

- ULTIMO
- PARRAMATTA
- SYDNEY OBSERVATORY
- CASTLE HILL

- https://www.maas.museum/powerhouse-renewal/design-competition/?utm_source=tactical_announce_edm&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=ultimo_design_comp&utm_content=button

POWERHOUSE ULTIMO RENEWAL

ARCHITECTURAL COMPETITION WINNER ANNOUNCED

Powerhouse Ultimo is set to undergo a transformation that will celebrate the best of its past with innovative museum exhibition and educational spaces, following the announcement of the winning architectural design for its renewal.

The concept designed by Australian team Architectus, Durbach Block Jagers Architects, Tyrrell Studio, Youssofzay + Hart, Akira Isogawa, Yerrabingin, Finding Infinity and Arup have been chosen to deliver a visionary world-class museum for the people of NSW.

The design contains expanded museum exhibition spaces, including international museum standard galleries for immersive exhibitions and learning programs. A new urban space connecting the museum to The Goods Line will create a major new public square for Sydney, increasing open public space that will support outdoor programs. The Harris Street frontage will be revitalised with creative studios that will support education and industry programs and will create new opportunities to access the museum's library and archive.

The Powerhouse Ultimo renewal will reinvigorate one of Australia's most revered museums, offering incredible museum experiences, expanded exhibition spaces, that will provide new levels of access to the Powerhouse collection. The design will enable the museum to showcase international exclusive exhibitions and programs that support the creative industries.

The new Powerhouse Academy will offer a rooftop camp for secondary and tertiary students from regional NSW and beyond, providing an immersive learning experience in the heart of the city. This will provide a range of new opportunities for young people right across the State to engage with and explore the Powerhouse Ultimo's internationally renowned exhibitions.

"With a bold, defined approach to Country-centred design that is sensitive to the heritage of the site, and inspired by the memory of local sandstone escarpment, the winning scheme is in essence an Acknowledgement of Country in practice," said Powerhouse Director, First Nations, Emily McDaniel.

The Powerhouse Ultimo renewal is part of the NSW Government's record investment in cultural infrastructure, reinforcing Sydney's reputation as a global cultural destination.

The winning Design Team have created a deeply considered response to the Ultimo site, honouring the history and heritage of the Powerhouse museum whilst simultaneously reimagining how the Powerhouse can continue to engage communities and visitors into the future.

The internationally distinctive design will achieve a world-class museum that will fortify the Powerhouse Museum's role, at the forefront of global contemporary museum practice. We look forward to collaborating and consulting with the community as part of Stage 2 State Significant Development Application which will commence early in 2023.

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Our project acknowledges Country as our inspiration and narrator, restoring a natural and intuitive experience of the city; walking with, rather than on, Country.

We propose a new relationship to the heritage fabric. 'Leaning back' to allow the full heritage facades to be seen, creating a continuous walkable sky-expanding gorge between old and new, from the Creative Courtyard to the Goods Line Terrace. The new building re-sees the heritage fabric and city beyond from multiple levels of this escarpment – from uses, circulation, terraces and gardens. Respectful and immediate, the new building lives alongside the Powerhouse core, a powerful embodiment of both geography and backdrop.

Our team is dedicated to exceeding business-as-usual by delivering a world-leading environmental outcome. We want to set an example: a museum that is energy net positive, water neutral and zero waste – on site, without investing in offsets.

Our design honours and is framed by the wider landscape, a cultural topography, that operates at the largest scale of geological and hydrological systems. This biophysical context of the living landscape organises the public domain and buildings into an experience that is clear and legible for all who visit and use the museum; as the ridgeline, the escarpment and the valley terraces. This place is a creative field beyond its walls, engaging the ever-changing life of the museum with the life of the modern city, connected to, and in tune with, the ancient rhythms of Country.

DESIGN TEAM

Architectus, Durbach Block Jagers Architects, Tyrrell Studio, Youssofzay + Hart, Akira Isogawa, Yerrabingin, Finding Infinity and Arup

Durbach Block Jagers Architects are proven design innovators and authors of some of our country's most remarkable buildings. Architectus brings the best experience and attitude together to design and deliver Australia's most complex precincts and cultural projects. Tyrrell Studio guides an urban design and landscape architectural response informed by the precinct and by place. Emerging Sydney practice Youssofzay + Hart use their philosophy of creating equitable, accessible and enjoyable spaces for all. Renowned Australian fashion designer Akira Isogawa is our provocateur and collaborator. Yerrabingin is coach, advisor and collaborator, embedding our approach to Design With Country. Finding Infinity pushes the sustainability agenda to achieve world-leading results. Arup's venues team provide specialist arts and culture design expertise and experience.



Standing

left to right: Alex Gelego, Durbach Block Jagers; Dr Stephen Long, Architectus; David Jagers, Durbach Block Jagers; Neil Durbach, Durbach Block Jagers; Luke Johnson, Architectus; Ross Harding, Finding Infinity; John Jeffrey, Architectus; Chris Mercer, Arup. Seated left to right: Ruth Wilson, Architectus; Christian Hampson, Yerrabingin; Akira Isogawa; Mark Tyrrell, Tyrrell Studio; Camilla Block, Durbach Block Jagers; Anne Kristin Risnes, Durbach Block Jagers; Belqis Youssofzay, Youssofzay + Hart.

Architectus

Architectus is an award-winning Australian architecture and design studio specialising in arts and culture, community, commercial, education, interiors, residential, transport, urban design and planning. Their insightful and humancentric design approach is combined with a collaborative ethos to create unique places that are exemplars of elegance, function and sustainability. They operate as a single studio with creative teams based in Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane, Adelaide and Perth and have designed and delivered some of Australia's most complex and important cultural buildings.

Durbach Block Jagers Architects

Neil Durbach, Camilla Block and David Jagers are the directors of Durbach Block Jagers Architects. They lead a permanent team of 12 who have worked together for over 20 years. The practice is

committed to search for the possibilities of architecture itself: its power and poetry; its pleasure and necessity. They work within the parameters of appropriateness and innovation, subscribing to a sensibility of sensitivity – seamlessly integrating landscape and architecture. Durbach Block Jagers Architects are focused on delivering quality in all projects.

Tyrrell Studio

Tyrrell Studio is a multidisciplinary Australian design firm led by Mark Tyrrell. The studio designs regenerative and adaptive urban environments ranging from strategic work at the city or ecosystem scale through to the detailed design of large-scale public domain projects. Tyrrell Studio's significant public commissions have been recognised nationally for their conceptual clarity, strong environmental agenda, and poetic response to place.

Youssofzay + Hart

Emerging Sydney practice Youssofzay + Hart bring expertise working with cultural institutions to create art spaces that are innovative and radical. Based in Sydney and established in 2017, the practice is committed to built excellence through design services, research and creative collaborations with a focus on cultural, civic and public architecture. For the past 5 years, they have worked with some of Australia's most renowned arts institutions to deliver exhibitions, gallery interiors and site-specific architectural interventions in close collaboration with curators, artists and other gallery stakeholders. Adjacent to their cultural work the practice pursues commercial and residential projects with density, sustainability and resource use at the forefront of their design agenda. Their work has been recognised in both national and international awards with their cultural project No Show at Carriageworks awarded the NSW Australian Institute Small Project Award in 2022.

Akira Isogawa

Akira Isogawa is one of Australia's most celebrated and critically acclaimed designers. Born in Kyoto Japan, Akira moved to Sydney in 1986, studying fashion and design at the Sydney Institute of Technology. Akira is renowned for his contemporary aesthetic, drawing inspiration from traditional Japanese design. Debuting in 1996 at Australian Fashion Week, he continues to present collections to international embrace. Akira's powerful creative force has seen him collaborate across multiple platforms, including designing costumes for the Australian Ballet and the Sydney Dance

Company. Akira's work has been exhibited in institutions and galleries worldwide including the NGV, Powerhouse Museum and V&A Museum London.

Yerrabingin

Yerrabingin was co-founded by Christian Hampson in 2018. The visionary start-up seeks to disrupt conventional approaches to ending Indigenous disadvantage and create intercultural opportunities for future generations to thrive. With over 20 years of experience working in Indigenous cultural heritage, Christian sought to walk a new path by interweaving collaborative design thinking and Indigenous knowledge. Yerrabingin have become a leading force in the commercial design industry by delivering environmentally conscious native landscapes and place making designs enriched with Indigenous narratives. Their vision is that sensing and caring for Country is something that transcends cultural differences and highlights the many values that are similar across the cultures of our contemporary communities. Yerrabingin is committed to supporting a socially inclusive, resilient, and innovative community – based on honouring the wisdom and kinship of all cultures – captured through the lens of custodianship.

Finding Infinity

Finding Infinity is an environmental sustainability studio that provides purpose driven self-sufficiency consulting, allowing projects to truly touch the earth lightly. Their approach is to always design with respect to future generations Always striving for maximum performance and never content with minimum compliance. Delivering the most cost-effective way of achieving self-sufficiency through energy, water, food and waste strategies for projects ranging in scale from houses to citywide masterplans. Finding Infinity was established in 2012 by Ross Harding and has seven staff who have diverse skill sets including engineers, architects, designers and artists.

Arup

Arup Venues team specialises in arts, culture and entertainment spaces. Many of the team are experienced arts practitioners with backgrounds in music, dance, theatre, visual arts, and technical and operations management in the visual and performing arts. A seamless, single practice integrates skills in visioning and stakeholder engagement, cultural and visitor experience planning, arts management and production, theatre and exhibition architecture, acoustic design, facility planning, stage engineering,

production lighting, sound, and audio visual systems. The team brings not only industry expertise and experience, but also a shared passion to find the best possible outcomes by working together in highly collaborative environments.

JURY STATEMENT

The Jury was impressed with the quality of the design proposals for the Powerhouse Ultimo Design Competition and commends all competitor teams for their immense work and the careful thought and energy given to their submissions. After thorough deliberation and unanimous agreement, it is with great pleasure that the Jury congratulates the design team which comprises the following practices: Architectus, Durbach Block Jagers Architects, Tyrrell Studio, Youssofzay + Hart, Akira Isogawa, Yerrabingin, Finding Infinity and Arup.

The winning scheme is underpinned by a compelling and coherent vision for the renewal of the Powerhouse Ultimo site and the broader precinct. The design approach centres on making subtle moves appropriate to the site – at times via gentle intervention and repair, at others through ambitious moves that enable the site to be ‘unlocked’ to provide a distinctive and highly functional museum experience. The proposal supports the Powerhouse vision of generous public connectivity and access through and within the site, and its materiality and scale respond sensitively to the surrounding Ultimo context.

Designing and connecting with Country strongly informed the conceptual development of the project and is meaningfully embedded in all aspects of the architectural, functional, landscape and urban response. This proposal composes a family of strong masonry buildings which, through the exploration of form and detail over time, reflect and respect the heritage, ethos and future of this innovative institution.

ABOUT THE JURY



Standing left to right: Wendy Lewin, Alison Page, Annette Pitman, Lisa Havilah. Seated left to right: Abbie Galvin, Peter Poulet. Photo by Zan Wimberley

Wendy Lewin LFRAIA, Chair (NSW) is a Life Fellow of the Australian Institute of Architects and currently heads her own architecture studio. Since graduating with a degree in architecture from the University of Sydney she has held leading positions in private practice and is the recipient of state, national and international awards for her built work and contribution to architecture, education and the profession. She contributes to the public discourse on architecture through her varied advisory and curatorial roles, national symposiums, and national and international exhibitions. Wendy is committed to design education and for over 35 years has taught at various universities including the University of Sydney, UNSW, UTS and as a visiting Professor at Hong Kong University. She has chaired and participated in numerous state, national and international architectural design competition juries. Wendy is a member of the Design Integrity Panel for the Powerhouse Parramatta project and is an independent consultant to the Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences. In August 2018, Wendy was appointed a Commissioner of the NSW Independent Planning Commission.

Abbie Galvin LFRAIA (NSW) is the 24th NSW Government Architect. Abbie brings to the role 30 years of experience in architectural practice on a wide range of project types that have been highly awarded, published and recognised internationally. Projects Abbie

led have been the recipient of more than 40 state, national and international architectural awards including the RAIA Lloyd Rees Award for Urban Design, the RAIA Jack McConnell Award for Public Architecture and the RAIA Blackett Prize for Regional Architecture, in addition to personal awards such as the AIA Marion Mahoney Griffin Prize for a distinctive body of work in the field of architecture. Abbie has been involved with the profession, the Institute of Architects and the Board of Architects for many years. She is a regular speaker at universities and conferences nationally and internationally and chairs and participates as an expert adviser in many design advisory panels, taskforces and awards juries. Her focus on policy and advice enables Abbie to promote and leverage the long-term benefits of great design within the built environment. Abbie is a Life Fellow of the Australian Institute of Architects.

Peter Poulet LFRAIA (NSW) is the Central District Commissioner with the Greater Sydney Commission. He is a Trustee of the Museum of Applied Arts and Sciences and Professor of Practice at Western Sydney University School of Architecture. Peter was the inaugural State Architect of Tasmania 2009–2012 and was the 23rd NSW Government Architect from 2012–2018. Peter’s projects have received numerous awards including the Horbury Hunt Award, the Blakett Prize and an Australian Institute of Architects’ Award. He is a Fellow of the Australian Institute of Architects.

Alison Page (NSW) is a Walbanga and Wadi Wadi woman and is an award-winning designer and film producer whose career, spanning 24 years, links Aboriginal stories and traditional knowledge with contemporary design. She appeared for 8 years as a regular panellist on the ABC TV show *The New Inventors* and in 2015 was inducted into the Design Institute of Australia’s Hall of Fame. She is Associate Dean (Indigenous Leadership & Engagement) in the Faculty of Design, Architecture and Building, UTS; founder of the National Aboriginal Design Agency; and in 2022 was named Gold Medal winner at the Interior Design Excellence Awards. Alison is a Councillor with the Australian National Maritime Museum and a Board Director of the Sydney Harbour Trust, Art Gallery of South Australia and Aboriginal research group Ninti One Ltd.

Annette Pitman is passionate about creating public spaces that inspire and delight and leading the talented teams that deliver them. Since joining Create NSW, she has guided the delivery of Walsh Bay Arts Precinct, Powerhouse Museums and Theatre Royal and the development of a large pipeline of cultural infrastructure.

Previously as a project director, she led some of Australia's most transformational cultural and sport projects, including Arts Centre Melbourne's Hamer Hall Redevelopment and the Melbourne Park Tennis Centre Redevelopment. Her career spans public and private sector leadership roles in Melbourne, Sydney and the United States and has focused on project delivery, strategic planning and organisational development.

Lisa Haviilah is Chief Executive of the Powerhouse. Through her leadership she is establishing a new museum paradigm for one of Australia's oldest and most important cultural institutions. The landmark renewal of the Powerhouse includes the creation of the museum's new flagship, Powerhouse Parramatta; the revitalisation of Powerhouse Ultimo; the expansion of Powerhouse Castle Hill and the digitisation of the Powerhouse Collection. From 2012–2019, Lisa was the Director of Carriageworks. Under her leadership Carriageworks experienced extraordinary audience, artistic and commercial growth, becoming the fastest growing cultural precinct in Australia. Previously, she was Director of Campbelltown Arts Centre, where she pioneered an internationally renowned contemporary arts program that brought together culturally and socially diverse communities.

COMPETITION PROCESS

In June 2021, the NSW Government announced a \$480–\$500 million investment into the renewal of Powerhouse Ultimo. A Design Excellence Strategy was prepared to support a Stage One Concept State Significant Development Application. The Design Excellence Strategy was prepared in accordance with the City of Sydney Competitive Design Policy (CoS Policy) adopted by City of Sydney Council (CoS) 14 December 2020, the Sydney Local Environment Plan 2012 (the LEP) and the Sydney Development Control Plan 2012 (the DCP) and took into account the Draft Government Architect NSW Design Excellence Competition Guidelines (May 2018). The competition was undertaken as a Competitive Design Alternatives process under the CoS Policy.

In July 2022, the NSW Government launched a national Design Competition to renew Powerhouse Ultimo. The two-stage competition invited collaborative design teams to bring their own expansive concepts and ambitions and collaborate with the Powerhouse to deliver this generationally important cultural project. Following a call for Expressions of Interest, from more than 100

submissions, five design teams were invited to participate in the Design Competition, which commenced in September 2022.

The competition was managed by CityLab on behalf of Create NSW, Infrastructure NSW and the Powerhouse, and was formally endorsed by the Australian Institute of Architects.

FINALISTS

BVN and OCULUS with OCP Architects, TTW, Eckersley O'Callaghan, Transsolar Klima Engineering

BVN is an architecture and interior design practice whose work includes Atlassian Central, Green Square and the National Aboriginal Art Gallery. OCULUS is an urban design and landscape studio which has delivered public realm for the Museum of Old and New Art (MONA), Hobart and are currently designing the public domain for Tarrkarri Centre for First Nations Cultures in Adelaide. BVN and OCULUS collaborated with OCP Architects on heritage, TTW on structural design, Eckersley O'Callaghan on façade, and Transsolar Klima Engineering on sustainability and climate engineering.

Cox Architecture, Neeson Murcutt + Neille, Other Architects, Hector Abrahams Architects, Sue Barnsley Design and Arup

A collaborative team of Sydney-based practices with a high level of investment in the vitality of the city, the core of this team has significant shared experience and expertise in public domain design, public building design, museum curation, heritage interpretation, landscapes, and sustainability. They believe that successful public projects are grounded in a nuanced sensitivity to place and that Country provides the foundation for a future Powerhouse Ultimo in its embodiment of place, ecology and people.

John Wardle Architects, Billy Maynard, ASPECT Studios, Bangawarra Design Studio, Eckersley O'Callaghan, Atelier Ten and Urbis

John Wardle Architects is renowned for making buildings that work sympathetically with a city's historic fabric. Billy Maynard is an emerging practitioner and collected artist, currently leading the spatial design team for the Sydney Modern Project designed by SANAA. Urban designers and landscape architects ASPECT Studios have a record of excellence in projects of transformational change.

Bangawarra Design Studio's Designing with Country methodology applies site-specific knowledge in challenging colonial spatial practices by listening to, valuing and respecting tens of millennia of unbroken ancestral knowledge and culture. Rounding out the team are environmentally sustainable design specialists Atelier Ten, Eckersley O'Callaghan (structural and facade engineering), and Urbis (heritage and archaeology).

Tonkin Zulaikha Greer Architects, JMD Design, TCL, Sibling Architecture, Freeman Ryan Design, Atelier Ten

This multidisciplinary and multigenerational design team reflects the collaborative research, ideation and curatorial approach of the Powerhouse. Each member brings unique expertise and a breadth of project experience. TZG are renowned for thoughtfully articulated heritage and culturally embedded architecture; Sibling Architecture are recognised for socially engaged, participatory environments; Freeman Ryan are leaders in strategic gallery and exhibition thinking; TCL create place-connected landscapes; and JMD Design drive people-centred urban spaces. The diversity of approaches and perspectives across the design team will be the basis of a compelling and inspired proposal for the renewed Powerhouse.