

# EXPRESSION OF INTEREST – APPLY NOW

MARCH 2021

## THEME: RECONNECT

Melbourne is a diverse and rapidly growing city. It's estimated that by 2050 it will grow to over 8 million people. This rapid growth brings with it great opportunities but also significant challenges for the future of our city, our suburbs and our regions – challenges that have never been more urgent to address as we emerge from the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

As our community grapples with what might constitute a 'new normal' post-pandemic, we must also address equally urgent issues: recognising Indigenous sovereignty; human-induced climate change; access to social and affordable housing; compassionate care for our most vulnerable; and providing safe, equitable public space for all. It is clear that we must find new ways to **reconnect** and envisage transformative ways to live and work better together.

For Victorians, the experience of an extended lockdown has brought into sharp relief the value of our public life and how the places in which we live, work and gather impact deeply on our sense of place and well-being. We all vividly remember the images and experience of our deserted city and suburbs in the height of the pandemic and this experience has fostered deeper appreciation of the vital role that a well-designed and inclusive built environment can play in shaping a better future.

How we meet, share and gather has also shifted and morphed rapidly across physical and digital space. On one hand, the flexibility fast-tracked by the pandemic has allowed us to test new ways of organising our lives, with the concept of the '20-minute city' fast-tracked into reality as we work, learn and live via platforms such as Zoom and Teams. Yet for many people, the experience of lockdown has been one of extreme isolation and vulnerability as our city and suburbs shut down, challenging our claim to 'liveability' and exposing the fragility of the systems and infrastructure required to support those most in need – hospitals, care facilities, educational institutions, and emergency and social housing.

As University of Melbourne academic Rory Hyde aptly writes in his recent essay ‘A New World: Surviving A Crisis’: “The pandemic has allowed us to step off the hamster wheel for a moment, to glimpse another future. When all of this is over, what kind of a world do we want to live in? There’s no going back to normal, but what we go back to is as yet undefined. We have a chance to dream of a new way of organizing the world. And, as architects, we have an opportunity to play a central role in designing that world.”<sup>1</sup>

Collectively, we are questioning what the ‘new normal’ should be and this reframing has shaped our focus. Our understanding of what constitutes good design in the built environment is expanding as we draw upon the deep knowledge of Indigenous culture and non-human-centred design approaches that recognise biodiversity as being crucial to a thriving future for everyone.

We need to reconsider the way we will occupy our city and find new ways of designing and adapting our buildings and infrastructure – our homes, places of work, civic and educational institutions, community spaces, meeting places – and consider how we will access them using diverse modes of transport. We must address the spaces between them – our landscapes, parks, gardens and waterways – and encourage slower methods of movement via well-connected pathways, footpaths and cycleways.

Through these adaptive changes, both small and large, we can **reconnect** with the natural world and drive social engagement outside – on foot or bike or skate – to, in turn, support a sustainable lifestyle that results in better health outcomes for our communities. In this way, the incremental social innovation of local action can have a transformative and positive impact on the state of public health and the built quality of the city.

In this moment, as we emerge from the shock of the past year and face the challenges ahead, we have the opportunity to **reconnect** with our city and our suburbs with fresh eyes and open minds. We can reclaim the agency for design in shaping the public good and, in turn, re-design our values, systems and spaces and achieve a more adaptable, equitable and sustainable future for our built environment.

We invite you – our built environment community – to take an active role in re-imagining our future for Open House July 2021.

## FLEUR WATSON

Executive Director | Chief Curator  
Centre for Architecture | Open House Melbourne

<sup>1</sup> [www.architectureau.com/articles/a-new-world-surviving-a-crisis](http://www.architectureau.com/articles/a-new-world-surviving-a-crisis)

# RECONNECT – A HYBRID PROGRAM

## COVIDSAFE PLANNING

*Reconnect: OHM 2021* is a hybrid program that welcomes submissions for ‘in real life’ tours and events (where they can be conducted safely) as well as ‘digital’ or online programs.

This means that we will accept applications for physical tours, programs and events where registrations can be taken and where they can be conducted in line with COVIDSafe government guidelines. We also encourage and welcome submissions for online events that extend our 2020 fully digital program.

This growing ‘digital archive’ provides one of Australia’s largest collections of virtual building tours and provides greater reach, accessibility and inclusivity for audiences.

Building on the success of the 2020 digital program, the 2021 hybrid program aims to reconnect our community with good design and the built environment.

*Reconnect: OHM 2021* will be a place to discover and experience how good design in the built environment can inform new ways in which we can live and work together and achieve a better future for everyone.

During the pandemic we witnessed a universal embrace of digital platforms and tools to communicate and collaborate together. We are interested in how these new skills can be utilised to push new spatial experiences, facilitated through virtual environments as part of the OHM program.

We encourage you to submit your expression of interest so that together we can experience new ideas, propose new strategies and explore new ways to live in our city and on country, as well as use the opportunity to make our community better for our collective future.

## KEY DATES

Submit your expression of interest by:

**FRIDAY 30 APRIL 2021**

All expression of interest applications will be reviewed by the Centre for Architecture | Open House Melbourne curatorial team together with the Open House Melbourne Building Council.

You will be notified of your successful inclusion in the program via email by Friday 14 May 2021.

## COVIDSAFE PLANNING

For this year’s 2021 program, each submission must comply with public safety guidelines and supply a COVIDSafe Venue Plan and/or register under the Public Events Framework with a COVIDSafe checklist – see below link for details for registering your public event: [www.coronavirus.vic.gov.au/register-your-public-event](http://www.coronavirus.vic.gov.au/register-your-public-event)

## IRL (IN REAL LIFE) OR DIGITAL EVENTS

*Reconnect: OHM 2021* is a hybrid program. We are calling on our built-environment collaborators and building custodians to submit buildings, spaces, events and programs for *Reconnect: OHM 2021*. This means that you can submit your building or event as a digital or physical format.

Note: if you are planning a physical tour or event, you will need to adhere to COVIDSafe guidelines. Additionally, we recommend having an online contingency plan in place to be implemented if any further restrictions are applied.

## HOW TO APPLY

Follow the submission guidelines on page 5 of this document, also found at [www.openhousemelbourne.org/EOI2021](http://www.openhousemelbourne.org/EOI2021)

We encourage EOIs from across the city and Melbourne’s suburbs. To be considered for the 2021 program, you should describe clearly if your submission is intended to be a physical and/or digital event, tour or program. The building, tour or project should have architectural, historical, sustainable, design and/or cultural interest or merit.

The curatorial team and Building Council will review all submitted EOIs and applicants will be notified if selected for the program.

## WHO SHOULD APPLY?

We welcome EOI applications from: building owners, custodians, institutions and community groups with significant buildings and spaces in their care. We welcome proposals from architects, urban designers, landscape architects, designers and spatial practitioners, along with passionate design advocates within our community who wish to engage directly with public audiences to communicate the importance of good design for our built environment.

## WHY APPLY?

OHM is the largest and longest-running Open House program in Australia. The program is a great opportunity for building owners, custodians, architects, urban designers, landscape designers and spatial practitioners to reach a broad cross-section of the community, and access new audiences.

The OHM Weekend provides a significant opportunity to take a leading role in advocating for the value of good design in our built environment; lead broad public discussion around the role of design in creating better futures; reach a broad cross-section of the community; and gain access to new audiences.

## PROMOTION

Open House Melbourne is able to promote your program to a wide audience, with an established database of over 43,000 email subscribers, 200,000+ annual website visits and an audience of over 55,000 people across social media channels.

## LOGISTICS

The Open House Melbourne team will provide general guidance on event logistics including digital program / website listings; offer support with bookings and ticketing; supply flags and signage; organise volunteer assistance; and include all buildings and events in OHM's comprehensive communications strategy – meaning building advocates and custodians can focus on helping the public learn more about their building.

## DESIGN CRITERIA

Please consider the following key criteria when submitting your building, space, project or program for the OHM July 2021 program. The criteria will guide the curatorial process to determine what is accepted into the program for 2021. Does the building, project or space:

- Represent design excellence?
- Is it award-winning or has it been recognised by professional design peers?
- Is it innovative, pushing boundaries and/or a great addition to the city?
- Is it of significant heritage? Is it a rare example?
- Is this an exemplar in the space of Ecologically Sustainable Development (ESD)?
- Does it contribute to a more resilient city with reference to the theme of 'reconnect'?
- Does it contribute to a more equitable, inclusive and safe city?
- Does it represent innovation in new housing models, shifting the needle on housing affordability? Does it provide better-designed public housing?
- Does it tell an important story about Melbourne's past, present or future?
- Does it speak to Melbourne as a multicultural city?
- Does the building offer insights into how the city operates?
- Does the building (or tour, project or program) offer a once-in-a-lifetime/very special opportunity?
- Will there be a great experience for families?
- Are we inspiring the next generation of design professionals/future urbanists/active citizens?
- Is the building, space or landscape safe for public gathering noting COVIDSafe protocols and requirements to maintain safe social distancing?

## WHY IS OPEN HOUSE FREE?

The core remit of the Open House concept lies in the direct experience of architecture and design that is accessible and free to all. A free program is equitable and upholds everyone's right to the city. A free program attracts a diverse audience. A free program encourages people to explore and engage with architecture and design in a relaxed and inspirational way.

# EOI SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

Please prepare your EOI submission based on the following questions. Head to [www.openhousemelbourne.org/EOI2021](http://www.openhousemelbourne.org/EOI2021) to submit your application by the closing date.

## PROGRAM PROPOSALS – PHYSICAL / DIGITAL

1. Your name. (First and surname)
2. Are you submitting a physical or digital building, space or project for the 2021 OHM program?
3. What is the title or name of your building, space or project? (Working title is acceptable)
4. Please explain in 1 or 2 sentences your proposal and how it relates to the theme 'reconnect'.
5. Which architect, landscape architect, urban designer or other form of design practice designed the buildings, space or project? (List all, if known)
6. If proposing a physical building, space or project, are you able to comply with COVIDSafe guidelines? See link [www.coronavirus.vic.gov.au/register-your-public-event](http://www.coronavirus.vic.gov.au/register-your-public-event)

## OPERATIONAL

7. Your contact email address.
8. Your phone number.
9. Have you participated in Open House Melbourne before?
10. Did you participate in 2019 or 2020 program?
11. What is the building, space or project's title and address?
12. What is the associated website and/or platform for digital programming (if relevant)?
13. Please tell us anything else that's relevant and/or significant about this building, space or project in relation to your event/tour/program.
14. Is the building, space or project normally open to the public?
15. What is your special offer or 'Open House only' experience – keeping in mind COVIDSafe guidelines?
16. When and how will people visit?
17. What day/s and time/s will your building or event be open on the July Weekend?
18. Are you offering guided or self-guided tours, or other events involving the designers, architects or other experts (historian, archivist, curator/s, engineers, builder etc)?

## ACCESSIBILITY, OH&S AND COVIDSAFE PLANNING

19. How accessible is the building, space or project? (Physical and digital accessibility)
20. Is the building, space or project safe for public gathering? (COVIDSafe guidelines)
21. Can you control the number of people taking part to maintain safe distancing?
22. Can you ensure the collection of participants' details/registrations? (As per COVIDSafe guidelines)

## WEBSITE LISTING INFORMATION

23. Please provide working title and brief and engaging 'public facing' description of your building, space, project or program (maximum 100-150 words including architectural or design significance, historic or unique facts and current use or operation).
24. Is there more information available via a website or other digital platform? Please provide link(s) and/or details.
25. Please upload 3 – 6 high-quality and engaging images to supplement your listing (Note: compress to upload multiple images).

## DESIGN CRITERIA

26. Select the criteria that best describes your submission (additional details should be provided where relevant). Refer to Page 4.

## CONTACT

For further information please contact:

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