



ANNUAL REPORT

2023

OUR PROGRAMMING EXISTS ON WHAT ALWAYS WAS AND ALWAYS WILL BE THE LAND OF THE PEOPLE OF THE KULIN NATION. WE PAY OUR RESPECTS TO ELDERS PAST, PRESENT AND EMERGING, AS WELL AS TO ALL ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER PEOPLE IN THE WIDER MELBOURNE COMMUNITY AND BEYOND.

INDIGENOUS SOVEREIGNTY HAS NEVER BEEN CEDED IN AUSTRALIA AND WE ARE MINDFUL OF THIS IN EVERYTHING WE DO, GIVEN OUR FOCUS ON THE MODERN BUILT ENVIRONMENT.

INTRODUCTION

Message from the President	8
Message from the Executive Director + Chief Curator	9

ORGANISATION REVIEW

Our People	13
Management Committee Governance	16
Partners + Finance	21

PROGRAM REVIEW

Open House Program Review	23
Volunteer Engagement	45
Reach + Profile	47

APPENDIX

OUR VISION, MISSION, + THEMATIC PILLARS

Open House Melbourne’s vision is to inspire and empower all Victorians to respect and care for place and to champion the power of good design in shaping the future of our built environment.



Our Thematic Pillars

- **First Peoples First:** Indigenous knowledges and designing on Country
- **Design of Public Life:** The future of work, home and leisure
 - **Climate Crisis:** Sustainable practices and the carbon-neutral city
 - **Home Truths:** New models for adaptive and responsive housing
 - **More than Human Urbanism:** Design, ecology and the natural world
 - **Accessibility and Inclusion:** Designing spaces for care and possibility for all

Through collaborative, creative and impactful programs, Open House Melbourne leads critical public debate on the value of place and design, empowering all Victorians to understand the important role they can play in shaping our built and natural environments. Essential to our mission is recognising First Peoples’ knowledges and sovereignty, campaigning for sustainability towards a net-zero future and advocating for good design that is inclusive and accessible to all.





MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

2023 HAS BEEN A YEAR OF CHANGE AND INNOVATION AT OPEN HOUSE MELBOURNE.

After a summer-long search, we found our new Executive Director and Chief Curator, Tania Davidge. Former ED Fleur Watson who finished in the role at the end of last year, joined the Board and continues to share her wisdom with us all.

Tania came to Open House with a long history in what the organisation does—advocating for good design in a broader public realm. Her PhD, *Encountering Architecture: Architecture, Audience, Communication and the Public Realm*, is well suited to our mission at Open House. Tania started her new role with passion and professionalism, and comes to Open House building on her work as part of OoPLA and her dedicated efforts leading the group that saved the Yarra Building at the now heritage-listed Federation Square. Tania is shaping Open House for the future: one that addresses both the public realm and key issues of housing, accessibility, sustainability and First Nations stories in our civic realm.

I would like to thank fellow board members who assisted with the recruitment process that dominated the start of the year. Since starting, Tania has rebuilt the small dynamic team that produces all of what Open House does, and I thank new staff Katie Evans and Kate Trickey; and I would particularly like to thank and acknowledge Piera Maclean for being the bridge between old and new offices and working with intelligence and dedication throughout the year.

The Weekend continues to be our flagship event and this year was a great success, under the theme of *Collective City*. This was an event made possible by our hundreds of hard-working volunteers and I would like to again thank them for all their contribution. I also thank those other volunteers, the Open House Board, for their efforts in a busy year. I acknowledge and thank our outgoing Board members—Mark Davis, Naomi Stead, Patrick Rundle and Emma Telfer. Emma Telfer's engagement with Open House is long (over 15 years) and diverse—as a volunteer, Building Committee member, Executive Director and for the last few years, Board member and Vice President. Her ongoing insights, wisdom, precision and generosity have been an enormous contribution to Open House.

I would also like to thank our partners—those who have been with us for sometime and those who have joined us in the last 12 months. The tightening economic times and general post-pandemic era have hit Open House as they have many, and I thank those who have supported us financially and in-kind. I welcome potential new members, donors and partners in the Open House family to join us in working together in making good design more broadly recognised and supported.

In Melbourne, we have countless places that form the cultural DNA of the city, and Open House has been lucky to be in and around them for events and programmes this year. From the Shrine of Remembrance to the Capitol Theatre and up to the New Student Precinct at the University of Melbourne, Open House's tours and events have discussed, opened and celebrated new and old together.



STUART HARRISON
Board Member and President, Open House Melbourne

MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR + CHIEF CURATOR

2022-2023 HAS PRESENTED A YEAR OF ACHIEVEMENTS, CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR OPEN HOUSE MELBOURNE.

This Annual Report demonstrates the significant impact of the 2022-2023 Open House Melbourne program.

This year saw a return to community with the July Weekend's Collective City theme. Our team worked hard to bring back the Open House sense of community that was significantly impacted by the pandemic years. In 2022-2023 we felt a reinvigorated sense of warmth and welcome as Open House extended its invitation to Victorians to experience our unique buildings, places and spaces and participate in conversations focused on the making and shaping of our cities, towns and regions.

We delivered regional programming in Bendigo and initiated a new program of walking tours called the Stroll the City. We enabled people to connect with nature in the urban environment through our Open Nature programming for Melbourne Design Week, curated by the NGV. And finally, we delivered a wonderful, warm and welcoming July Weekend program enhanced by the most glorious weather in Open House memory.

Our programming showcased the complexity and character of metropolitan and regional Victoria and addressed key issues such as housing, sustainability, urban planning and designing with our First Peoples. It contributed to Victoria's economic impact, with the July Weekend alone adding more than \$2 million to the economy, and connected the community to the buildings, places and spaces that make Victoria such a wonderful place to live.

Although this year has been challenging, it has also provided substantial opportunities. Open House sees this potential and we are planning for the future. We are focused on ensuring audience engagement and financial stability through the delivery of year-round issues-based programming targeting conversations important to Victoria. We are expanding our fundraising efforts and developing a donor program—Open Circle. We are committed to improving our inclusion and accessibility, delivering First Nations programming and fostering long-term partnerships critical to the stories that need to be told.

No other organisation in Victoria delivers the built environment conversations, experience and engagement that Open House delivers. In the context of the state and federal government's commitment to housing; the planning and delivery of significant state-wide rail, community and cultural infrastructure; and climate, economic and social challenges; Open House's programming has never been more critical.

The Open House program connects people to place and fosters a deeper public understanding of the impact of good design. Arming the public with this information raises the benchmark for the design of our cities, towns and regions and increases recognition of the important role designers, aligned professionals and organisations play in making and shaping the built environment. Most importantly, through our significant community engagement, Open House fosters the community's sense of ownership and pride in the city.

We look forward to informing, inspiring, empowering and advocating for good design in Victoria for many years to come.



TANIA DAVIDGE
Executive Director + Chief Curator





OUR PEOPLE

OPEN HOUSE TEAM

TANIA DAVIDGE

Executive Director / Chief Curator
EFT commenced March 2023

PIERA MACLEAN

Program Manager
EFT

KATIE EVANS

Partnerships and Communications Manager
EFT January–March 2022

FLEUR WATSON

Executive Director / Chief Curator
EFT finished December 2022

HELEN SWEATMAN

Business and Operations Manager
EFT finished May 2023

ISABELLA RADEVSKI

Program and Communications Manager
EFT finished March 2023

The core team was supported by Kate Trickey—as Operations Coordinator for the Open House Melbourne Weekend.

MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

STUART HARRISON

Director, Harrison & White
Board Member and President

EMMA TELFER

Director, Assemble
Board Member and Vice President

AMY MUIR

Director, MUIR Architecture
Board Member and Secretary

MATTHEW BOWEN

CA, Director, Syracuse
Board Member and Treasurer

LEANNE OLDEN

Senior Associate, Pinsent Masons
Board Member

NAOMI STEAD

Professor of Architecture, Monash University
Board Member

MARK DAVIS

Technology Director, Today
Board Member

DR. FLEUR WATSON

Associate Professor, RMIT
Board Member

PATRICK RUNDLE

Deputy Official Secretary,
Office of the Governor of Victoria

OUR AMBASSADOR

PETER MADDISON

OUR PATRONS

DANIEL DORALL

JOY VILLALINO

ALAN SHAW

BUILDING COUNCIL

STEVE STEFANOPOULOS OAM (CHAIR)

ANNA O’SULLIVAN

PHOEBE HARRISON

LAVANYA ARULANANDAM

TANIA DAVIDGE

MELANY HAYES

VOLUNTEER COUNCIL

NEIL HARKNESS (CHAIR)

ANDREW PURVIS

ELOISE GLANVILLE

JOY VILLALINO

STEPHANIE BATEMAN

A special thank you to Steve Stefanopoulos and Neil Harkness for leading as Council Chairs during the last financial year.

ASSOCIATION MEMBERS

ADAM PUSTOLA

ALISON CLEARY

ANDREW PURVIS

ANNA O’SULLIVAN

BEN MORGAN

CHARLES TREMLETT

DAMIAN BUTLER

DAMIAN SABATINI

DANIELLE JOHNSTON

ELOISE GLANVILLE

EMMA APPLETON

HUGH FALCON

JACQUELINE DI BLASI

JIM GARDINER

JOHN PETIT

JOY VILLALINO

KIERAN LEONG

KIM IRONS

LAVANYA ARULANANDAM

LEO MARTIN

LYNNE PEPPER

MARCIA HARKINS

MARGOT WILLUMSEN

MARY DOUGHERTY

MELANY HAYES

NATHAN MILESI

NEIL HARKNESS

NIC CULNANE

NICK ROUSE

PATRICK RUNDLE

PAUL BORELLA

PHOEBE HARRISON

QUAN PAYNE

ROHAN TROLLOPE

SALLY DOBELL

SHELLY PENN

SHAUN NEWING

SIMON JOHSON

SOPHIE NEWING

STEPHANIE BATEMAN

STEVEN NEAVE

STEVE STEFANOPOULOS

OAM

TANIA DAVIDGE

TIM LESLIE

VON SLATER

VOLUNTEERS + COLLABORATORS

Our organisation relies on the incredible goodwill of the people of Victoria. People give to Open House Melbourne in so many ways—from volunteering with OHM to opening their building or home; providing spaces for an event; donating their time and expertise; providing their endorsement of our events; or a myriad of other ways.

We are so very grateful for your support of Open House Melbourne and we hope to continue working with you over the many years to come.

Thank you.



University of Melbourne Student Precinct. Open House Melbourne Weekend 2023. Photo: Nick Bebbington.

MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE GOVERNANCE

OUR PEOPLE

The beginning of the year saw several changes to the OHM Board under the interim leadership of Helen Sweatman as Acting Executive Director and Chief Curator following the resignation of Fleur Watson in December 2022. It was wonderful that Fleur accepted a role on the board which has provided the organisation with stability and robust guidance moving into 2023. We also welcomed Leanne Olden and Patrick Ruddle as new members of the board. In March 2023, Tania Davidge joined the organisation as Executive Director and Chief Curator. We are already benefiting enormously from Tania's enthusiastic, strategic, and thoughtful approach to the role. Her passionate advocacy for the built environment is an asset for the organisation. Continuing board members are Stuart Harrison (President), Emma Telfer (Vice President), Amy Muir (Secretary), Matthew Bowen (Treasurer), Naomi Stead and Mark Davis.

We would like to acknowledge the invaluable contributions made by board member Jeremy King who resigned at the end of 2022. Jeremy joined the board in 2019 and brought a wealth of knowledge and experience providing guidance to the board from a governance perspective. With Fleur Watson's transition to board member, we would like to thank Fleur for the enormous energy and diverse lens that she brought to the role of Executive Director and Chief Curator. Fleur joined Open House Melbourne in September 2020 and guided the team and organisation through an incredibly difficult time, agilely navigating the complexities that the pandemic delivered, whilst enabling growth and providing stability.

The Open House Melbourne team has evolved under Tania's leadership. We welcomed Katie Evans, Partnerships + Communications Manager, and Kate Trickey, Operations Coordinator. They have been working closely with Program Manager Piera Maclean and Tania to deliver an extraordinary body of annual programming whilst expanding the organisation's public presence. We farewelled and would like to thank Helen Sweatman, Business and Operations Manager, and Isabella Radevski, Program and Communications Manager, both of whom provided significant passion and leadership within the organisation in their respective roles.

Thank you also to our Building Council, Volunteer Council and our enthusiastic volunteers and collaborators who remain dedicated to the Open House movement and our ongoing work here in Melbourne. Without their support OHM would not be what it is.

SUB-COMMITTEE / ADVISORY GROUPS

Three subcommittees and one advisory group were established in 2021 to provide specific areas of focus and advice to the management team. These subcommittees continued to develop through 2023. Each subcommittee meets regularly to address the outcomes for each group.

See below the summary of responsibilities for each committee:

① FUND RAISING AND PHILANTHROPY

Chair: Emma Telfer

This sub-committee's purpose is to support the ED/CC to:

- Identify and track new partnership opportunities including through the wider OHM and committee networks;
- Develop a strategy to attract philanthropic funding through high net worth channels;
- Build non-government related funding.

② RISK & FINANCE

Chair: Amy Muir

This subcommittee's purpose is to:

- Develop and implement a risk register and policy;
- Monitor the risk register;
- Monitor cash flow and financial stability.

The subcommittee will guide and support operational staff to ensure processes are compliant and achievable within a small team, not-for-profit environment. The focus of the committee has been the establishment of a Risk Register for 2022–2023. This is currently being refined through the review of external parties.

③ PROGRAM ADVISORY GROUP

Co-chairs: Naomi Stead / Fleur Watson

The subcommittee's purpose is to:

- Identify programming opportunities;
- Offer feedback and advice on programming submissions and partnerships;
- Be a 'connector and advocate' to secure funding support in relation to operational and programming growth for Open House Melbourne.

MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING ATTENDANCE

MEETING NUMBER	MEETING DATE	STUART HARRISON PRESIDENT	EMMA TEFLER VICE PRESIDENT	AMY MUIR SECRETARY	MATTHEW BOWEN TREASURER	MARK DAVIS MEMBER	LEANNE OLDEN MEMBER	PATRICK RUNDLE MEMBER	NAOMI STEAD MEMBER	FLEUR WATSON MEMBER	TANIA DAVIDGE ED + CC	HELEN SWEATMENT ACTING ED
09-2022	11.10.2022	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	N	Y	Y - ED		
10-2022	08.11.2022	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	OBS	OBS	Y	Y - ED		OBS
01-2023	14.02.2023	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y		Y
02-2023	14.03.2023	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y		Y
03-2023	04.04.2023	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N	Y	Y	
04-2023	09.05.2023	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	
05-2023	20.06.2023	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N	N	Y	Y	Y	
06-2023	11.07.2023	Y	N	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	
07-2023	08.08.2023	N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N	Y	Y	
08-2023	12.09.2023	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	



PARTNERS + FINANCE

MAJOR SPONSORS

CITY OF MELBOURNE
CREATIVE VICTORIA
EFRONT
STUDIO PAYNE

SPONSORS

OVGA

MAJOR PROGRAM PARTNERS

ARBV
HERITAGE COUNCIL VICTORIA

PROGRAM PARTNERS

ACMI
ARCHITEAM
AUSTRALIA INSTITUTE OF ARCHITECTS
RMIT + THE CAPITOL
UNIVERSITY OF MELBOURNE

MAJOR PRACTICE PARTNERS

COX
LOVELL CHEN
MITCHELL BRANDTMAN
PARTRIDGE

PRACTICE PARTNERS

ARCHITECTUS
BATES SMART
FENDER KATSALIDIS
GJM HERITAGE
GRIMSHAW
MODSCAPE
HAYBALL

MAJOR PRECINCT PARTNERS

CITY OF PORT PHILLIP
SPRING PLACE

PRECINCT PARTNERS

BOROONDARA CITY COUNCIL
HOBSON BAY CITY COUNCIL
MARIBYRNONG CITY COUNCIL

MEDIA & DIGITAL PARTNERS

ARCHITECTUREAU
BOOM
ELLIKON
MATT RICHARDS
PLAKKIT
BIG PLANS
ZILLA & BROOK

SUPPORTERS

COLLINGWOOD YARDS
COMMITTEE FOR MELBOURNE
OPEN HOUSE WORLDWIDE
PINSENT MASONS
SAFETY IN NUMBERS
SYRACUSE

PATRON

DANIEL DORALL
JOY VILLALINO
ALAN SHAW

REVENUE IN 2023 IS RECORDED AS \$472,384, A REDUCTION OF \$139,706 COMPARED TO 2022 (\$612,090).

2023 saw a reduction in government funding for regional programs and the slightly changing face of corporate support. Other funding streams remain relatively unchanged from previous years.

• FUNDING MIX—2022 V 2023

GOVERNMENT PROGRAM FUNDING



CORPORATE SPONSORSHIP



EVENT REVENUE



MEMBERSHIP



DONATIONS



OPEN HOUSE PROGRAM REVIEW



OPEN HOUSE BENDIGO 22+23 OCTOBER

ATTENDANCE:

1,813

IN-PERSON ATTENDANCE (ATTENDEES PARTICIPATED IN TALKS, WALKING TOURS AND SPECIAL EVENTS)

1,725

WEEKEND BUILDING VISITS

52%

OF ATTENDEES WERE FROM METROPOLITAN MELBOURNE

36%

WERE FROM BENDIGO

COLLABORATORS ENGAGEMENT:

22

BUILDINGS, PROGRAMS AND SPACES

100%

PARTICIPATED TO PROMOTE THEIR ACTIVITIES TO A NEW AND DIFFERENT AUDIENCE AND ENGAGE WITH THE LOCAL COMMUNITY

100%

WOULD PARTICIPATE IN OHB AGAIN



ECONOMIC IMPACT:

25%

SPENT BETWEEN \$100-\$300 PER DAY

64%

OF VISITORS TRAVELLED FROM OUT-OF-TOWN TO PARTICIPATE IN THE OPEN HOUSE BENDIGO PROGRAM

The Open House team was delighted to return to Bendigo for the Open House Bendigo Weekend 2022 program and open up more than 20 buildings, spaces, talks and programs across the city for everyone to enjoy.

The festival shone a light on spaces of architectural excellence from significant heritage sites or contemporary design. The program aspired to create a sense of civic pride in the changing urban environment of Greater Bendigo—with access to multiple historic sites and a diverse range of modern buildings, catering for heritage and contemporary design lovers alike.

This year, Open House worked collaboratively with local partners to curate the program including the Dja Dja Wurrung Clans Aboriginal Corporation, the City of Greater Bendigo and the La Trobe Art Institute—the latter of which was an Open House Bendigo (OHB) hub for programs including our mini-marathon talk series titled *Culture of Place: Bendigo and the Big Build*, which explored the contribution and impact of three new, large-scale civic and educational buildings shaping the centre of the city.

Culture of Place opened with an address from Jill Garner, Office of the Victorian Government Architect (OVGA), who set the scene for the Big Build projects, followed by a generous presentation exploring 'Designing with culture & Country' by Dja Dja Wurrung artist Rebecca Phillips in collaboration with Anne-Marie Pisani from Aspect Studios. These two positional presentations were closely followed by short, illustrated talks that provided a deep dive into the design process of the three Big Build projects—Galkangu—Bendigo GovHub, presented by Adam Pustola from Lyons; Bendigo Law Courts, by Meaghan Dwyer and Kah-Fai Lee from Wardle and Bendigo TAFE, presented by Jayden Peacock from Architectus.

Additional Saturday program highlights included an opening Walk on Country and Smoking led by Dja Dja Wurrung Traditional Owners, exploring the landscape, frog ponds and future to re-imagine and renew Bendigo Creek; a landscape tour of Bendigo's Garden for the Future led by TCL landscape architects; the regional premiere of *Modern Melbourne* featuring the work of architect Peter Elliott which screened at the historic Star Cinema; and The Big Draw, an interactive workshop at Bendigo Gallery for children and families. Sunday saw guided tours of the Returned Soldiers' Memorial Hall led by Lovell Chen; plus tours of the Former Bendigo Mining Exchange's restoration within the Beehive Building, guided by Williams Boag Architects.

The Weekend culminated with architect and housing advocate Tania Davidge hosting an insightful and vital discussion at Bendigo's Engine Room that focused on issues that influence the provision of social and affordable housing in the region.





STROLL THE CITY

154

TOTAL IN-PERSON ATTENDANCE

737

ONLINE ENGAGEMENT

Stroll the City was a series of in-person summer walking tours delivered across the summer of 2022-23, with the support of the City of Melbourne. Led by cultural leaders and industry experts, participants wound their way through Melbourne's city streets, laneways, buildings and parklands, uncovering its hidden gems and listening to insights into its ever-evolving built environment.

Each tour was audio recorded to produce the [Stroll the City interactive audio map](#). Audiences are invited to Stroll the City at any time they like, either physically or in their imagination, by following an existing tour route or embarking on their own adventure to hear a range of perspectives on the successes, challenges and opportunities for our future.

STROLL THE CITY WITH PETER MADDISON 10 DECEMBER

Through the lens of architecture, food and wine culture in the heart of Melbourne's CBD, OHM Ambassador, former Grand Designs host and founder and director of Maddison Architects, Peter Maddison, shed new light on the design elements of the much-loved spaces that actively contribute to the public life and vibrancy of our city.

STROLL THE CITY WITH JILL GARNER AND HAMISH LYON 11 FEBRUARY

Jill Garner and Hamish Lyon revealed the stories, ideas and policy decisions behind some of Melbourne's most significant urban public spaces and buildings, focusing on the large-scale and design-led civic infrastructure projects which have shaped the long-term future of the city. Speaking to the importance of 'designing policy for people', Jill and Hamish pointed to examples of where modest (at times) yet impactful lobbying for changes to planning policy have successfully instigated long-lasting contributions to our city.

STROLL THE CITY WITH ARM ARCHITECTURE 19 FEBRUARY

ARM Architecture's founding director Ian McDougall with director Jesse Judd and RMIT's Conrad Hamann guided participants around some of ARM's most innovative, vibrant, and courageous projects along the St Kilda Road and Swanston St corridor, illustrating how they have shaped this major thoroughfare and helped mould the identity of Melbourne's CBD.

STROLL THE CITY WITH THE GREENLINE TEAM 24 MAY

Meandering along the Yarra/Birrarung, participants experienced the city-shaping Greenline project and its recently installed floating wetlands in action. Joined by ecologist Jacinta Humphrey and wetland specialist Dr Tom Headley, City of Melbourne Senior Landscape Architect Yijun Lu explained the significance of these wetlands to the health and diversity of the ecologically-rich river system, including the many fish and birds making their homes in and around the wetlands.



OPEN NATURE MELBOURNE DESIGN WEEK 18-26 MAY

100%

ATTENDED TO ENGAGE WITH TOPICAL ISSUES AND IMPROVE THEIR CULTURAL AWARENESS ABOUT MELBOURNE/VIC

56%

HAD NOT PREVIOUSLY ATTENDED MELBOURNE DESIGN WEEK

Open House Melbourne is committed to supporting endeavours to reduce emissions and showcasing the critical role of good design in making our cities sustainable.

For Melbourne Design Week 2023, Open House Melbourne presented Open Nature—a series of guided walks, talks, tours, workshops and events exploring our relationship with the natural environment in relation to the urban realm.

This year, the Open Nature program encouraged us to think more deeply about our relationship with the Birrarung/Yarra River, Melbourne waterways and tributaries and their relationship to the broader ecology of our city.

The program explored our connection to place through water and the natural environment. It began at the Heide Museum of Modern Art with a deep listening tour led by naturalist and educator Andrew Skeoch. Andrew invited participants to immerse themselves in the sounds of the Birrarung as an active creative practice and connect to the natural environment through sound. With Heide gardener Luke Murchie, we further explored the gardens of the Heide site, ending our tour at the Yaluk Langa garden on the banks of Birrarung. Luke revealed the history of gardens from their early European influences

to the contemporary way of thinking about gardens in relation to their pre-colonial landscape.


With RMIT landscape architect Jock Gilbert and Professor Tim Entwisle, Director of Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria, our audience discovered pockets of unexpected urban wilderness at Westgate Park and the Botanic Gardens. These tours looked at how re-thinking traditional approaches to the development and delivery of urban landscapes is increasing biodiversity, creating educational opportunities and experimenting with the ways we relate and connect to nature in our city. Grimshaw principal architect Eduard Ross, Dr. Marilyn Olliff from the Hobsons Bay Wetland Centre and Dr. Phillip Roos from the Deakin Biophilia Lab highlighted the importance of the internationally recognised wetlands and gave us insight into the architectural proposal for the new Wetlands Centre with the help of a 3D virtual tour and an architectural model.

We strolled the Greenline with City of Melbourne Greenline Project team's Yijun Lu, Jacinta Humphrey and Dr. Tom Headley to gain a better understanding of the recently installed floating wetlands trial and the outcomes it will drive into the future. The Yarra Riverkeeper, Charlotte Sterrett, showed us the Birrarung River at Pound Bend, connecting us to the natural beauty, biodiversity and resilience of the Birrarung through a photographic lens. The week rounded out with a walking tour led by artists Geoff Robinson, Ying-Lan Dann, Saskia Schut and Benjamin Woods. Under gentle rain we explored the intersection of the Moonee Ponds Creek within its industrial context, reframing our relationship with remnant waterways through drawing and listening activities.

Open Nature offers our participants the opportunity to learn through active engagement. It provides ways to come together to care for Country, to deliver sustainable outcomes, practice deep listening and reflect on the role of the natural environment within our city. The natural world is an integral part of our city and our connection to it needs to be nourished.

Open House Melbourne Open Nature program is made possible through the generous support of our program funders, partners, collaborators and most importantly, our audience whose enthusiastic engagement with our programming inspires us every year. Additional thanks must go to the curatorial team at the NGV and to Creative Victoria for their ongoing support and engagement with the Open Nature program.

Open Nature was presented by Open House Melbourne as part of Melbourne Design Week – an initiative of the Victorian Government in collaboration with the NGV.



I VERY MUCH ENJOYED THE OPPORTUNITY TO LEARN ABOUT THE RIVER FROM SUCH AN EXCELLENT SOURCE. DESPITE THE WEATHER, IT WAS A GREAT EXPERIENCE.

I LEARNED A LOT AND WAS INTRODUCED TO A PARK THAT I DIDN'T KNOW EXISTED

LOVELY TO BE IN THE OUTDOORS AND ENJOYED THE MOMENT OF REFLECTION TO LISTEN TO NATURE.

94%

SAID THEY WERE SATISFIED WITH THEIR OVERALL EXPERIENCE AT OPEN NATURE

94%

SAID THEY HAVE LEARNT SOMETHING NEW ABOUT THE ENVIRONMENT

75%

SAID THEY ARE MORE LIKELY TO PAY ATTENTION TO LOCAL PLANNING, ARCHITECTURE AND/OR URBAN DESIGN ISSUES AFFECTING THE ENVIRONMENT

94%

SAID THEY WERE LIKELY TO ATTEND SIMILAR EVENTS IN THE FUTURE



JULY WEEKEND 29+30 JULY

56,923

IN-PERSON ATTENDANCE (PROGRAM ENGAGEMENT, INCLUDING BUILDING VISITS, TOURS AND TALKS)

4,193

ATTENDEE PARTICIPATION LIVE STREAM EVENTS AND VIRTUAL TOURS

710

INDIVIDUAL TALKS, TOURS AND EXHIBITIONS

In 2023, Open House Melbourne turned on the charm with a wonderful display of the city's most unique buildings, places and spaces and some of the most beautiful weather in OHM Weekend memory.

Our city is changing rapidly. Cranes march across our city's skyline, large infrastructure projects disrupt the flow of people and traffic —and there are more and more city-shaping projects on the horizon. A conservative estimate suggests the population of Melbourne is on track to reach 8 million people by 2050 and we face significant challenges. We are concerned about the climate, the economy, housing affordability and the obstacles that COVID has left in its wake. In the context of these significant challenges, this year's theme, *Collective City*, garnered a fantastic response.

The *Collective City* program spoke to our ability to come together. It was wonderful to see the public, our collaborators and our volunteers enthusiastically embrace the theme and our program. In particular, it was inspiring to see how Melbourne is responding to these important issues and the people, communities and organisations who are working to deliver solutions that will allow us to live better together now and into the future.



This year, the public could visit precincts that embedded First Peoples' knowledge into design (University of Melbourne Student Precinct Project) and houses that addressed climate change (Blackburn North Passive House). They could tour new social and affordable housing projects and listen to how these projects are working to build community and deliver homes for all Victorians (Making Home). There were projects that looked at how we are embracing different ways of thinking about nature in our city (The Greenline) and projects that brought us together (The Roundtable). There were large civic infrastructure projects (Bell to Moreland Level Crossing Removal Project), housing that addresses how we can live well as we age (The Alba apartments) and projects that aim to make housing more affordable (38 Albermarle Street + Nightingale Village).

Across 186 program listings OHM delivered over 710 guided and self-guided tours, lectures, keynotes and talks, workshops, performances and exhibitions. Over 9,500 tickets were booked. These in-person offerings were supported by live streamed events, online and virtual tours, and recorded 'on-demand' programming to ensure accessibility to the festival beyond Melbourne city and suburbs.

Our survey results demonstrate the loyalty and passion of the OHM audience. Over 70% of our survey participants have attended a previous OHM Weekend in-person and 35% of respondents have attended five or more. Our programming continues to generate significant impact for small businesses. 81% of survey respondents spent money on dining out with an average spend of \$45 per person. Extrapolating these numbers, it is estimated that our audience contributed over \$2 million to Melbourne's economy over the Weekend.

The OHM community is built on the valued contributions of our partners, collaborators, volunteers and the passion of our audience. Our survey results showed over 80% of visitors felt a sense of community during the Weekend and 80% of our collaborators participate to engage with the local community.

It is this community that is central to Open House. What really brings this home is getting out and about during the Weekend. It is on the ground where everyone can meet so many of the wonderful people who make this such a special event, and fully experience the OHM sense of community.



JULY WEEKEND HIGHLIGHTS

THIS IS PUBLIC: COLLECTIVE CITY IN-PERSON ATTENDANCE—311

This is Public: Collective City marked the Weekend's official opening and framed the program in relation to the theme. It presented a cross-section of people working to make our city better, more equitable and more welcoming for all of its inhabitants.

Architect and champion for Indigenous-led design thinking, Jefa Greenaway, spoke to how practices of reconciliation and First Peoples' knowledge were embedded in the design of the new University of Melbourne Student Precinct Project. Jocelyn Chiew, Director of City Design at the City of Melbourne, talked about the importance of fostering people-centric design in the city. Architect and RMIT academic, Ben Milbourne, presented the community-initiated Roundtable project, designed to bring people together. Margie McKay, Acting Director of Planning and Portfolio Development at Homes Victoria, helped us to understand the importance of social and affordable housing. Felicity Bernstein of Melbourne Design Studios inspired us to design our homes more sustainably and Chris Edwards, Director of Government Relations & Advocacy at Vision Australia, challenged us to design the city with empathy and to think beyond compliance, codes and regulation, so that we can create a city that is welcoming to everyone who uses it.

DESIGNING WITH COUNTRY: PLANTS IN-PERSON ATTENDANCE—482

In the lead-up to the Weekend OHM presented 'Designing with Country: Plants'. Authors Zena Cumpston, Michael Shawn-Fletcher and Lesley Head spoke in conversation with the RMIT Yulendj Weelam Design Research Lab's Dr Christine Phillips, Beau de Belle and Jock Gilbert offered insight into how First Nations knowledge can provide leadership on landscape issues at a national scale.

The conversation unpacked western preconceptions of the pre-colonial landscape. It asked us to think more deeply about the history and relationship of First Peoples and Country and how that might influence contemporary design and stewardship practices in relation to the Australian landscape.

HERITAGE ADDRESS: MICHAEL VEITCH IN-PERSON ATTENDANCE—429 ONLINE—595

The Collective City program closed with the 2023 Heritage Address delivered by actor, broadcaster and author Michael Veitch. Michael spoke to Melbourne's heritage losses. He pointed out many of our wonderful buildings almost lost to the wrecking ball and reminded us to imagine what heritage might look like in the future so we can advocate for it now.

The lecture was followed by a conversation drawing out the themes in the address and moderated by HCV Chair Philip Goad, with live questions from the audience.

MODERN MELBOURNE: KERSTIN THOMPSON IN-PERSON ATTENDANCE—107 ONLINE—731

On the eve of the Weekend a new episode of *Modern Melbourne* screened at ACMI. Presented in partnership with the Heritage Council of Victoria the episode featured Kerstin Thompson, one of Australia's most important architects and winner of the 2023 Australian Institute of Architects Gold Medal. Filmed in the award-winning Melbourne Holocaust Museum, the documentary showcased the extraordinary depth and breadth of Kerstin's body of work, highlighting her contribution to architecture, housing, the civic realm and what she describes as our living heritage.

The screening was followed by a Q+A between Heritage Council of Victoria's (HCV) Chair Professor Phillip Goad and Kerstin Thompson.

This episode of Modern Melbourne was made possible by the generous support of Kerstin Thompson Architects (KTA) and the Heritage Council of Victoria, with support from the Victorian Government through Creative Victoria.

MAKING HOME

Thoughtfully curated by Tania Davidge, *Making Home* shone a light on social and affordable housing and the importance of its delivery as part of a broader infrastructure of care. The series interrogated how architects, housing providers and local government are working to make a difference across Victoria.

Three talks were programmed across the July Weekend: 'Making Home: More than a home, building community,' 'Making Home: It takes a Village' and 'Making Home: Changing the conversation, Markham Ave' all held at the Melbourne School of Design's (MSD) Japanese Room. Each explored different ways to provide social and affordable housing in ways that support residents and the broader community.

JULY WEEKEND PROGRAM STATS

COLLABORATORS:

186

PROGRAMS IN TOTAL

77

NEW COLLABORATORS

99%

WOULD CHOOSE TO PARTICIPATE IN THE OPEN HOUSE MELBOURNE WEEKEND AGAIN NEXT YEAR

VISITORS:

10,105

VISITS TO PRECINCT PARTNERS CITY OF BOROONDARA, CITY OF HOBSONS BAY, CITY OF MARIBYRNONG, CITY OF PORT PHILLIP AND SPRING PLACE

92%

AGREE THAT THE OPEN HOUSE MELBOURNE WEEKEND PROVIDES AN IMPORTANT ADDITION TO THE CULTURAL LIFE OF MELBOURNE

93%

FEEL OPEN HOUSE MELBOURNE PROVIDES A UNIQUE AND VALUABLE OPPORTUNITY TO DIRECTLY ENGAGE WITH ARCHITECTURE IN THE CITY



29%

VISITORS ATTENDING AN OHM EVENT FOR THE FIRST TIME

34%

ATTENDED MULTIPLE DAYS

96%

AGREED THAT THE PROGRAM CREATED A SENSE OF CIVIC PRIDE AND ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP

98%

SAID OHM PROVIDED A UNIQUE AND VALUABLE OPPORTUNITY TO DIRECTLY ENGAGE WITH ARCHITECTURE IN THE CITY

VOLUNTEERS:

491

VOLUNTEERS RECRUITED AND SHIFTS COMPLETED

1800+

VOLUNTEER HOURS CONTRIBUTED

39%

HAVE VOLUNTEERED FOR FIVE OR MORE YEARS



VOLUNTEER ENGAGEMENT



Open House Melbourne programs would not be possible without the extraordinary commitment and generous support of our volunteers.

36

VOLUNTEERS RECRUITED AND SHIFTS COMPLETED (BENDIGO)

10

VOLUNTEERS RECRUITED AND SHIFTS COMPLETED (STROLL THE CITY)

4

VOLUNTEERS RECRUITED AND SHIFTS COMPLETED (OPEN NATURE)

491

VOLUNTEERS RECRUITED AND SHIFTS COMPLETED (WEEKEND)

114+

VOLUNTEER HOURS CONTRIBUTED (BENDIGO)

40+

VOLUNTEER HOURS CONTRIBUTED (OPEN NATURE)

1800+

VOLUNTEER HOURS CONTRIBUTED (WEEKEND)

18–82

AGE RANGE OF OPEN HOUSE VOLUNTEERS

90%

VOLUNTEER TO GIVE BACK TO AN EVENT THEY ENJOY AS A PATRON

98%

VOLUNTEER TO CELEBRATE MELBOURNE AND ENGAGE WITH THE LOCAL COMMUNITY

43%

PARTICIPATED FOR THE FIRST TIME IN 2023

110

VOLUNTEERED FOR FIVE OR MORE YEARS

29

HAVE VOLUNTEERED FOR TEN OR MORE YEARS

REACH + PROFILE

ATTENDANCE

65,643

TOTAL

3,538

IN-PERSON VISITATION (BENDIGO)

154

IN-PERSON VISITATION (STROLL THE CITY)

98

IN-PERSON VISITATION (OPEN NATURE)

56,923

IN-PERSON VISITATION (WEEKEND)

7,822

ONLINE

WEBSITE

The OHM website openhousemelbourne.org underwent a functional and visual refresh to improve user experience. New functions included a pop-up Acknowledgement of Country, various drop-down menus to assist in the filtering of program events, clearer type font to allow for greater ease locating content and condensing of archived programming.

OHM’s strategy is to drive all visitation to the website—the primary source of information about the individual programs. While some collaborators independently managed ticketing for their program, these were linked out from the OHM website, making it easy for attendees to access all information from one source.

The application of the UserWay platform continues to enhance the accessibility and usability of the OHM website.

Most of the website traffic came via direct traffic and organic search, demonstrating the strength of OHM’s brand awareness amongst our audience. This, combined with the high level of new users also suggests that brand awareness is expanding to a wider audience.

NEWSLETTER

Open House Melbourne has fostered a loyal community that continues to connect with its programming. The OHM database of subscribers is incredibly active and engaged, with more than 50% of the 48,406 EDM recipients opening the Weekend campaign launch e-newsletter. Throughout the campaign which sent more than 237,300 emails, the click rate increased and there was an increase to the e-newsletter subscription rate of 4%. This demonstrated a successful strategy of clear sign-up call-to-actions across socials and the website, with key messages first released via e-newsletter.

48,406

EDM SUBSCRIBERS (5.3% INCREASE)

46.6%

OPEN RATE (AVERAGE)

SOCIAL MEDIA

Open House’s organic social media activity continues to foster engagement and advocacy within our community, promote and support our partners, stakeholders and collaborators and encourage attendance at Open House programs. We engage an active audience of 58,600+ across all platforms including Facebook (28,000+ followers), Instagram (20,700+ followers), X (formerly Twitter) (9,307+ followers), LinkedIn (2,116+ followers) and YouTube (872+ subscribers). These platforms have seen sustained growth resulting in a 4.5% increase in followers from 2022.

109,401

TOTAL DATABASE—EDM SUBSCRIBERS AND SOCIAL MEDIA (INCREASE OF 4% ON 2022)

60,995

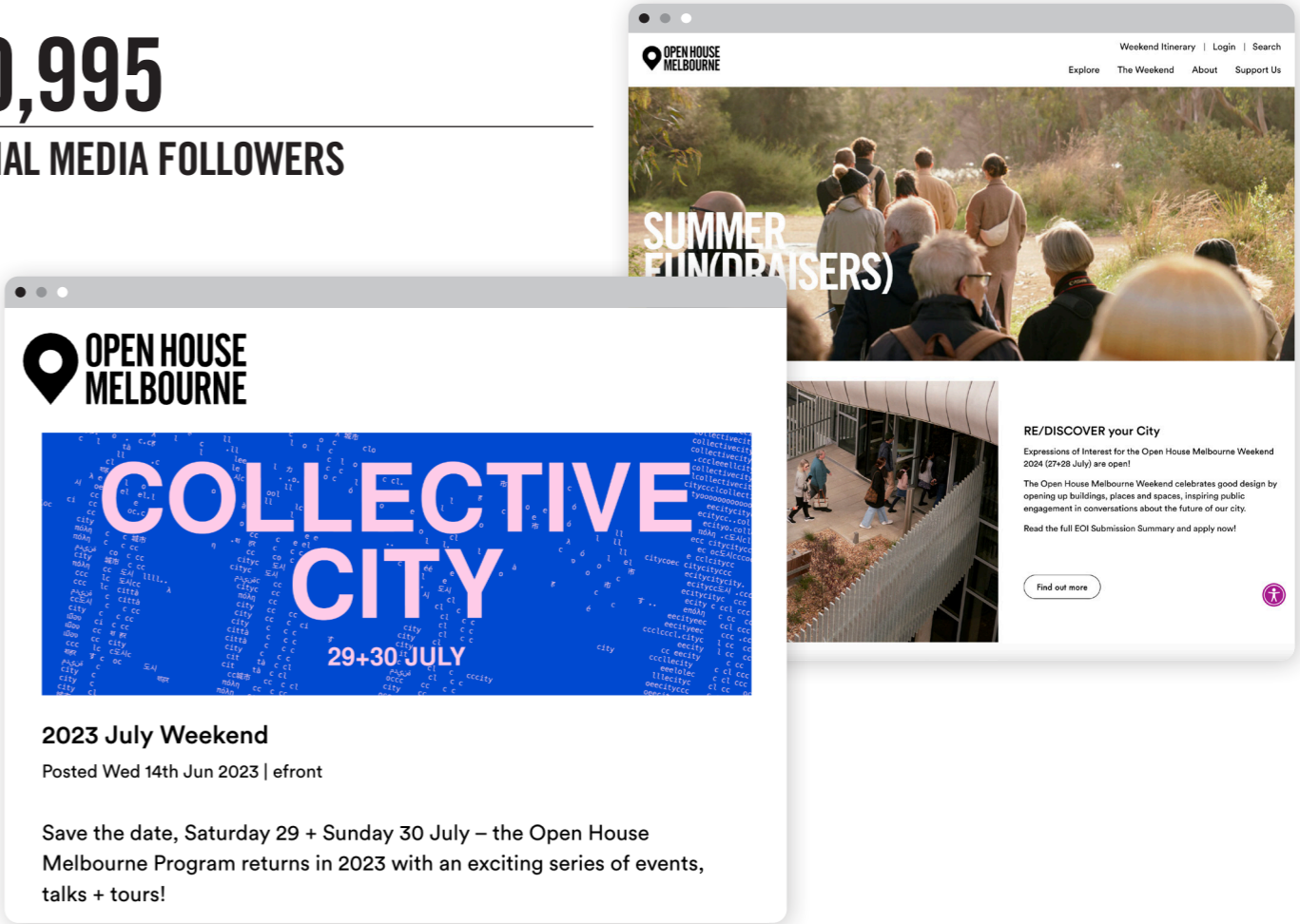
SOCIAL MEDIA FOLLOWERS

MEDIA EVALUATION

Our media campaign led by partners Zilla & Brook generated high visibility for our programs, with 154 media hits and a total of \$4,998,309 in PR value across our three major campaigns this year: Open Nature, OHM July Weekend and Open House Bendigo.

9,798,348

TOTAL MEDIA REACH ACROSS PRINT, ONLINE, TV AND RADIO (24% INCREASE FROM 2022)





THANK YOU

As this report shows, Open House Melbourne delivers a huge program with significant impact. Our small but mighty team could not present the annual program without the support and generosity of the many dedicated organisations and people involved. With special mention to our Major Sponsors—the City of Melbourne, Creative Victoria and OHM’s long-term partners Efront and Studio Payne for pushing the boundaries with our branding and website design to bring you this extensive public program.

OHM could not present our program without the generous contribution and assistance of the OHM Board, Building Council, Volunteer Council, Association Members, our Collaborators, much-valued Practice, Program and Precinct Partners, Media and Digital Partners, Donors, Supporters and over 400 passionate and pink-vested volunteers.

And finally, Open House Melbourne would like to acknowledge the passionate engagement and enthusiastic participation of our audience—it is wonderful to program for people who love the city and good design as much as we do.

Thank you.

OPEN HOUSE MELBOURNE TEAM





APPENDIX

- **OPEN HOUSE BENDIGO 2022
PROGRAM REPORT**

↘ [DOWNLOAD HERE](#)

- **OPEN NATURE 2023
PROGRAM REPORT**

↘ [DOWNLOAD HERE](#)

- **OPEN HOUSE MELBOURNE 2023
PROGRAM REPORT**

↘ [DOWNLOAD HERE](#)

- **OPEN HOUSE MELBOURNE 2023
FINANCIAL REPORT**

↘ [DOWNLOAD HERE](#)

