



WEEKEND REPORT 2025

[illegible]

STORIES OF THE CITY

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

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 NAARM 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 BUILT
ENVIRONMENT.

CONTENTS

Executive Summary	6
Visitation + Impact	10
Visitor Engagement	12
Program Insights	16
Key Programs	18
Access Map	20
Precincts + Itineraries	21
New Programs	22
Returning Favourites	24
Celebrating Precincts	28
Collaborator Engagement	31
Volunteer Engagement	36
More Partner Initiatives	38
Marketing + Media Evaluation	40
Website	42
Identity	48
Thank You	50
Appendix	52
Sponsors + Partners	54



Designing with Country

Curated by Open House Melbourne

Owen Cafe
Leila Gurruwiwi

Co-hosts:
Dr. Jock Gilbert
Associate Professor Christine Phillips

Melbourne Conversations

ENOKI

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OPEN HOUSE
MELBOURNE

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



The 2025 Weekend festival truly embodied the idea of an ‘Open House’. Melbourne threw open its doors with warmth, generosity and pride to welcome people into the buildings, places and spaces that make our city unique. Despite dire weather forecasts, the rain largely held off and our audience embraced the program with passion and curiosity—exploring new spaces, discovering the unexpected and reconnecting with much loved favourites.

AT OPEN HOUSE MELBOURNE, WE OFTEN SPEAK ABOUT HOW OUR PROGRAM CONNECTS PEOPLE TO PLACE, AND THIS YEAR’S THEME—STORIES OF THE CITY—MADE THAT CONNECTION TANGIBLE. CITIES ARE MORE THAN BRICKS AND MORTAR. IT IS PEOPLE’S STORIES THAT GIVE THE PLACES WE LOVE THEIR IDENTITY AND PERSONALITY. OUR STORIES CONNECT PEOPLE TO THE CITY, TO EACH OTHER AND TO COMMUNITY.

As the largest architecture and built environment festival in Asia Pacific, the Weekend continues to grow in scale and impact. In 2025, the festival attracted over 69,734 in-person and online visits including open buildings, tours, talks, events, exhibitions and online programs. To experience the Weekend, visitors travel from across Victoria and interstate, with regional audiences increasing year on year. The Weekend generated an estimated \$2,329,770 in economic value for the city and also attracted strong international interest, with representatives from Open House Europe visiting again this year to experience the festival first-hand.

Stories of the City, resonated across metropolitan Melbourne. To celebrate the theme, the ARBV presented *Tales of Melbourne Theatres*, while the Melbourne Camera Club’s exhibition captured visual stories of architecture, culture and community. In a collaboration with Bates Smart, Open House Melbourne invited the public to share their own anecdotes and memories of Melbourne for an exhibition at the Bates Smart Gallery of personal stories of connection to place. Additionally, Open House Melbourne partnered with Maptivate, Tract and Architecture and Access to deliver our first online Access Map, identifying twelve neurodiversity and mobility friendly sites on our program.

One of our core program pillars centres on First Nations knowledge and culture in architecture and design, and there were many opportunities to engage across the Weekend. We opened the program with our annual Designing with Country conversation—featuring Agency Projects’ Leila Gurruwiwi, Blaklash’s Owen Cafe and RMIT’s Yulendj Weelam Lab exploring the idea of Country and what it means for design practice. Other highlights included the Potter Museum of Art’s powerful *65,000 Years* exhibition, the Blak Dot Gallery at Balam Balam Place and the Koorie Heritage Trust, weaving workshops at the Queen Victoria Women’s Centre, a Heritage Coexistence discussion bringing together European and Indigenous perspectives and guided experiences such as the Yalinguth walking tour and a moving Walk on Country at Abbotsford Convent.

THIS YEAR THE FESTIVAL EXPANDED TO INCLUDE A FULL FRIDAY OF PROGRAMMING, GIVING AUDIENCES MORE OF WHAT THEY LOVE. OVER 30 NEW EXPERIENCES WERE OFFERED, FROM BEHIND-THE-SCENES ACCESS AT THE YOUNGHUSBAND WOOLSTORE AND ESSENDON FIELDS AIRPORT, TO THOUGHT-PROVOKING CONVERSATIONS ON RETROFIT AT 500 BOURKE AND THE UNIVERSITY OF MELBOURNE.

Stories of the City celebrated people’s love of Melbourne and offered a rich range of experiences—from award-winning private homes such as the Naples Street House to city-shaping projects like Glen Huntly station and the West Gate Tunnel Project Veloway. In keeping with Melbourne’s love of sport and the arts, the Prahran Skate Park and Whitten Oval opened their doors along with street art studios Everfresh, Blender and RONE and Callum Preston. Visitors explored the distinctive architecture of the Pride Centre and the Holocaust Museum and leading educational facilities like the Kanagan Institute and Penleigh and Essendon Grammar School. Collectively, these sites spoke to Melbourne’s diversity and the ways design is shaping our city. Other program highlights revealed the evolving story of our city. The Portable Iron Houses, Heller Street development and Bills Street social housing spoke to Melbourne’s search

for housing solutions across its colonial history. The Essendon Incinerator Complex, Queen & Collins and Collingwood Yards show how heritage is adapting to contemporary needs. Tours of the Melbourne Arts Precinct Transformation and Anzac Station offered a window into how the city is changing, while the new Elephant Habitat at Werribee Open Range Zoo reminded us that great design can solve challenges for everyone—including our more-than-human friends.

On Sunday afternoon our Modern Melbourne documentary shone a light on architect Greg Burgess. His work includes the Brambuk Cultural Centre in Gariwerd and the Uluru-Kata Tjuta Cultural Centre on the lands of the Anangu people. Over five decades, Greg has helped define Australian architecture, with a practice that places people, culture and Country at its heart—grounded in deep listening, belonging and community. Our annual Heritage Address closed the Weekend, with former Lord Mayor Sally Capp and curator Eddie Butler Bowden from the City of Melbourne Art and Heritage Collection sharing stories of the city through their favourite artefacts from the collection.

In 2025, across 190 program listings, OHM delivered more than 1,000 tours, talks, workshops, performances and exhibitions, complemented by livestreamed and on-demand programming. This was made possible by a diverse network of Collaborators—including architecture and design practices, building owners and managers, state and local government, arts and cultural organisations and community groups. This year, 46 new Collaborators joined us, contributing to 97 new programs from both first-time and returning participants.

To deliver the Weekend, Open House Melbourne grows from a core team of four into a collective of over 2,000 people. This extraordinary group includes our Board, Building and Volunteer Councils and advisors, partners and sponsors, over 1,600 Collaborators and almost 500 pink-vested Volunteers. Together with our passionate and engaged audience, these people are our community. The sense of community over the Weekend is tangible and truly moving—it is remarkable to see how much people give to the program and the joy they take from it.

We can’t wait to see what 2026 brings.

Tania Davidge
Executive Director | Chief Curator



VISITATION + IMPACT

HOW MANY?

69,734

Weekend Program engagements including building visits, tours, talks and online programming

190

Programs delivered

46

New Collaborators

1,015

Individual talks, tours, exhibitions etc.

7

Precincts

40

Valued Partners + Supporters

492

Volunteers

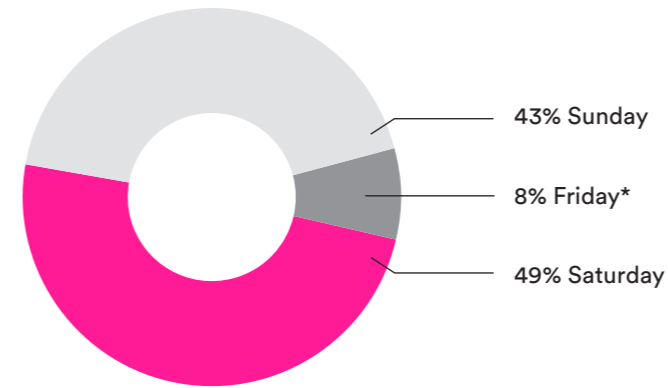
\$2,329,770

Economic impact

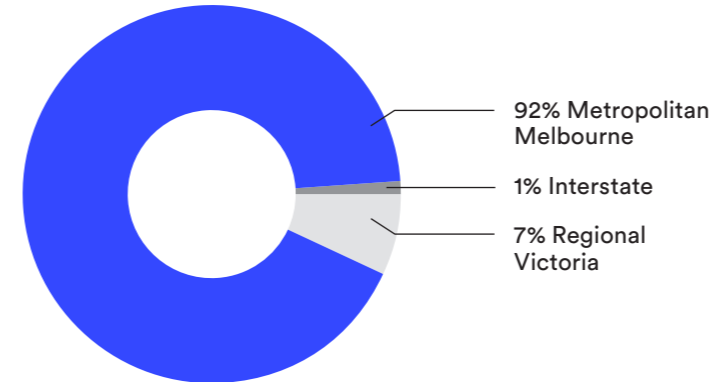
WHO?

- 66% of attendees identify as female
- 32% of attendees as male
- 0.5% of attendees identify as non-binary
- 1.5% prefer not to disclose
- 37% attending for the first time
- 63% had previously attended an in-person Weekend
- 36% visited 3 or more buildings/events
- 43% spent more than \$30 per day
- 90% spent money on dining out including cafes, restaurants, bars, groceries
- 36% spent on transportation
- 57% are over 55 years old
- 11% are under 35 years old
- 6% of respondents speak a language other than English at home
- 17% born overseas
- 7.5% identified as a person with a disability or carer
- 5% currently undertaking study
- 10% attended with a child/children under the age of 18
- 78% used Public Transport
- 52% used a vehicle
- 45% walked or cycled

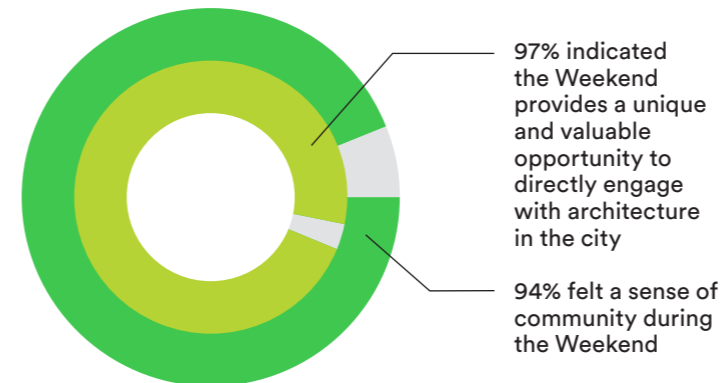
WHEN?



WHERE FROM?

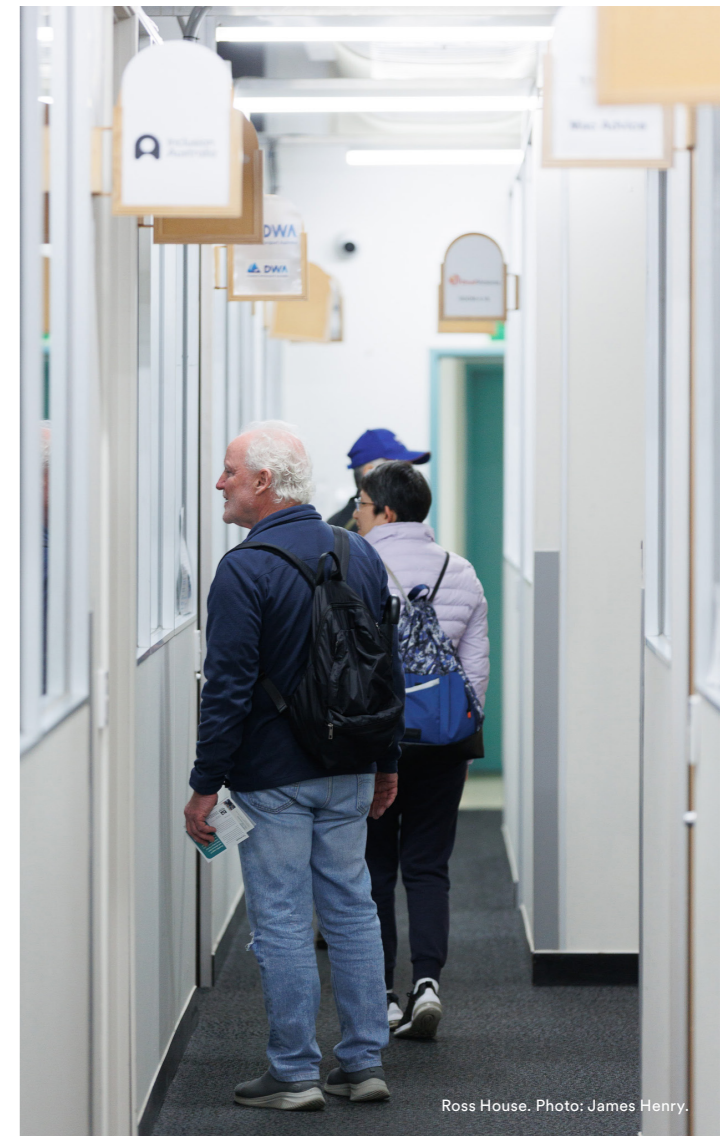


IMPACT



*Includes Designing with Country

“I REALLY APPRECIATED THE INCLUSION OF SOME FRIDAY TOUR OPTIONS THIS YEAR. IT WAS GREAT TO BE ABLE TO DO A TOUR NEAR MY OFFICE IN MY FRIDAY LUNCH BREAK, FREEING UP TIME ON SUNDAY TO GO TO OPTIONS FURTHER AFIELD.”



Ross House. Photo: James Henry.

VISITOR ENGAGEMENT

WHY DID YOU ATTEND?

93%

Attended to improve their cultural awareness of Melbourne

93%

To stay informed and learn more about the city's architecture

77%

Stay informed about the factors that influence the planning of Melbourne

96%

For pure entertainment and enjoyment

As part of our initiative to better understand our audience and where the Open House Melbourne Weekend fits within their broader cultural calendar, in-person surveys were conducted at nine participating sites across the program:

- ABC Southbank
- ANZ's Gothic Bank and Verdon Chambers
- Bates Smart Gallery
- Como House and Gardens
- Essendon Fields Airport Terminal
- Mission Whitten Oval (Western Bulldogs)
- Port Phillip EcoCentre
- Werribee Park Mansion
- Younghusband Woolstore

A broader visitor survey was also distributed to ticket holders, via direct email and to the general public across social media and EDMs, garnering 1,415 responses with a 78% completion rate. We received a rich insight across demographics, motivations and visitor experience, with a particularly strong response from older female participants (56+).

New in 2025 was our Access Map—a resource featuring mobility-friendly and neurodiverse-considerate sites across the program. Developed in partnership with Maptivate, Tract, and Architecture & Access, the Access Map provides nearby amenities and practical information to better support visitors with disability and carers throughout the Weekend. The pilot was intentionally scoped with manageable parameters across all collaborators—accessibility advisors, web developers, designers, and content partners—and successfully embedded into the visitor experience. 3% of survey respondents indicated they required mobility access, and 16% of the total audience used the Access Map.

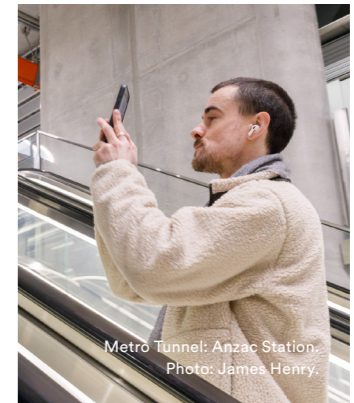
The appetite for Open House Melbourne programs remains strong and deeply valued among audiences: 94% of respondents reported feeling a sense of community during the Weekend, and 97% agreed that the program provides an important addition to the cultural life of Melbourne. Importantly, 93% said there are activities within the program that they are willing to travel for. 37% were first-time attendees, while 63% had previously attended an Open House Weekend, with 28% of respondents having attended five or more weekends.

Despite inclement weather across the Weekend, the Open House Melbourne community – visitors, volunteers, partners and staff – remained undeterred, demonstrating the ongoing relevance, loyalty and energy that defines the program. Audience participation was enthusiastic: 36% of visitors attended three or more buildings or events, while 2% attended more than 10. 97% reported gaining new insights and knowledge through their experience.

“ALL THE EVENTS WERE EXCELLENT. WE REALLY LIKED THE DIVERSITY, IN BOTH CONTENT AND LEVEL OF ‘POLISH’—IT WAS GREAT TO BE ABLE TO ATTEND BOTH SHINY AND PROFESSIONAL EVENTS FOR LARGE INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS AS WELL AS MORE SMALL SCALE AND PERSONAL EVENTS FROM SMALL BUSINESS OWNERS OR COMMUNITY MEMBERS.”



Hawthorn Tram Depot. Photo: James Henry.



Metro Tunnel: Anzac Station. Photo: James Henry.

“IT WAS FABULOUS. MADE US VERY PROUD OF MELBOURNE.”



HV.Hotel at Ferrars & York. Photo: Christian Woodmansey.

“TOO MUCH INTEREST IN YOUR ACTIVITIES, AND TOO FEW TICKETS TO SOME EVENTS, HOWEVER, I REALLY UNDERSTAND THAT LOGISTICALLY, THAT'S NEVER GOING TO BE FIXABLE. I THINK IT'S A CREDIT TO THE EVENT. AND I'LL KEEP COMING BACK TILL I SEE IT ALL.”



FOOTSCRAY

PROGRAM INSIGHTS

190

Programs delivered

46

New Collaborators

97

New programs from new and returning Collaborators

1,015

Individual talks, tours, exhibitions etc.

96%

Indicated the Weekend sparked their curiosity and made them want to find out more

95%

Indicated the Weekend was well organised

This year's program of 190 listings responded to the *Stories of the City* theme, attracting 46 new Collaborators and delivering 97 new programs by both new and returning contributors. The program curation, led by Open House Melbourne's experienced Building Council of architecture, heritage, sustainability, landscape, planning and urban design experts resulted in a unique and diverse balance tours, talks, walks and events. The breadth of offerings—from walking tours and architect-led tours to themed talks and open exhibitions—reflects a strong commitment from Collaborators to providing rich, engaging and varied experiences for visitors of all ages and interests.

Bookings were required for 80 programs, while 85 were fully open access and 23 combined both elements. Pre-bookings are determined in consultation with Collaborators and are essential for all residential sites and recommended for limited-capacity or timed tours. First-time Collaborators commonly opted for bookings to better manage attendance, while some returning Collaborators shifted from booked to open access formats as their confidence and delivery capacity increased. As the sector continues to rebuild post-Covid, we anticipate further transition towards open access experiences as Collaborators grow their capability.

Ticketing for pre-booked programs was again released across two dates, reinforcing Open House Melbourne's commitment to equitable access for limited-capacity events across the program. Improved ticketing analytics revealed overwhelming demand, with over 38,000 unique visitors engaging with ticketed programs. Waitlists were applied to all pre-booked programs and 3,826 were registered on waitlists, demonstrating program demand and enable Open House Melbourne to expand to better meet audience needs moving forward.

FRIDAY PROGRAMS

In 2025, Friday was included as an optional, additional day for Collaborator programming, on top of their Saturday and Sunday activities. This opportunity was embraced by Collaborators with 35 opting for Friday participation. While for some it simply enabled them to add another full day of repeat activities to their offering, for others it offered an opportunity to curate special events like panel discussions to complement their open access or tours taking place across the Saturday and/or Sunday. Friday activities were enthusiastically embraced by visitors, with over 50% of pre-booked events reaching maximum capacity and 8% of total Weekend attendance falling on Friday. With minimal operational consequences, the inclusion of Friday to the program provides an opportunity to spread the demand for Weekend programs across another day and engage different and more audiences eager to access the program.

TICKETING + BOOKING FEE

The \$7 booking fee applied to each ticket for pre-booked programs to contribute to ticketing administration costs. The fee had minimal impact on the uptake of tickets for highly popular limited capacity programs with both the first and second releases booking out within hours of going live. Of the sites that required pre-bookings, 79% were fully booked prior to the Weekend. This suggests that for most visitors the small fee doesn't present a barrier but rather encourages visitors to carefully consider and plan their Weekend itinerary, ensuring a level of equity, reducing attrition and improving overall attendance on the day. Collaborators delivering pre-booked programs reported they experienced full or nearly full tour and event groups, despite wet and windy weather across the Weekend. Some programs with slow uptake on tickets, and where the booking fee was identified as presenting a possible barrier, were shifted to open access in consultation with the Collaborator.

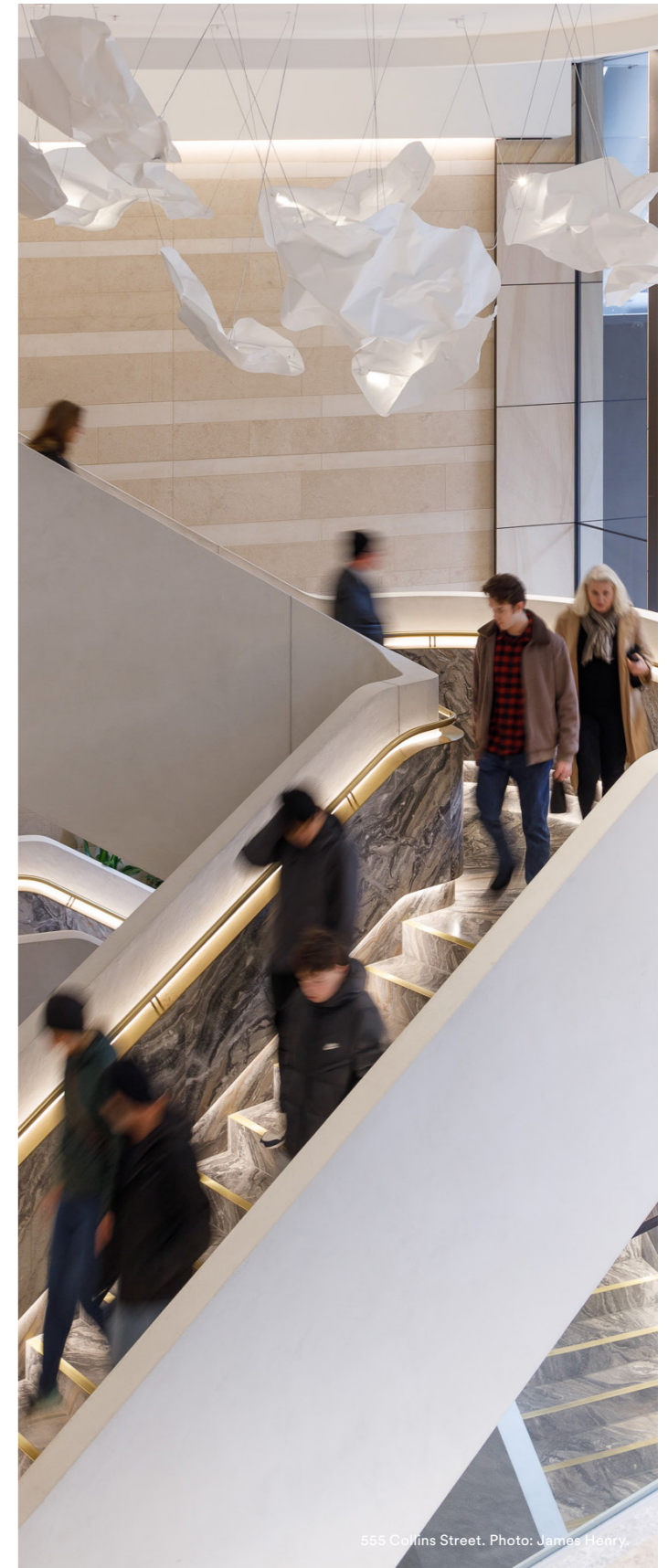
A Lucky Last Minute Ticket trial was introduced to attempt to effectively capture walk ups on the day where they could be accommodated due to no-shows at fully-booked programs. Broadly, this was received positively as a tool for equitably managing walk ups. With improved education and training for Collaborators and Volunteers on how to manage this operationally, it will remain a useful initiative.

UPTAKE OF TICKETS

Beyond the highly sought after programs including the private homes Cairo Flats, Merri House and Naples St, Metro Tunnel: Anzac Station, ABC Southbank, CityLink Control Room, ANZ Gothic Bank and the Fed Sq Behind the Scenes, where tickets were booked up instantly, uptake of tickets more broadly across the program was steady in the lead up to the Weekend. This allowed for those accessing the program later in the campaign period to access pre-booked programs.

Of the 103 programs with bookings, 79% were fully booked prior to the Weekend. Of the 15,685 bookings made through Humanitix, 14,187 incurred a booking fee. The booking fee was balanced by a continued strong commitment to offering high quality open access programs for which no pre-booking or ticketing was required, maintaining Open House Melbourne's commitment to offering free programming to a broad public audience.

**OF THE TOTAL 69,734 ENGAGEMENTS
WITH THE WEEKEND PROGRAM,
55,547 WERE OPEN ACCESS AND FREE
TO THE PUBLIC.**



OPEN HOUSE MELBOURNE KEY PROGRAMS

DESIGNING WITH COUNTRY

Wednesday 23 July
The Edge, Fed Square



The notion of Country is fundamental to Indigenous ways of knowing, being and designing, yet as architects and landscape architects increasingly seek to engage with this concept, important questions remain—what is Country, how do diverse Indigenous communities across Australia define and relate to it, and how might a deeper understanding transform contemporary design practices?

Presented to a full audience at Fed Square's The Edge, this year's Designing with Country discussion, presented in partnership with the City of Melbourne as part of their Melbourne Conversation series, explored these questions with leading Indigenous thinkers Owen Café and Leila Gurruwiwi, in conversation with Jock Gilbert and Christine Phillips from RMIT's Yulendj Weelam Lab.

Together, they unpacked the complexity and richness of Country, offered insight into its meaning, relevance and potential to shape a more culturally responsive built environment, and engaged thoughtfully with audience questions throughout.

Designing with Country was presented by Melbourne Conversations in partnership with program curators Open House Melbourne and event partner Fed Square.

STROLL THE CITY

Friday 25 July + Saturday 26 July +
Sunday 27 July
Online
[Access Digital Map Here](#)



Open House Melbourne continues to build on the Stroll the City platform with two new exciting additions launched as part of the *Stories of the City* Weekend.

Designing Culture: Melbourne Arts Precinct dived into the evolution and development of the Melbourne Arts Precinct. Open House Melbourne's Executive Director and architect Tania Davidge along with special guests shared the architectural characteristics that have shaped this pocket of our city, and the significant project underway that will transform this iconic cultural precinct.

Anzac Station is one of five new underground train stations as a part of the Metro Tunnel Project. With guidance from Kylie from the Metro Tunnel Project and an ensemble of special guests, participants journeyed through the station to learn about the station design, while exploring amazing artworks and hidden details of one of Melbourne's future architectural icons.

COLLECTIVE NARRATIVES OF MELBOURNE AT BATES SMART GALLERY

Saturday 26 July + Sunday 27 July
Bates Smart Gallery



To celebrate this year's theme, *Stories of the City*, Open House Melbourne and Practice Partners Bates Smart, invited visitors to share their own stories of the city. Curated by Bates Smart, select stories submitted during an online campaign prior to the Weekend were printed to form the basis of the exhibition.

Across the Weekend, visitors contributed their unique stories, anecdotes and memories to the interactive exhibition. Collectively, these stories were pinned up to the wall which became layered with the multiple stories that shape our city.

OPEN PLAY AT ELTHAM LIBRARY

Sunday 27 July
Eltham Library



OPEN Play is Open House Melbourne's educational program for young people, encouraging them to explore the role good design plays in shaping our communities and cities.

As part of the Weekend, families were invited to participate in creative, hands-on activities responding to the *Stories of the City* theme. Inspired by the shapes and spaces of the Eltham Library, children and families reimaged their own buildings using colourful tactile felt, and reflected on local heritage by creating photo-collage artworks to take home.

MODERN MELBOURNE PREMIERE: GREG BURGESS

Sunday 27 July
ACMI Cinema 2



Modern Melbourne is a series that documents the extraordinary practice of our most important architects and designers and looks at their lasting impact on Melbourne.

In this episode, Greg Burgess, a unique figure in Australian architecture, reflected on his community-focused approach to design and how he has used architecture to foster relationships with clients, communities and Country to create spaces full of meaning and spirit. In conversation with Dr Peter Raisbeck at Eltham Library, Greg revealed how he has consistently championed this approach, producing work noted for its complex geometries, innovative materials and deep cultural insights.

This sellout premiere screening at ACMI Cinema 2 was followed by a Q&A with Heritage Council.

Produced and presented by Open House Melbourne in partnership with the Heritage Council of Victoria.

HERITAGE STORIES OF THE CITY WITH SALLY CAPP AND EDDIE BUTLER-BOWDON

Monday 28 July
The Capitol RMIT



Former Lord Mayor Sally Capp and curator Eddie Butler-Bowdon from the City of Melbourne's Art and Heritage Collection presented a captivating conversation that lifted the lid on Melbourne's hidden stories.

Through stories of their favourite artefacts from the vast civic collection, they shared surprising, quirky and powerful tales that have shaped the city—from political power moves to artistic revolutions—while reflecting on the evolving significance of heritage and the importance of keeping the collection relevant.

They emphasised that the Collection reflects the City of Melbourne's values by honouring the past while presenting a contemporary perspective on heritage. This unique instalment of the Heritage Address offered audiences a rare glimpse behind the scenes of Melbourne's cultural treasure trove, where every object holds a story waiting to be told.

Produced and presented by Open House Melbourne in partnership with the Heritage Council of Victoria.

ACCESS MAP

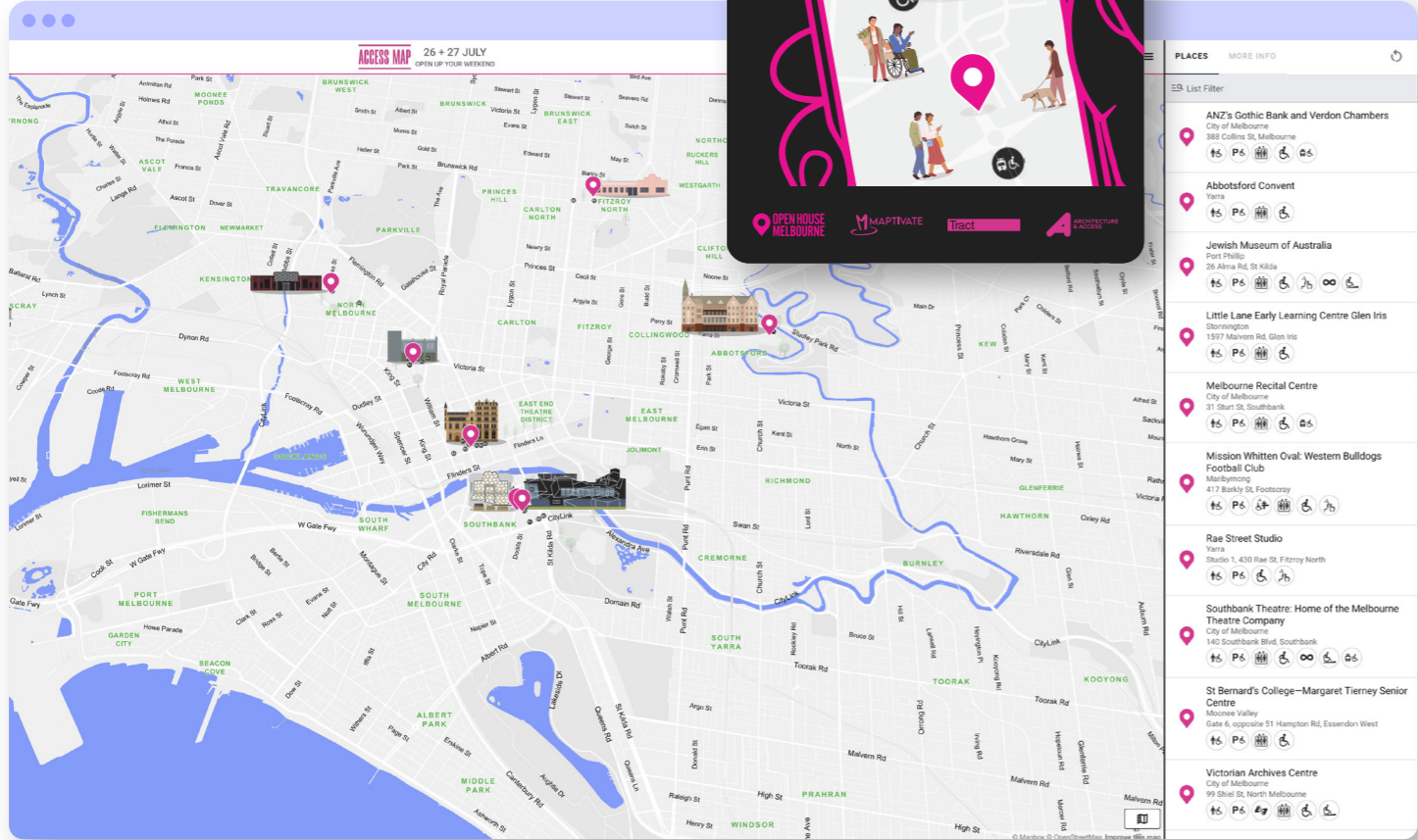
As a major new initiative for 2025, Open House Melbourne introduced the Access Map—a purpose-built digital tool designed to make the Weekend more inclusive and accessible.

50,224

Access Map views

7,725

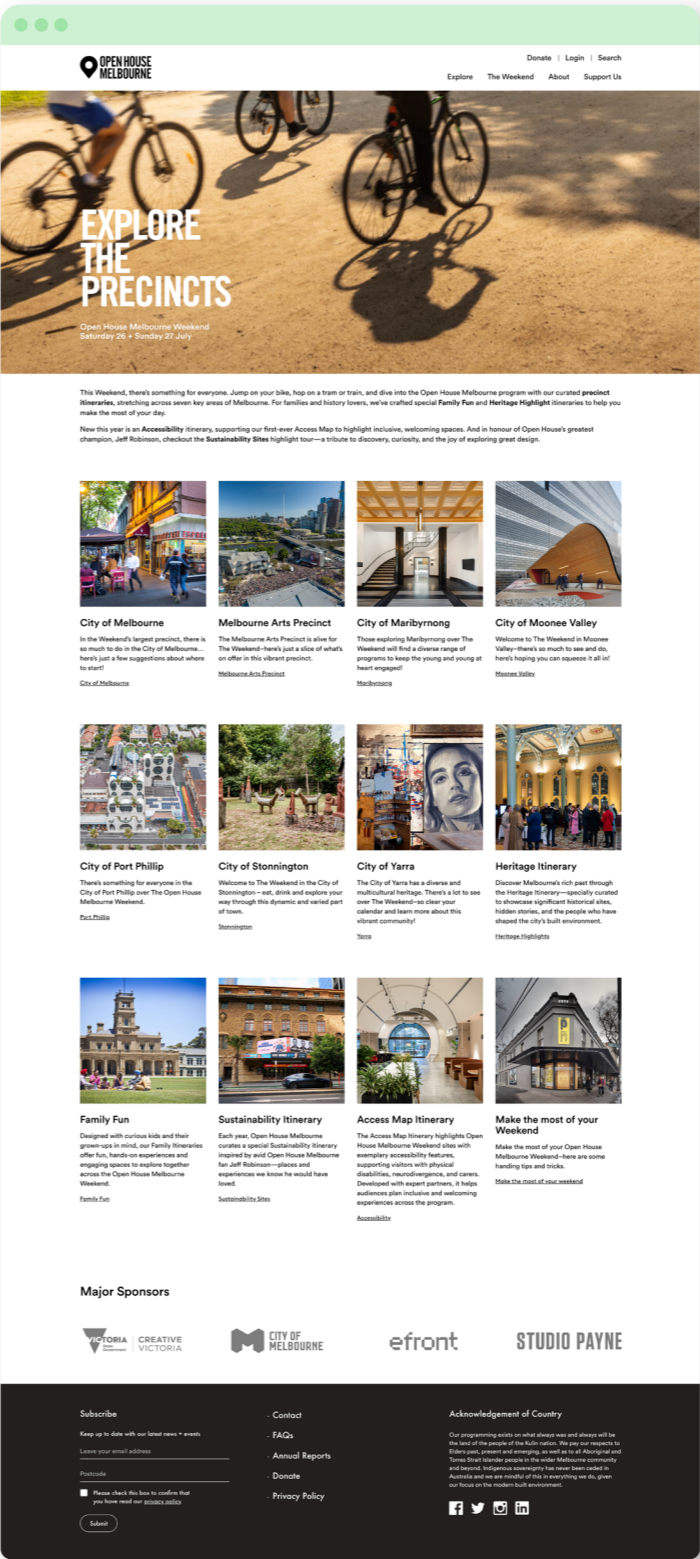
Active users



Together with Major Program Partners Tract and Maptivate, and Program Partner Architecture & Access, we developed in line with our strategic commitment to greater access and equity, a new Access Map. The Access Map highlights mobility-friendly and neurodiverse-considerate sites and helps visitors plan their journeys with confidence, including identifying nearby amenities and supports. Available across both mobile and desktop, the Map represented a significant step forward in ensuring the Open House Melbourne Weekend is welcoming to all visitors, and stands as a flagship example of how our programs are evolving to meet the needs of diverse audiences.

[Explore the Access Map](#)

PRECINCTS + ITINERARIES



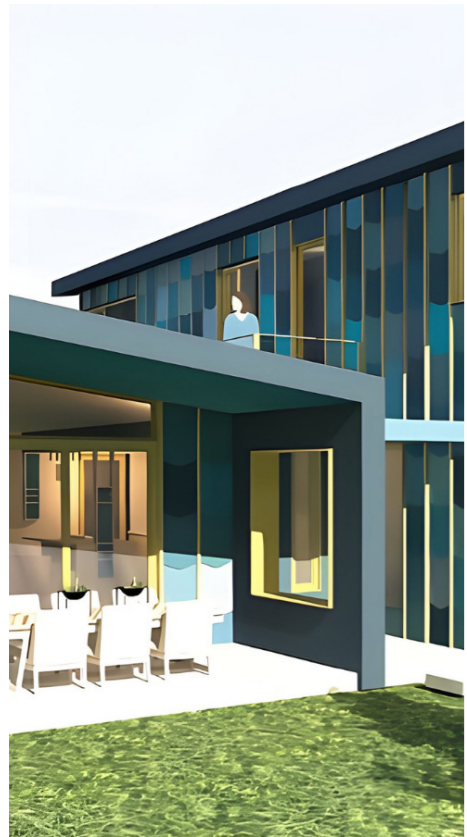
In partnership with multiple local government associations including the Cities of Melbourne, Maribyrnong, Moonee Valley, Port Phillip, Stonnington, Yarra and Melbourne Arts Precinct, and Melbourne Arts Precinct, this year's program featured eleven curated precinct itineraries, each highlighting unique stories of architecture, community and place.

The itineraries covered Family Fun, Heritage Highlights and, new this year, an Accessibility Itinerary aligned with the launch of the Access Map. The Sustainability Sites highlight tour, named in honour of Open House champion Jeff Robinson, provided an inspiring route focused on design, discovery and environmental leadership—encouraging participants to explore the city by bike, tram or on foot.

[Explore the Precincts](#)

NEW PROGRAMS

OPENING THE DOOR TO MELBOURNE'S HOMES OF THE FUTURE



An evening panel discussion that brought together designers and energy experts to showcase winning True Zero Carbon Challenge homes that create more energy than they use and tackle embodied carbon for a sustainable future.

“AS A LAYPERSON IN THE FIELD OF ARCHITECTURE, PLANNING AND SUSTAINABLE HOUSING, I FOUND THE FRIDAY EVENING SESSION AT RMIT “OPENING THE DOORS TO MELBOURNE’S HOUSES OF THE FUTURE” AN EXCELLENT INTRODUCTION TO SOME OF THE ISSUES. A GREAT INCLUSION IN PROGRAM. MORE LIKE IT!!”

NORTHCOTE HOUSE

“I ONLY VISITED ONE SITE, THE NORTHCOTE HOUSE, AND THOUGHT IT WAS THE MOST EXCITING AND BEAUTIFUL HOUSE I HAVE EVER SEEN. I HAD OFTEN WALKED PAST IT WHILE IT WAS BEING BUILT AND HAD REALLY WANTED TO SEE INSIDE. SATISFACTION LEVEL – HIGH!”



A behind-the-scenes tour of award-winning compact inner-city house designed by LLDS, recognised for its innovative approach in sustainability, interior design and residential design.

METRO TUNNEL: ANZAC STATION



Public tours offered a self-guided audio experience highlighting Anzac Station’s design, cultural connections, and insights from architects, artists, and community leaders.

“TALKING WITH AN ARCHITECT OF THE NEW ANZAC STATION ABOUT THE DESIGN OF THE PROJECT AND HOW IT IS BUILT LARGE ENOUGH TO ACCOMMODATE THE ANTICIPATED GROWTH IN PASSENGERS OVER THE COMING DECADES. IT GAVE AN APPRECIATION OF THE DESIGN AND SIZE OF THE STATION BEFORE IT BECOMES A CROWDED AND BUSY THOROUGHFARE.”

OTTER PLACE BY MILIEU: A NEW ‘GREAT AUSTRALIAN DREAM’



Otter Place by Milieu is a medium-scale residential development with a new pocket park. Attendees heard from its designers on reshaping the ‘Great Australian Dream’ for Melbourne’s urban future.

“IT WAS A PLEASURE TO SEE THE BEAUTIFULLY FINISHED STANDARD OF THE DEVELOPMENT WHICH IS MUCH LOVED BY ITS OCCUPIERS. THE HIGHLIGHT WAS HEARING THE OCCUPANTS SPEAKING ABOUT THEIR EXPERIENCE.”

VALLEY LAKE WALKING TOUR



This walking tour explored how community action transformed a former brownfield site into housing and parkland, with insights from campaigners, architects, and landscape designers, plus a visit to the new Valley Lake Lookout.

“I REALLY APPRECIATE WHAT THE COMMUNITY HAS DONE TO PROTECT THE ENVIRONMENT, ORGANISE THE PLANNING AND CONSTRUCTION AND BUILD A BETTER WORLD.”

ABBOTSFORD CONVENT WURUNDJERI RIVER WALK

“THE BIRRARANG WALK AT THE ABBOTSFORD CONVENT WAS INCREDIBLE. JACK WAS SO KNOWLEDGEABLE AND SHARED SO MANY STORIES THAT MADE ME FEEL MORE CONNECTED TO THE LAND THAT WE LIVE ON.”



Wurundjeri Elders led a guided River Walk at Abbotsford Convent, exploring the cultural significance of Country at the junction of the Merri Creek and Birrarung.

RONE + CALLUM PRESTON

“LOVED HAVING THE OPPORTUNITY TO STEP INSIDE RONE & CALLUM PRESTON STUDIO & HEAR THEM TALK ABOUT THEIR WORKS & TO SEE THEIR WORK FIRST HAND!”



Tours of the hidden Collingwood studios of RONE and Callum Preston enabled visitors to meet the artists, explore their archives, and see works in progress.

BILLS STREET SOCIAL AND AFFORDABLE HOUSING: PUBLIC HOUSING RENEWAL PROGRAM



Bills Street tours explored its 206 new social and affordable homes, focusing on the architectural, landscape, and design strategies behind the project.

“VISITING BILLS ST PROJECT AND OBSERVING HOW ARCHITECTURE CAN PLAY AN IMPORTANT PART OF HOW WE LIVE IN A COMMUNITY ENVIRONMENT.”

RETURNING FAVOURITES

YALINGUTH FITZROY: STORIES. SOUNDS. KNOWLEDGE.



A guided walking tour with Jason Tamiru along Gertrude Street to explore the Black Power movement in Australia, using the award-winning Yalinguth app to connect to its history.

“YALINGUTH WAS SO SPECIAL. THE GUESTS THAT SHARED THEIR STORIES AND TALENTS WERE PHENOMENAL. WALKING DOWN GERTRUDE ST WITH A BOOM BOX PLAYING BLAK MUSIC FELT LIKE A POWERFUL RECLAIMING OF SPACE. THANK YOU YALINGUTH!”

GETTING TO KNOW THE GREENLINE



Tours along Melbourne's north-bank Greenline Project with the landscape team uncovered the urban renewal, ecological restoration, and cultural heritage initiatives along the Birrarung.

“IT WAS FASCINATING HEARING ABOUT HOW COMPLEX THE PROCESS IS FOR GREENING THE CITY INCLUDING TREE SELECTION AND WHERE TO TRIAL THE FLOATING WETLANDS. THE GUIDE WAS FUNNY AND INFORMATIVE. NOW I FINALLY KNOW WHERE WILLIAMS CREEK ENTERS THE YARRA.”

FOOTSCRAY MARKET

“JOYCE WAS AMAZING! SHE HAD CARING AND INSIGHTFUL STORIES TO SHARE AND HELPED US FORGE A CONNECTION TO THE MARKET AND ITS PEOPLE. AND THE FOOD WAS DELICIOUS!”



Immersive tours of Footscray Market revealed its rich history that has evolved alongside the changing demographics of the community.

CITYLINK CONTROL ROOM

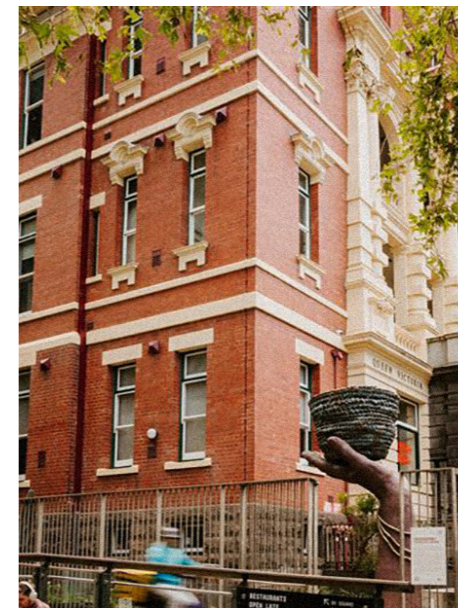


An opportunity to see the CityLink Control Room in action and learn about the technology used to monitor 45 kilometres of road.

“SO INTERESTING TO SEE HOW OUR TRAFFIC IS MONITORED ON OUR MAJOR ROADS, STAFF WERE GREAT.. REALLY ALL THE OPEN HOUSE EXPERIENCES I’VE BEEN TOO HAVE BEEN FANTASTIC, INFORMATIVE AND INTERESTING WITH GREAT VOLUNTEERS”

QUEEN VICTORIA WOMENS CENTRE

“I ABSOLUTELY LOVED HEARING ABOUT THE HISTORY OF THE QUEEN VICTORIA WOMEN’S CENTRE, FORMERLY WOMEN’S HOSPITAL. MANY PEOPLE WHO ATTENDED THE CEO’S TALK HAD A PERSONAL CONNECTION TO THE HOSPITAL WHICH ADDED TO THE IMPACT OF THE TALK AND THE GUIDED TOUR.”



Housed in Melbourne's former women and children's hospital, the QVWC was open for exhibitions, artist talks, workshops, and guided tours celebrating women, social justice, and First Nations art.

MAKING MELBOURNE: IMMIGRATION MUSEUM AND CUSTOMS HOUSE TOUR



Tours unpacked 150 years of history at Customs House, exploring its impact on First Peoples, migrants, and Australian culture through its architecture and stories.

“THE GUIDED TOUR WAS VERY THOUGHT PROVOKING. IT WAS INTERESTING TO SEE THE BUILDING AND ALSO TO CONSIDER THE LAND ON THE RIVER BANK THERE.”

PRESTON SERVICE RESERVOIR

“BEING LOCAL TO THE AREA, I HAD ALWAYS WONDERED WHAT WAS BEHIND THE BIG FENCES & NOW I KNOW!”



Guided tours of Preston Reservoir revealed its history, engineering, architecture, and role in Melbourne's water supply.



CELEBRATING PRECINCTS

CITY OF MELBOURNE

43,637 attendees
Precinct engagement: 4,517 views/3,164 users

MELBOURNE ARTS PRECINCT

13,246 attendees
Precinct engagement: 3,297 views/2,636 users

MOONEE VALLEY

1,268 attendees
Precinct engagement: 1,740 views/1,313 users

STONNINGTON

1,129 attendees
Precinct engagement: 1,166 views/937 users

CITY OF PORT PHILLIP

2,717 attendees
Precinct engagement: 1,804 views/1,233 users

CITY OF MARIBYRNONG

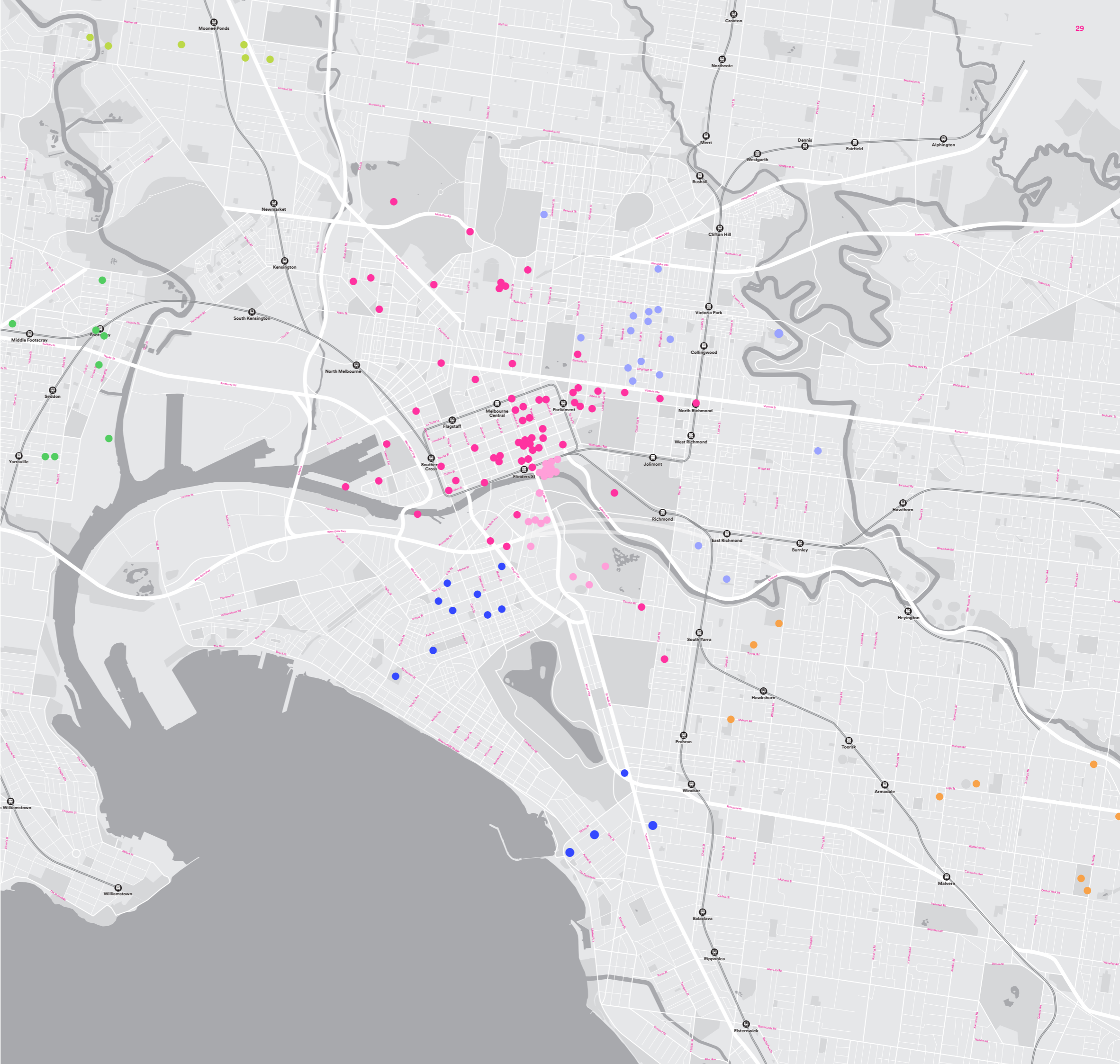
860 attendees
Precinct engagement: 1,552 views/1,182 users

CITY OF YARRA

4,310 attendees
Precinct engagement: 1,761 views/1,275 users

HERITAGE

Precinct engagement: 2,647 views/1,837 users



“STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS WERE VERY HELPFUL, HAPPY AND POSITIVE. WITHOUT THEM WE WOULD NOT BE ABLE TO LEARN SO MUCH ABOUT THE GREAT BUILDING IN OUR CITY AND THE AMAZING SECRETS THEY HOLD.”



555 Collins Street. Photo: James Henry.

“THE OPEN HOUSE WEEKEND IS A TERRIFIC INITIATIVE; I JUST WISHED I COULD VISIT A FEW MORE PLACES BUT THERE’S ALWAYS NEXT YEAR! THE WEBSITE WAS VERY INFORMATIVE AND I WAS ABLE TO PUT MY CHOICES INTO THE “SAVED” TAB. I WAS NOTIFIED WHEN MY BOOKING WAS CONFIRMED AND I GOT REGULAR EMAILS REMINDING ME OF THE UPCOMING EVENT. CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL THE PEOPLE BEHIND THE SCENES!”



Connected Community HackerSpace. Photo: James Henry.



Footscray Town Hall Tour. Photo: James Henry.

“I HAVE TRULY HAD THE MOST AMAZING WEEKEND! AFTER 20KM OF EXPLORING ON FOOT AND HOWEVER MANY MORE OF TRAINS, TRAMS AND BUSES, I’VE BEEN INSPIRED, INFORMED AND ENTERTAINED! THIS EVENT IS AN EXCEPTIONAL AVENUE TO CONNECT TO OUR CITY AND MY ADMIRATION HAS GROWN AS A RESULT. MUCH APPRECIATED!”

COLLABORATOR ENGAGEMENT

96%

Would choose to participate in the Open House Weekend again next year

86%

Believe the Weekend provides an important addition to the cultural life of the area

92%

Felt a sense of community during the Open House Melbourne Weekend

86%

Of Collaborators participate in Open House Melbourne to engage with the local community

92%

Participate to promote their organisation to a new audience

An Expression of Interest process was opened to the public and communicated through our networks via a direct email invite to past Collaborators and organisational contacts, Open House Melbourne’s EDM and across social media. Targeted approaches were made to new, unique and award-winning projects identified by the Building Council.

A total of 227 submissions were received. Submissions were reviewed by the Open House Melbourne curatorial team together with the Building Council and a total of 201 were accepted into the program. This allowed for an anticipated drop-off of approximately up to 10% between acceptance emails being sent and the Weekend delivery. 190 programs were promoted at the Program Launch and some late cancellations due to Collaborator circumstances or inclement weather resulted in a final total of 186 programs being delivered across the Weekend.

The *Stories of the City* program engaged 190 Collaborators (architecture + design practices, building owners/managers, community groups) in the organisation up to the Weekend with an additional 900+ paid staff and 770+ organisation-affiliated volunteers participating on the Weekend to assist in delivering the program.

Along with direct email and phone communication to support Collaborators, an online Collaborator Portal and multiple online briefings were utilised to communicate timelines, key dates, marketing assets and other important operational information to Collaborators during the campaign. This year’s record attendance at the online Collaborator Briefing of 136, demonstrates strong engagement by Collaborators with the program and Open House Melbourne. Out of the survey respondents, 94% felt adequately prepared for the Weekend.

“SO MANY WONDERFUL VISITORS, MANY WHO WERE FAMILIAR WITH WHAT WE DO BUT MANY WHO HAD NEVER BEEN TO A SHOW BEFORE OR STEPPED FOOT IN A THEATRE AND WERE BLOWN AWAY BY THE EXPERIENCE. LOTS OF CHILDREN AND PEOPLE OF ALL AGES ATTENDED. LOTS OF WONDERFUL CONVERSATIONS AND STORIES SHARED.”

“THE SHEER NUMBER OF LOCALS ATTENDING WALKING AWAY WITH A DEEPER UNDERSTANDING AND APPRECIATION OF OUR OPERATIONS AND HISTORY.”

“INTERESTED, ENTHUSIASTIC AND CURIOUS PARTICIPANTS THAT MADE THE PROGRAM A DELIGHT TO RUN AND SHARE.”

“SO MANY NEW FACES THROUGH THE DOOR, AND SO MANY HAPPY SMILING FACES ON THE WAY OUT. THE OPEN HOUSE MELBOURNE SCHEME HAS BEEN SUCH A FABULOUS WAY FOR US TO REACH THE BROADER COMMUNITY.”

“OHM IS A GREAT PLATFORM PROVIDING A GREATER REACH BEYOND OUR FOLLOWERS. OHM PROVIDES GREATER SCOPE FOR A VARIETY OF EVENTS.”

“THE WHOLE DAY WAS AMAZING IN THAT WE HAD THE MOST INTERESTED VISITORS, MANY MORE MALE ATTENDEES AND YOUNGER PROFESSIONAL ATTENDEES THAN USUAL. ALSO, A DIFFERENT DEMOGRAPHIC OF VISITORS – FROM DIVERSE SUBURBS AND LOCATIONS WHO PROVIDED INSIGHTFUL FEEDBACK IN OUR VISITOR COMMENTS BOOK. THE MAJORITY (95%) WERE FIRST TIME VISITORS.”

“THE COMMENTS WE COULD SNATCH AT THE END OF EACH TOUR WERE ALL GREAT, AND WE MANAGED TO MAKE MANY CONNECTIONS WITH FORMER RESIDENTS, LOCAL HISTORIANS, NEIGHBOURS, ETC”

“THERE WAS A MASSIVE SENSE OF ENTHUSIASM, GRATITUDE, INTEREST, HAPPINESS ALL DAY.”

“WE DEFINITELY SAW DIFFERENT GROUPS OF PEOPLE COMING THROUGH THAN WE WERE USED TO. GREAT SUCCESS!”

“IT’S A WONDERFUL WAY OF MELBOURNE OPENING IT’S DOORS TO IT’S COMMUNITY! VERY REWARDING.”

“WE HAD A CONTINUOUS FLOW OF VISITORS WHO WERE INCREDIBLY INTERESTED IN THE HERITAGE BUILDING BUT ALSO THE CONTEMPORARY BUILDING. SOME WERE LOCAL AND HAD ALWAYS BEEN INTRIGUED WHAT WAS INSIDE THE BUILDING AND SOME WERE FROM OTHER PARTS OF MELBOURNE AND HAD PLANNED TO COME AND VISIT.”

“OHM IS A GREAT PROGRAM WITH A REACH NOT OTHERWISE POSSIBLE BY CONVENTIONAL APPROACHES.”

“IT WAS FABULOUS. MADE US VERY PROUD OF MELBOURNE.”

“THE DEMOGRAPHICS OF THE GUESTS ON MY TOUR WERE IMPRESSIVE. A WIDE CROSS-SECTION OF AGES, COUNTRIES OF ORIGIN, AND LEVELS OF KNOWLEDGE. I HAD MANY PEOPLE WHO HAD A HIGH LEVEL OF KNOWLEDGE OF MELBOURNE’S URBAN HISTORY, ARCHITECTURE, AND TO A LESSER DEGREE, ART. AS MY TOUR FOCUSED ON ART IN PUBLIC SPACE, AND THE INTEGRATION WITH ARCHITECTURE AND URBANISM UNDER THE CITY OF MELBOURNE’S UNIQUE APPROACH TO ART IN PUBLIC SPACE, I BELIEVE THERE IS A KEEN INTEREST AND GAP IN THIS AREA..”

“A FEW VISITORS WHO HAD SPENT LOTS OF TIME AS KIDS INSIDE TOWN HALL (DUE TO THEIR FAMILY MEMBERS WORKING THERE) & HOW SPECIAL IT WAS FOR THEM TO COME BACK INSIDE THE BUILDING & REMEMBER & SEE HOW IT’S CHANGED AND STAYED THE SAME.”

“HAVING A DIFFERENT AUDIENCE COME THROUGH THE STUDIO WAS A HUGE BENEFIT.”



VOLUNTEER ENGAGEMENT

492

Volunteers recruited

352

Volunteer training attendance / Three quarters of volunteers attended at least one training session

2,500+

Volunteer hours contributed

570+

Shifts

18-85

Age range of Open House Volunteers

122

Volunteers + Collaborators at the Thank You Celebration

38%

Participated for the first time in 2025

Open House Melbourne thrives on the passion, generosity and extraordinary commitment of its volunteers. In 2025, the program continued to nurture a strong sense of community that was both welcoming and inspiring.

Our already positive volunteer culture continued to thrive, with high attendance at training sessions and social touchpoints. With the support of our experienced Volunteer Council, engagement, tailored support and connection shaped the journey and encouraged volunteers to connect with one another, create new friendships, and facilitated camaraderie and a share sense of purpose.

Volunteer recruitment was highly successful, with an increase of 122 volunteers from last year. Notably, 38% of volunteers were contributing for the very first time. Notably, 38% of volunteers contributed for the very first time, demonstrating growing interest and engagement with the program.

The ongoing enthusiasm and commitment of our volunteers remains one of the cornerstones of the Weekend's success and its continued growth year after year.

62%

Have volunteered for five or more years

67%

Indicated giving back to the community as a key motivator for their involvement

75%

Volunteer because they enjoy cultural events, connecting with new people and have a passion for architecture

97%

Would return to volunteer for Open House

“I HAVE BEEN AN OPEN HOUSE VOLUNTEER SINCE 2017, AND IT IS SOMETHING I LOOK FORWARD TO EACH AND EVERY YEAR. I LOVED ATTENDING OPEN HOUSE BEFORE I BECAME A VOLUNTEER SO NOW I LOVE TO GIVE BACK BY VOLUNTEERING MY TIME WITH THE ORGANISATION AS I JUST LOVE WHAT IT REPRESENTS AND WHAT IT IS ABOUT.”



Metro Tunnel: Anzac Station. James Henry.



Orica House. Photo: James Henry.

“I’M ALWAYS DRAWN TO EVENTS AND EXPERIENCES THAT CELEBRATE THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT, AND OPEN HOUSE MELBOURNE HAS LONG BEEN ONE OF MY FAVOURITE CITY PROGRAMS.”

“THE HIGHLIGHT OF MY VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE WAS SEEING THE COMMUNITY’S EXCITEMENT DESPITE THE FREEZING WEATHER. SUPPORTING THREE UNIQUE SITES AND WATCHING VISITORS ENGAGE WITH EACH SPACE MADE IT INCREDIBLY REWARDING. IT WAS A GREAT REMINDER OF HOW POWERFUL THESE OPEN MOMENTS CAN BE IN BRINGING PEOPLE TOGETHER.”



Open House Melbourne Info Hub. Photo: James Henry.

MORE PARTNER INITIATIVES

HERITAGE COUNCIL OF VICTORIA

A significant new initiative this year was the double-page centre spread in the print program created in partnership with the Heritage Council of Victoria, spotlighting key heritage content for a readership of thousands. The spread promoted the Heritage Address, a Modern Melbourne feature, a curated heritage itinerary, and insights from the Victorian Heritage Register—marking the first time heritage programming received centre placement.

Open Play was strategically placed at Eltham Library to engage a younger audience in a Greg Burgess-designed space. Both the Modern Melbourne event and the Heritage Address (featuring Sally Capp in conversation with Eddie Butler-Bowdon) attracted capacity audiences, highlighting strong public interest in Melbourne's heritage narratives.



READINGS – PROGRAM DISTRIBUTION

We rekindled our partnership with Readings, who this year served as the primary distribution point for the printed program prior to the Info Hub opening. Programs were made available across all eight Readings stores throughout Melbourne, with increased print numbers to meet growing demand. Once the Info Hub opened one week out from the Weekend, distribution continued from there. Studio Payne's design ensured clear, accessible program communication across all platforms.



DOCPLAY – MAURICE AND I SCREENING

Open House Melbourne partnered with DocPlay to host a special screening of kiwi documentary *Maurice and I*, which celebrates two of Christchurch's internationally renowned architects, Sir Miles Warren and Maurice Mahoney. Presented in the stunning Sun Theatre, his film tribute added a cinematic element to the extended program while acknowledging the influence of international Open House networks and our continuing relationship with Open Christchurch.

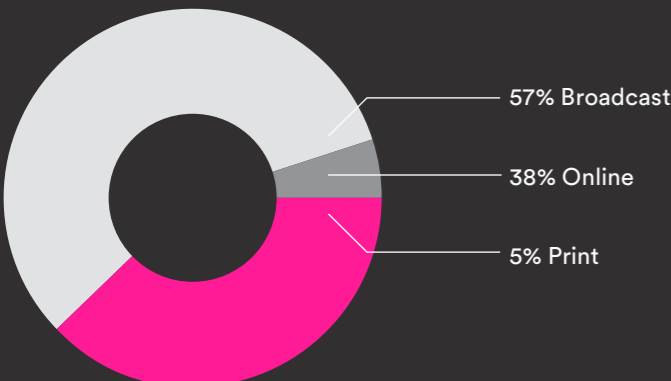


LOVELL CHEN + 100 STORY BUILDING

To celebrate the Weekend 2025 theme, *Stories of the City*, we partnered with 100 Story Building to deliver a creative holiday workshop for children aged 9–12 titled *Weird Doors of the West*. Major Practice Partner Lovell Chen contributed expert architectural insights, sparking imagination and creative writing across two full days of workshops. Young participants explored stories prompted by mysterious doors and hidden worlds, responding to the question: What's happening inside—and who's keeping it a secret? The program provided a powerful platform to hear directly from children about their own *Stories of the City*.



MARKETING + MEDIA EVALUATION



235,363,317

Total reach across print, online, TV and radio

\$2,273,636

Total PR value (Meltwater)

423

Media hits generated from 1 June to 1 August 2025

From the 25 June to the 13 August 2025, an integrated media campaign was rolled out to promote the *Stories of the City* program. This attracted high engagement with the preliminary program content resulting in high attendance outcomes.

The marketing campaign incorporated e-newsletters, social media, public relations, grassroots outreach, cross-promotions, website news articles and promotion via our printed broadsheet publication. In addition, the marketing campaign was supported by ground staff volunteers at a stand-alone information hub ('Info Hub') that acted as a central point of information sharing.

Open House Melbourne's most powerful marketing and communications activities continue to be its media campaign, managed by publicist Adam Valentine, which involves printed media, radio, digital media outlets and TV news coverage.

Event hosts, Collaborators and building partners were also integral in driving awareness and engagement of the Weekend through individual cross-promotional efforts on social media, their own paid PR activities and digital coverage.

32%

Open House e-news

19%

Open House social media (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn)

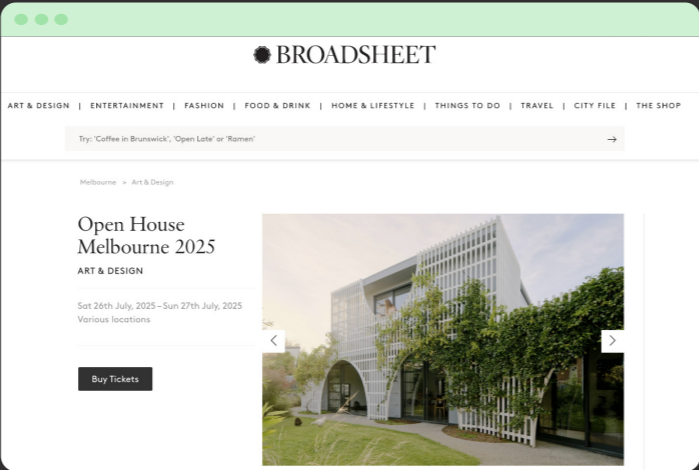
18%

Word of mouth

13%

City of Melbourne What's On

- 13% – News story (print, radio, online article, etc.)
- 11% – Open House website
- 12% – News articles
- 10% – Other organisation's social media accounts (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn)
- 4% – Other website or social media
- 3% – Just saw it happening
- 2% – Posters or flyers
- 9% – Other



MEDIA REACH

The Open House Melbourne Weekend 2025 media campaign was managed by publicist Adam Valentine, who lead a comprehensive built environment and design campaign that generated 423 total pieces of media coverage across television, print, radio and online coverage. A total PR value of \$2,273,636 (Meltwater) and a reach of 235,363,317.

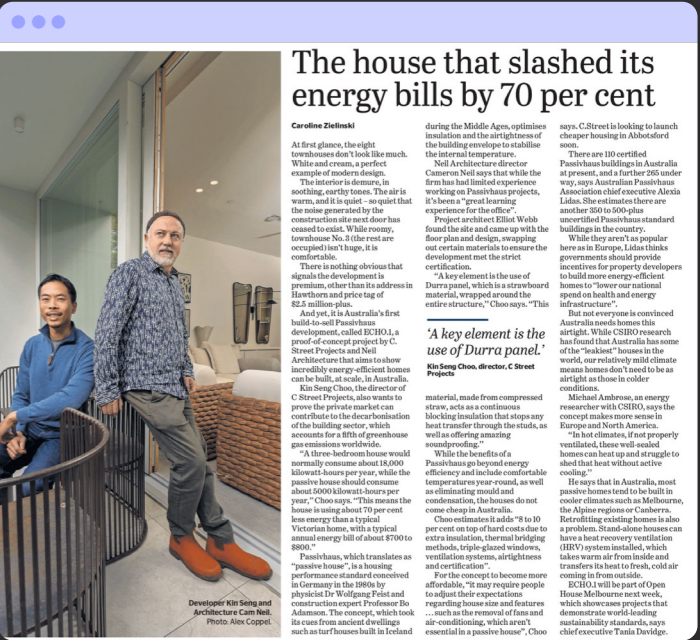
Online editorial was achieved across major news, arts, design and lifestyle digital platforms, including The Herald Sun, Time Out, Concrete Playground, ArtsHub, Broadsheet, The Design Files, Australian Associated Press and notably in The Age who produced a significant number of articles featuring Weekend programs this year.

Broadcast media coverage was secured across TV programs Channel Nine News, Channel 7 News, ABC News Breakfast & Postcards. Radio interviews ran across 3AW, ABC Radio Melbourne, Triple R and Joy. News bulletins also aired on the major radio commercial networks in Melbourne. (Includes syndications).

Print coverage was achieved across major metropolitan titles, including The Age and Herald Sun; as well as local news titles like CBD News, Star Weekly News Group and Southbank Local News.

CLICK TO SEE THE FULL REPORT

Click above link to see the full report and to view the media clippings from the campaign as well as a breakdown of the circulation and PR Value.



WEBSITE

89%

Of attendees accessed program information online

912,213

Page views (25% increase on 2024)

117,310

Users (12% increase on 2024)

The Open House Melbourne website continues to be the central platform for audience engagement, with 89% of attendees accessing program information online. In line with our strategy to drive all visitation to the website as the primary source of program information, we consolidated ticketing for 2025 so that all events were accessed via the Open House Melbourne website, which resulted in 912,213 page views—a 25% increase on 2024—and 117,310 users (up 12%).

Our dedicated Weekend landing page gave users a clear entry point to four key sections: the full program, tips for planning your visit, the itinerary tool, and the new Access Map. Also continuing to be popular among avid Weekend fans was the itinerary tool, with 31% of visitors using the itinerary tool to plan and personalise their weekend.

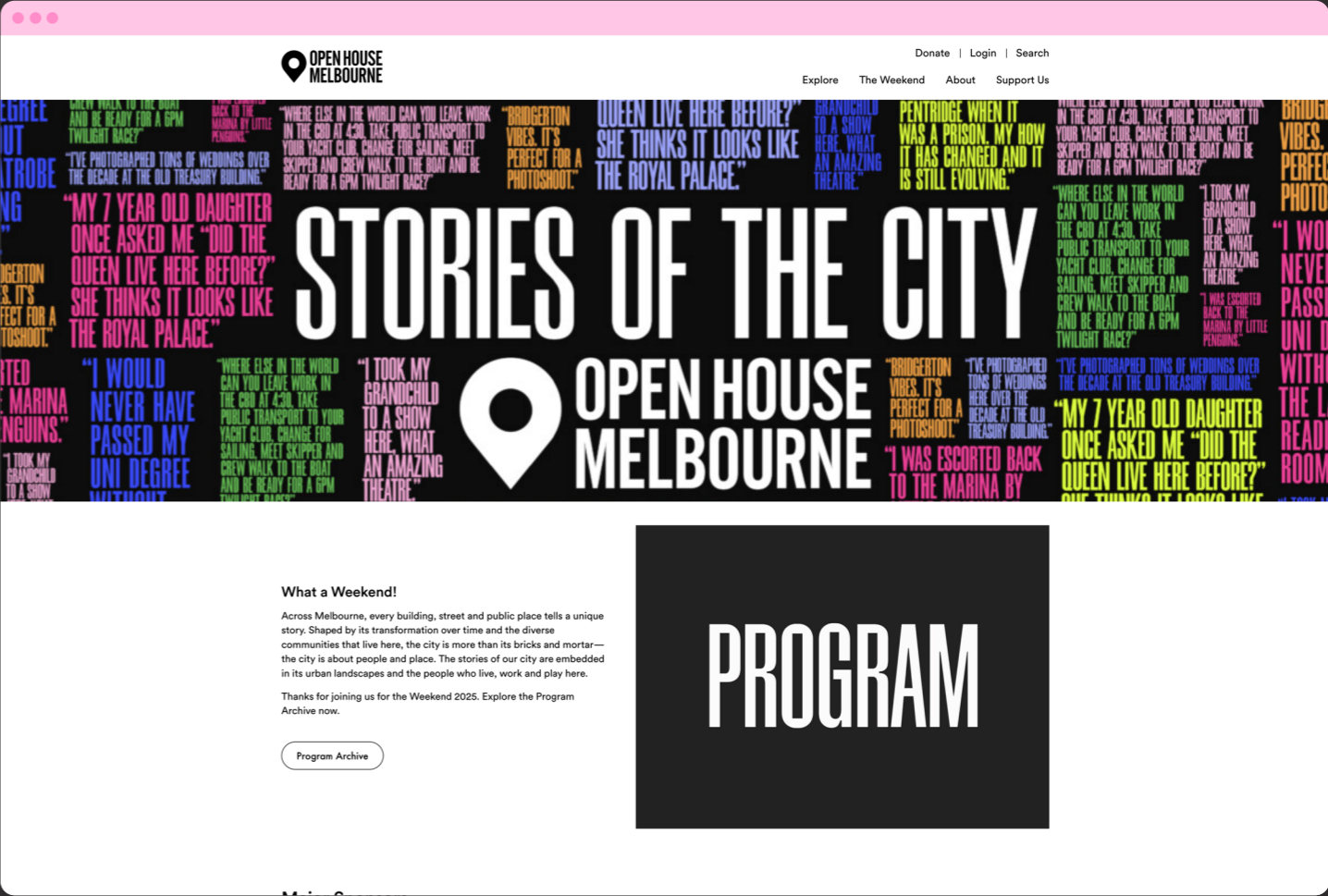
The UserWay accessibility platform also remained available across the site, offering an accessibility menu that enhances usability and user experience, aligned with our organisational focus on Equality, Accessibility and Dignity.

DEVELOPMENTS

In 2025, Efront undertook a comprehensive suite of web development improvements to enhance the Open House Melbourne website’s usability, accessibility and long-term functionality. Key work included a full program archive audit —cleaning up unused URLs, broken backlinks, and sitemap issues—with a new process established for individually archiving events year-round, including a consistent archived-event template and improved Airtable connectivity. Efront also implemented a series of updates across the What's On views, refining map pop-up styling, reversing booking indicator icons for clarity, and improving hover and featured-tag functions to deliver a more intuitive user experience.

On individual event pages, Efront introduced a set of targeted layout improvements, including dynamic “delivered by” labelling, more comprehensive accessibility and getting-here information pulled from Airtable, clickable address mapping, and clearer field headings. The itinerary tool saw the removal of archived events, a ‘clear itinerary’ function, and planned UX upgrades including accordion toggles, booking indicators, and date/time summaries. Most significantly, in the backend, Efront set up an API integration between Airtable and Humanitix to automate event creation, status updates, and ticketing data flow back to the website—this process saved a significant amount of data entry time and avoided unnecessary human error mistakes.

Finally, for Stroll the City, Efront updated content upload scripts to allow future tour data to be uploaded via Excel and ensured all tours have individual URLs—streamlining ongoing maintenance and improving the sustainability of year-round programming online.



MOST VIEWED PAGES (VIEWS/USERS):

1. The weekend program (214073/53952)
2. Open house Melbourne landing page (86184/43885)
3. The Weekend homepage (38976/22677)
4. My account (setting up an itinerary) (21578/6985)
5. Itineraries page (10124/7002)

The most visited building/event pages, and their number of unique page views throughout the campaign, included:

1. Metro Tunnel: Anzac Station (19249/13921)
2. ANZ's Gothic Bank and Verdon Chambers (11072/7524)
3. Donkey Wheel House: A Renaissance (7499/5316)
4. ABC Southbank (7401/5172)
5. Citylink Control Room (7088/4983)
6. Victorian Archives Centre (6433/4702)
7. Cairo Flats (5874/4433)
8. Naples Street House (5575/3784)
9. Abbotsford Convent (5276/3973)
10. Merri House (5258/3987)

TRAFFIC ACQUISITION (USER/ENGAGEMENT TIME)

- Organic search – 95,944 / 3m 3s
- Direct – 65,360 / 1min 41s
- Referral – 33,836 / 2m 1s
- Organic Social – 12,014 / 44s
- Paid Social – 3,162 / 44s
- Email - 1,776 / 1m 05s
- Unassigned – 495 / 4m 09s

WEBSITE ACQUISITIONS

The following websites were crucial in directing traffic to the Open House Melbourne website:

1. Google search (37.4%)
2. (net set) (37.9%)
3. Humanitix (3.1%)
4. City of Melbourne What’s On
5. M.Facebook.com

E-NEWSLETTER

Throughout the campaign, five newsletters were sent promoting the Weekend program, reaching more than 348,959 emails. The average open rate was 42.2% with the most popular newsletter being the City of Melbourne solus and the Program Live edition recording the highest number of click throughs.

52,121

Total subscribers to email database (at end of campaign)

42.2%

Average campaign open rate

8,271

Total campaign click rate

4.2%

Increase in email subscribers (during campaign period)



The Weekend is here



Rug up and start exploring—Open House Melbourne Weekend is here!

Something for everyone

CURATED ITINERARIES

Jump on your bike, hop on a tram or train and dive into the Open House Melbourne program with our curated precinct itineraries, stretching across seven key areas of Melbourne.

For families, heritage buffs and sustainability advocates, we've crafted special Family Fun, Heritage Highlights and Sustainability Sites itineraries to help you make the most of your day.

Explore more



New Access Map



OPEN UP YOUR WEEKEND

Our new Access Map, created with Maptivate, features mobility-friendly and neurodiverse-considerate sites from the program.



Program Highlights



SOCIAL MEDIA

In 2025, Facebook and Instagram were the primary social media platforms that were used to engage with audiences, communicate Weekend program information to our audiences and encourage participation in the broader Weekend conversations. Open House Melbourne utilised a social media management tool to coordinate posting schedules, sharing this information with key partners so they too could coordinate aligned post messaging. Posts to LinkedIn sat outside of this scheduling tool and were more targeted.

Open House Melbourne has a total active audience across all social media platforms of 68,164, including channels on Facebook (29K followers), Instagram (26K followers), Twitter (9K followers), YouTube (1K subscribers) and LinkedIn (3.3K followers). During the campaign period, our social media channels experienced an overall growth of 8% in audience numbers. All channels maintained a steady growth of activity and engagement in the lead-up and remained strong throughout the campaign period.

120,284

Total subscribers across email and social media database (5% increase on 2024)

INSTAGRAM

26,196

Followers

9,939

Profile visits

33,003

Reach

450,702

Post impression

FACEBOOK

28,608

Followers

153,120

Page views

38,156

Reach

LINKEDIN

3,309

Followers

912

Page views

12,254

Impressions

YOUTUBE

980

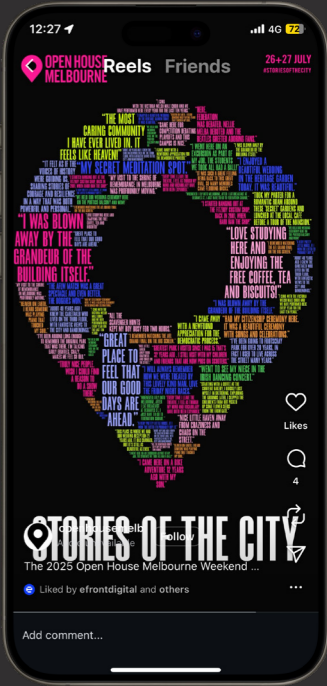
Subscribers

TWITTER

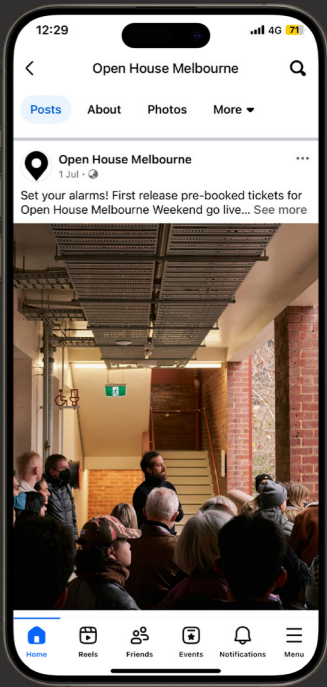
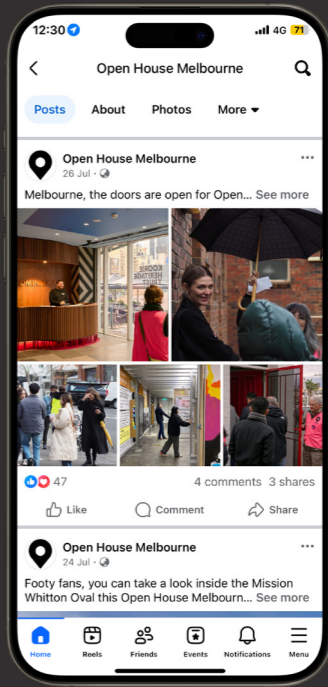
9,071

Followers

TOP TWO POSTS – INSTAGRAM



TOP TWO POSTS – FACEBOOK





IDENTITY

Central to communicating a consistent program and content is a consistent brand identity that can be presented across all of our marketing and communication channels. Major Partner Studio Payne developed the *Stories of the City* identity, which was distributed to all Collaborators through a marketing toolkit and utilised internally across all our platforms.

The printed program for 2025 was a broadsheet program style, with a special Heritage Council of Victoria centre page featuring their highlight programs and itinerary. The printed program was secondary to the information available on the website, but acted as an additional marketing tool for precincts and key partners to distribute to their own communities and networks, attract new audiences and present information to those who were less inclined to use computers.

Studio Payne broadened the Collaborator marketing kit, allowing for more flexibility and use of the identity. An accompanying style guide supported the use of the identity across more assets.

[Access Style Guide Here](#)



Open House Melbourne Info Hub. Photo: James Henry.



“THIS YEAR, WE WANTED TO DO SOMETHING COMPLETELY DIFFERENT FROM PREVIOUS YEARS. BY SHARING QUOTES FROM REAL PEOPLE’S ENCOUNTERS IN THE CITY’S OPEN HOUSE BUILDINGS, WE BROUGHT BOTH THE COMMUNITY’S AND THE BUILDINGS’ STORIES TO LIFE.”

STUDIO PAYNE Quan Payne – Studio Payne



Australian & New Zealand College of Anaesthetists: Styles and Stories. Photo: James Henry.





THANK YOU

The Open House Melbourne team is very small and we deliver a huge program with significant impact. I would like to acknowledge the Open House Melbourne team—Piera Maclean, Katie Evans and Veda Varcoe—whose dedication and hard work ensured the Weekend 2025 was a resounding success.

Open House Melbourne relies on the support and generosity of many dedicated organisations and people.

We could not present our extensive program without the significant contributions of the Open House Melbourne Board, Building and Volunteer Councils, our advisors and ambassador.

We thank our Major Sponsors—the City of Melbourne, Creative Victoria and long-term partners Studio Payne and Efront—for their support.

Deep and sincere thanks to our Collaborators, Practice, Program and Precinct Partners, Media and Digital Partners, Donors, Supporters and almost 500 passionate and pink-vested volunteers.

And finally, I 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.

Tania Davidge
Executive Director | Chief Curator

APPENDIX

FULL PROGRAM LIST

[View Full Program Here](#)



2025 SPONSORS, PARTNERS + PATRONS

Open House Melbourne could not deliver the Weekend program without the generosity and support of our Building Council, Volunteer Council and the 500 volunteers who generously give their time. Heartfelt thanks to Building Council members Steve Stefanopoulos OAM (chair), Anna O’Sullivan, Sophie Cleland, Adriano Zarosinski, Jeffrey Robinson and Mitchell Gow and Volunteer Council members Neil Harkness, Andrew Purvis, Joy Villalino, Stephanie Bateman, Maria Panettieri and Luise Raeder.

MAJOR SPONSORS



MAJOR PROGRAM PARTNERS



MAJOR PRACTICE PARTNERS



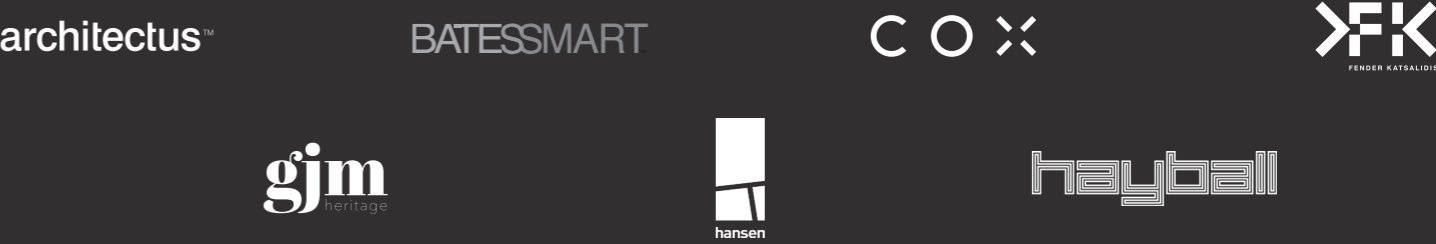
SPONSORS



PRECINCT PARTNERS



PRACTICE PARTNERS



PROGRAM PARTNERS



VENUE PARTNERS



MEDIA AND DIGITAL PARTNERS



SUPPORTERS



PATRONS



