

EMBARGOED UNTIL MIDNIGHT SATURDAY 28 JUNE 2025

## **CHIHULY IN THE BOTANIC GARDEN WINS 2025 CITY OF ADELAIDE PRIZE FOR DESIGN EXCELLENCE AND PEOPLE'S CHOICE AWARD**

A dazzling cultural activation that captivated more than **one million visitors** has been awarded the **2025 City of Adelaide Prize for Design Excellence**—alongside the coveted **People's Choice Award**, as voted by the public.

**Chihuly in the Botanic Garden**, delivered by the **Botanic Gardens and State Herbarium**, transformed Adelaide's iconic Botanic Garden into a vibrant, open-air gallery showcasing the internationally celebrated glass works of American artist **Dale Chihuly**.

Over seven months, the free exhibition invited visitors of all ages to experience 15 monumental glass installations—including two works created specifically for Adelaide—strategically placed throughout the Garden and the Bicentennial Conservatory. A standout feature was the *Glacier Ice and Lapis Chandelier*, now permanently housed in the historic Palm House as a lasting gift to the city.

Beyond its visual splendour, the project activated the city's creative and hospitality sectors through a dynamic program of **live music, workshops, tours, and retail collaborations**, generating cultural and economic uplift while connecting people to nature, art and place.

Presented at the **2025 SA Architecture Awards** held at the historic Queen's Theatre, the Prize was **generously supported by the City of Adelaide** and **presented by Adelaide Lord Mayor Dr Jane Lomax-Smith**. The award was **accepted by Michael Harvey**, Director of the Botanic Gardens and State Herbarium, and **Rhianna Pezzaniti**, Producer of the Chihuly Project.

The jury described the winning entry as *"a powerful demonstration of how art can elevate public space and civic life"*, praising its joyful integration with the heritage landscape and its inclusive, city-wide impact. Exceptional accessibility, expert curation, and deep community engagement contributed to its overwhelming public success, with record-breaking attendance and widespread acclaim.

This year's **People's Choice Award**, **generously supported by CityMag**, attracted **over 2,000 public votes**, with *Chihuly in the Botanic Garden* emerging as the **clear favourite**.

"This project exemplifies the aspirations of the City of Adelaide and sets a new benchmark for cultural engagement," the jury noted.

### **Commendations for Design Excellence**

Two commendations were also awarded in recognition of outstanding design contribution to the city:

- **Adelaide GPO Marriott Hotel**

*By Hassell with Baukultur*

A sophisticated redevelopment of the historic General Post Office precinct that seamlessly blends adaptive reuse with bold contemporary design. The jury commended its generous public realm contribution, sensitive heritage response, and catalytic role in the revitalisation of Victoria Square.

- **Union House – The University of Adelaide**

*By Swanbury Penglase*

A visionary reimagining of a campus landmark, restoring Union House as a vibrant social and cultural hub. The project was praised for its architectural sensitivity, enhanced accessibility, and reconnection of the university to the wider city through inclusive design.

The **City of Adelaide Prize for Design Excellence** is presented annually by the **City of Adelaide** in partnership with the **Australian Institute of Architects (SA Chapter)**. It recognises recently completed projects that have made an extraordinary contribution to the life and identity of the city through design excellence.

For full details of all award recipients including media summaries, jury citations, images – for named awards, category winners and commendations, please see attached spreadsheet – *2025 SA Architecture Awards – Media Assets* (WORD doc.). Further project images are provided in the Awards Dropbox folder:

<https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fo/95zi92o8w9qm1tx7vg8ew/AE3bidn-Y-YqJB9zTNXoZhQ?rlkey=9yehlzi5sbwafwh7a95cbun2y&st=a1iy2io4&dl=0>

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**NOTES TO EDITOR:**

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