



Design Excellence Advisory Committee

Terms of reference 2021-2025

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Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners

The City of Melbourne respectfully acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the land, the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung and Bunurong Boon Wurrung peoples of the Eastern Kulin and pays respect to their Elders past, present and emerging. We are committed to our reconciliation journey, because at its heart, reconciliation is about strengthening relationships between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples, for the benefit of all Victorians.

The City of Melbourne respectfully acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the land we govern, the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung and Bunurong Boon Wurrung peoples of the Eastern Kulin and pays respect to their Elders past, present and emerging.

We acknowledge and honour the unbroken spiritual, cultural and political connection the Wurundjeri, Bunurong, Dja Dja Wurrung, Taungurung and Wadawurrung peoples of the Eastern Kulin have to this unique place for more than 2000 generations.

We are committed to our reconciliation journey, because at its heart, reconciliation is about strengthening relationships between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples, for the benefit of all Victorians.

01 Introduction

The City of Melbourne's Design Excellence Program (the Program) demonstrates a long term commitment to elevating design quality and fostering a culture of excellence in the built environment. The Program includes a range of short, medium, and long-term initiatives to optimise design literacy and collaboration. These initiatives are categorised under the key themes of leadership, advocacy, design review and design competitions.

The Design Excellence Advisory Committee is a key initiative under the leadership category, providing a platform for community, industry, and academia to engage with a range of design challenges and opportunities in the City.

Key Objectives

The Design Excellence Committee will advise Council on the development and implementation of the Design Excellence Program, as well as providing valuable community discussion on Council projects and topical city design issues. It is envisioned as an informal forum for debate and a platform to support and build relationships with key Australian and International design champions and programs. The key objectives of this Committee include:

- **Provide advice on the implementation of the Design Excellence Program.**
- **Ensure Council strategies and projects prioritise Design Excellence.**
- **Promote design excellence in industry and the broader community.**
- **Explore opportunities for increased collaboration with the design and development industry and academia.**
- **Engage in Melbourne-based debates and events relating to design culture.**
- **Strengthen local and international awareness of City of Melbourne capabilities and achievements in design.**

02 Scope

The City of Melbourne's Design Excellence Advisory Committee will serve as an informal advisory and advocacy forum. It will not participate in any decision-making processes or formal design review of Council projects.

The scope of advice will include discussions regarding:

- Refinement, delivery timing and future directions of the Design Excellence Program and its components.
- Council strategies and projects as they relate to design leadership, advocacy, and communication.

The scope of advocacy will include:

- Share and build on existing events and forums that elevate design debate and the value of design, such as Open House Melbourne, Melbourne Design Week, MPavilion, etc.
- Support and build on the work of existing Institutes and industry bodies (e.g. Australian Institute of Architects (AIA), Australian Institute of Landscape Architects (AILA), Planning Institute of Australia (PIA), Property Council Australia (PCA), Urban Development Institute of Australia (UDIA) and others.
- Support and engage with institute and Council-led Awards programs, such as the Melbourne Awards.
- Identify opportunities for new partnerships across industry, academia, and the broader community.

03 Membership

The Committee will comprise of up to **eight (8) Technical Experts including one representative of the Office of Victorian Government Architect, and up to five (5) community members, a Committee Chair and Deputy Chair**. A detailed break-down of the Committee membership is as follows:

Technical Experts

- Experts in the fields of architecture, landscape architecture, urban design, urban planning, design communication, property, construction, and other relevant fields.
- Membership will reflect a balance of industry representatives (AIA, AILA, PIA, UDIA, etc.), practitioners and cultural organisations (Open House Melbourne, NGV, etc.) and academia.
- One member will be a representative of the Office of Victoria Government Architect and provide a State Government representative.

Community members

- Community members who comprise broad representation of residents and ratepayers of the City of Melbourne.

Committee Chair (1)

- Lead of the City of Melbourne City Planning Portfolio (or a delegated alternate chair).

Deputy Chair

- Lead of the City of Melbourne Heritage Portfolio (or a delegated alternate chair).

The panel will also include the following as full members:

- General Manager Strategy, Planning and Climate Change
- Director City Design
- Director City Strategy
- City Architect

City Design officers will also assist the committee where required.

Technical Advisers may be invited to participate in specific discussions at the discretion of the Committee. All Councillors will have a standing invitation to attend meetings of the Design Excellence Advisory Committee.

Appointment

Technical Experts will be nominated via a select invitation process based on the recommendations of Council's Director City Design and the City Architect.

Community members will be appointed via a public application process.

The appointment of panel members will be made by the General Manager Strategy, Planning and Climate Change. Councillors will be notified of these recommendations and provided the opportunity to request referral to Council prior to formal appointment.

Committee membership must be made in accordance with the Diversity Policy and represent a broad cross-section of the community. For the purposes of the Policy, diversity includes gender, age, ethnicity and cultural background. Under section 12 of the *Equal Opportunity Act 2010*, a dedicated Aboriginal membership has been considered to support Aboriginal representation on the Committee.

Members will be appointed for a period of two (2) years. Members may seek re-appointment for a further two (2) years with the maximum term being four (4) years.

Any member who fails to attend a minimum of 50% of quarterly meetings per year will be deemed to have resigned.

04 Role and responsibilities

The shared and individual responsibilities of Committee members are as follows:

Chair

- Conduct meetings in a fair, timely and ethical manner.

Deputy Chair

- Conduct meetings in the absence of the Chair.

Director City Design

- Confirm meeting agenda and items.
- Support Committee members to fully engage in issues on the table by providing information and research findings in a timely and accessible manner.

Technical Experts, community members and Technical Advisers

- To be fully prepared for meetings, individual pre-reading of agendas and attachments.
- To agree to participate in a collaborative meeting format.
- To bring local knowledge, technical expertise, and broad community experience to the table.
- To consider and raise issues, proposals and ideas.
- To provide informed advice and guidance.

Shared roles and responsibilities

- All members will be able to raise any issues and problems and have them dealt with in an honest, respectful and open manner.
- All members will be given equal opportunity to participate in Committee discussions.

Support

- The Design Excellence team will keep minutes and provide administrative support, including the setting up of meeting agenda and items. The Design Excellence team will circulate the agenda and all relevant materials to members in a timely and accessible manner.
- Council administrative support will schedule and cater for meetings.

Code of Conduct

In performing the role of a member, a committee member must adhere to City of Melbourne's Code of Conduct (refer separate document).

Conflict of Interest

In the event of a conflict of interest arising for any member of the Panel, the matter must be immediately tabled and the member must abstain from any dialogue in relation to that matter.

05 Meetings

The Design Excellence Advisory Committee will meet four (4) times annually. Additional meetings may be scheduled if required.

Meetings will be held at the Town Hall on 90-130 Swanston Street between 5.30pm – 7.30pm on a week day. Light refreshments/supper will be provided.

Virtual meetings will be held in the case where a face-to-face meeting is not possible. Further details will be provided to members in advance.

Council support for committee members

The Committee will operate on a voluntary basis.

Council will provide interpreters, carers, and any other requirements (as advised) to support members to attend and participate in meetings.

Resources, including printed materials, will be provided (if required) by Council.

Review of Terms of Reference

A review of the Design Excellence Advisory Committee Terms of Reference will be undertaken every four (4) years or sooner if needed.

Insurance

Members of the Committee will be covered under the Council's insurance program and will not be responsible for any cost or liability incurred by Council as a consequence of Council acting on the advice of the Committee.

Expenses

No member of the Committee will incur any expense in relation to his or her activities as a member of the Committee, without the prior approval of Council's nominated officer.

06 Confidentiality

Members are expected to comply with the confidential information provision contained within Sections 3(1) and 125 of the *Local Government Act 2020*.

Members must treat information they receive as confidential unless otherwise advised. The documents presented to the Design Excellence Advisory Committee will often be in draft format and are not intended for distribution.

Members must not use confidential information other than for the purpose of performing their function as a member of the Design Excellence Advisory Committee.

Public comment

Where Committee members are invited to provide public comment, they will need to ensure they engage with the City of Melbourne beforehand, to ensure alignment with Council's position. Failure to provide an opportunity for review would mean that the committee member would be in breach of their role.