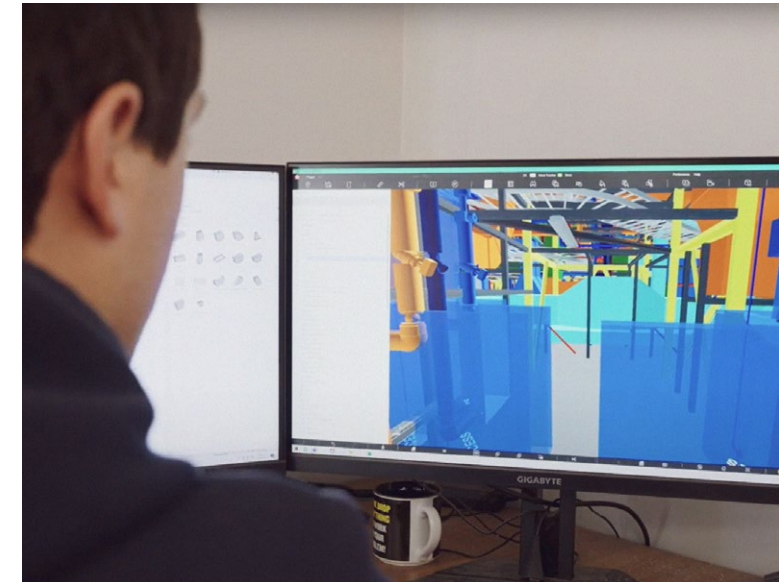
### TYPICAL WORK ARRANGEMENTS

- Primarily office-based with computer-intensive work requiring high-specification hardware and multiple monitors for model coordination
- Occasional site visits, depending on project involvement
- Meeting-intensive role combining online collaboration sessions with occasional travel for site visits and stakeholder meetings
- Hybrid working capabilities with technology-enabled remote work possible for most coordination and planning activities

## WHAT TO EXPECT

### REWARDS AND SATISFACTION

- Intellectual challenge of solving complex coordination problems and implementing innovative digital solutions
- The satisfaction of helping transform construction industry practices through technology adoption
- Exposure to diverse projects building experience across different sectors, project scales, and technological applications



- Access to cutting-edge technology, working with the latest digital tools, software platforms, and emerging technologies
- High-level strategic involvement influencing organisational digital strategies and major project delivery

### WORK-LIFE BALANCE

- Flexible working arrangements with control over schedule and project selection for independent practitioners
- Project deadline pressures create intensive work periods, but these roles are generally more predictable than site-based construction roles
- Technology-enabled remote working capabilities allowing location flexibility for much of the coordination and planning work

## GETTING STARTED

Independent BIM management requires a unique combination of construction industry knowledge and advanced digital skills. Most successful practitioners transition from traditional construction roles rather than entering directly, building credibility through practical experience before specialising.

### IMMEDIATE ACTIONS

- **Gain relevant qualifications** – A degree in engineering, architecture, quantity surveying, or construction management provides essential understanding of construction processes, project delivery, and industry practices.
- **Develop core BIM technical skills** – Gain proficiency with core BIM software (Revit, ArchiCAD, etc), coordination tools, and supporting technologies including reality capture, visualisation, and data management platforms.
- **Gain practical project experience** – Work within traditional construction roles while developing digital specialisation, gaining an understanding how BIM integration affects different disciplines and project phases.
- **Understand industry standards and processes** – Learn about BIM execution plans, digital delivery standards, information management protocols, and collaborative working arrangements.

### HOW TO BECOME A BIM SPECIALIST

- Transition from design or engineering roles with strong digital capabilities and a proven track record in BIM coordination.
- Develop specialisation within existing construction roles by building your reputation as the digital expert within architectural, engineering, or construction firms.
- Gain experience with specialist BIM consultancies, working on diverse projects before establishing independent practice.
- Build expertise through complex project involvement, demonstrating your capability to manage large-scale digital coordination challenges.

### ESSENTIAL SKILLS

- **Core BIM software expertise** – including Revit, ArchiCAD, Bentley platforms, and coordination tools like Navisworks or Solibri
- **Supporting technology knowledge** – including reality capture, AR/VR, point cloud processing, and data management systems
- **Understanding of standards and documentation** – covering BIM execution plans, information delivery manuals, and digital delivery protocols
- **Interoperability and data management skills** – for managing information exchange between different software platforms and project stakeholders
- **Construction industry knowledge** – providing credibility and understanding of practical construction challenges and constraints
- **Project management and coordination skills** – for managing complex stakeholder relationships and delivery timelines
- **Communication and training abilities** – for explaining technical concepts and supporting teams through digital transformation
- **Business development and client management capabilities** – for building and maintaining client relationships

## CAREER STORY



**Sam Henderson** – Digital Construction Consultant, Coorderly

**“The BIM management role is essentially setting the collaboration standards for a project, the information standards for a project, and really controlling that digital space within a project.”**

**Sam Henderson’s journey shows how a career pathway can unfold rather than needing to be planned from the outset. Without really knowing what an engineering career might look like, Sam studied mechanical engineering at Ara Institute of Canterbury. He was drawn to the CAD components of his course, and landed his first job as a structural draftsman at Structex.**

During eight years at Structex, Sam developed a keen interest in Building Information Modelling (BIM), moving from AutoCAD to Revit. He became the go-to person for 3D modelling and collaboration. Yet Sam eventually hit a ceiling – structural engineering firms don’t typically play much of a role in BIM coordination, so he didn’t find much opportunity to extend his skill set.

His career took off when he moved to Construction Workshop as a BIM manager, with a big shift in responsibility, from being a specialist in a single discipline to overseeing collaboration across multiple disciplines and setting standards for entire

projects. Initially, Sam found it daunting to manage large projects with international teams, but he quickly developed the confidence to rise to the challenge. After gaining solid experience over three years in the role, Sam set up his own BIM consultancy to give him more flexibility to manage his family commitments.

For a career in BIM management, Sam suggests that a degree in engineering, architecture, quantity surveying or construction management provides a good foundation. He stresses that practical construction knowledge is essential, and notes that people with trades backgrounds or construction roles can also make good BIM managers. Strong people management skills are perhaps even more important than the technical skills – Sam notes that BIM management is “very much a managerial-type role”, requiring diplomacy to manage relationships and responsibilities.

## CAREER STORY



**Cara Daggar** – Design and BIM Manager,  
Kea Construction Technology

**“We’re trying to fuse site experience with what’s happening in the digital environment; to bridge the gap as smoothly as possible. Working with subcontractors and main contractors, anyone who’s interested in bridging that gap and trying to do it in a way that works for their businesses.”**

**Cara Daggar studied architecture at Victoria University based on a teacher’s suggestion that she was “good at drawing”. However, she quickly discovered that her way of thinking didn’t really align with what she was studying. After she completed her degree in interior architecture, her real learning began through her uncle’s construction company, where she spent three years doing precast and structural steel shop drawings.**

This technical grounding became invaluable when she became a construction management cadet, and later a foreman, at Naylor Love. Despite having enjoyed the drafting and digital experience, she deliberately avoided using those skills to avoid being channelled into more administrative roles, in favour of gaining practical site experience.

On a complex aged-care facility, her project manager knew she had precast shop drawing experience, and asked her to tackle some precast coordination problems that were holding up the schedule. This project showed her that combining her technical digital coordination abilities with practical site management experience was actually her strong suit. In turn, this led to a custom Project Design Coordinator role, which allowed her to prove that her concept worked in practice.

Believing that projects with early contractor involvement would give her the best opportunity to apply her skills, Cara moved between companies to find the right opportunities. Finding herself trying to fit in design coordination after hours while being responsible for day-to-day site operations on a major rail infrastructure project, she realised she needed to define a role that involved both skillsets.

After reassessing priorities following the birth of her daughter, Cara and her partner launched their own company, Kea Construction Technology. The company provides freelance design manager/BIM manager services for projects that don’t have anyone in that role. They work on behalf of subcontractors to meet main contractors’ BIM requirements, and deliver shop drawings and as-builts for structural steel, metalwork, and precast elements. The company also provides model reviews for tendering contractors and offers training to ensure smooth handovers when clients hire permanent staff.

For anyone wanting to follow a similar career path, Cara’s advice is direct. “Go get site experience. It’s as simple as that.” Her philosophy is clear, “Personally, I think that having people skills and an interest in physical problem solving are critical. The digital stuff can support that.”

## EMPLOYMENT OPTIONS

### EMPLOYER TYPE

#### Large BIM consultancies or multidisciplinary firms

- Narrower range of responsibilities within a larger team, focusing on specific aspects of BIM process
- More structured support for professional development and career progression

#### Small specialist BIM consultancies

- Broader role scope with opportunity for direct involvement in business development and client relationships
- Greater individual responsibility and faster decision-making processes
- More flexible service delivery approaches and project selection control
- Entrepreneurial opportunities with potential for partnership development

#### Independent practice

- Complete control over workload, project selection, and client relationships
- Higher financial risk but greater earning potential for successful practitioners
- Business development pressures with responsibility for securing project pipeline
- Equipment and software investment requirements

### REGIONAL VARIATIONS

#### Main centres

- Higher concentration of projects requiring sophisticated coordination capabilities
- Better access to professional development opportunities and technology showcases

#### Regional centres

- Closer working relationships with local contractors, architects, and engineers
- Broader project scope combining strategic planning with hands-on implementation
- Potentially limited advancement opportunities

**“At the start when I was thrust into these big projects and expected to manage them, it was quite daunting... I had these international design consultants and expert contractors and it was down to me every two weeks to review the models and find the coordination issues, that was daunting, but also at the same time really gratifying and confidence building once I got into the flow of it, and now I just feel confident in that space.”**

– Sam Henderson, Digital Construction Consultant, Coorderly

## NEXT STEPS AND RESOURCES

### BUILDING YOUR PROFESSIONAL NETWORK

- Participate in BIM and digital construction conferences, workshops, and technology showcases
- Join international BIM organisations and digital delivery networking groups
- Engage with technology vendors and software user communities
- Connect with other digital specialists across architecture, engineering, and construction firms

### Upskilling and continuing education

- BIM software certification across multiple platforms
- Digital delivery standards training covering international standards, government requirements, and industry best practices
- Technology specialisation development in areas such as reality capture, digital twins, or data analytics
- Business and project management skills for independent practice – including client management, commercial negotiations, and business development
- Industry transformation understanding, keeping current with digital trends, policy developments, and technology evolution

### Industry resources

- Building Institute Aotearoa  
[buildinginstitute.nz](https://buildinginstitute.nz)
- BMinNZ  
[biminanz.co.nz](https://biminanz.co.nz)
- Technology vendor communities such as Autodesk, Revizto, and Trimble, user groups and industry events

### MAKING YOUR DECISION

Independent BIM management offers the opportunity to lead digital transformation in construction, while working with diverse projects and teams.

This career suits individuals who combine strong technical skills in both digital and construction technology. The field rewards those with excellent communication abilities, who can understand the big picture of digital transformation, yet manage detailed technical implementation across diverse stakeholder groups.

Independent BIM management provides excellent potential for professional growth, international opportunities, and the satisfaction of contributing to industry transformation. However, success requires balancing technical expertise with business acumen, continuous technology learning, and patience in building market recognition for specialised digital delivery services.

*This guide draws from research including in-depth interviews with construction professionals across New Zealand, industry surveys, and analysis of career progression patterns. For the complete research report and additional career pathway information, visit [buildinginstitute.nz/resource/file/27](https://buildinginstitute.nz/resource/file/27)*



## IS THIS THE RIGHT CAREER STREAM FOR YOU?

A career in **BIM management** is more than just a job. It's a pathway to professional growth, community contribution, and long-term job satisfaction. Whichever career stream you choose, you'll be playing an important role in protecting communities, contributing to high-quality construction, and making a tangible and lasting difference to New Zealand's built environment.



## GET THE GUIDE

**Use the QR code to download the full Built Environment Career Streams guide and explore the many rewarding pathways in the construction sector.**

Or head to the website using this link:  
[buildinginstitute.nz/resource/file/27](https://buildinginstitute.nz/resource/file/27)