Australian Institute of Architects sets new sustainability benchmark with 2023 Victorian Architecture Awards

Monday 27 February 2023

The Victorian Chapter of the Australian Institute of Architects has today announced the launch of the 2023 Victorian Architecture Awards, with a renewed focus on recognising sustainable architectural outcomes.

The Institute's awards program, which celebrates the highest achievements in the architectural profession across the state, will officially commence on **Tuesday 21 March** with an exhibition of entries hosted at the Melbourne School of Design. The exhibition will showcase photographs drawn from this year's **254 submissions** – the largest field of entries in recent years, and a significant increase from last year's total of 209 entries.

Marking the return of a fully in-person awards program, the Exhibition of Entries is a rare opportunity for the public and industry peers to view the state's best and most recent architectural outcomes, displayed by category, while Victorian Architecture Awards judging takes place.

This year, the Institute has strengthened its commitment to supporting projects that provide a sustainable built environment for future generations of Victorians with the introduction of a new Sustainability Checklist for all entrants across the 10 direct categories that make up the Victorian Architecture Awards.

Victorian State President David Wagner, FRAIA said this year's program welcomes the introduction of a Sustainability Checklist against which all projects are required to be assessed.

"The checklist is another pillar in the Institute's focus on reducing embodied carbon content in construction, minimising carbon expenditure in the operation of buildings and navigating towards a sustainable, circular economy," Wagner said.

"Each year, the Architecture Awards celebrate architectural excellence in the design of our built environment, varying from individual houses to commercial buildings and heritage restoration, to public infrastructure across the state of Victoria. I am looking forward to celebrating the winning projects' commitment to sustainability and architectural innovation, as well as seeing in-person presentations of projects, open to the public for the first time since the onset of the pandemic."

Revealing the changing character of Victoria's urban landscape, submissions for the commercial architecture, public architecture and urban design categories saw projects shaping Melbourne in surprising and innovative ways.

Projects like *Budj Bim Cultural Landscape* (Cooper Scaife Architects) and the *Gunditj Mirring Keeping Place & Business Centre* (Phillips/Pilkington Architects) highlighted new and considered ways for architecture to connect to Indigenous Australian cultures. The field of entries also saw the completion of major public works such as Bell to Moreland, Lilydale and Mooroolbark level crossing removals.

Cont.

The multi-residential architecture categories captured novel approaches to medium-density living, including *Nightingale Village* in Brunswick, comprising 203 homes across six buildings designed by different architects (Hayball, Breathe, Architecture architecture, Austin Maynard Architects, Clare Cousins Architects and Kennedy Nolan) – a highly unusual example of six leading architecture practices collaborating on one single entry.

The Heritage and Education Category spotlighted projects that showcased Victoria's history including the repair and refurbishment of Queen Victoria Market's open-air sheds (NH Architecture with Trethowan Architecture) and the Royal Exhibition Building promenade (Lovell Chen).

Perennial favourites, the Residential and Interior Architecture categories received the most entries in 2023, with 132 entries across four respective categories. Other categories include Sustainable Architecture, COLORBOND® Award for Steel Architecture, Melbourne Prize, Regional Prize, Enduring Architecture Award, and return of the Emerging Architects and Graduate Network (EmAGN) Project Award.

Victorian State Manager, Daniel Moore RAIA said it's phenomenal to see such a high calibre of projects submitted from across the state in this year's awards program.

"There is an evident connection to nature and local character in each project, regardless of scale or typology. It will be fascinating to watch the presentation to juries to hear the stories behind the stunning images these projects occupy," Moore said.

Chair of Juries, Ingrid Bakker LFRAIA said: "We have assembled a high-quality team of jurors for the 2023 Architecture Awards. We are excited that the number of entries exceeded our expectations this year and that the quality of entries is high, providing a great challenge for our juries."

The public is welcome to view the Exhibition of Entries (Tuesday 21 March – Monday 3 April) as well as the Presentation to Juries on (**Saturday 25 March**), where entrants will present their projects to the juries. Both events are hosted within the first-floor atrium at the architecturally award-winning Melbourne School of Design, Glyn Davis Building on the Parkville campus of the University of Melbourne – entry is free and open to all.

The 2023 Victorian Awards Program will culminate in an Awards Night Dinner on **Friday 16 June** where winning projects will be honoured. Winners of the Victorian Awards will be entered into the National Architecture Awards, announced in November.

More information on the Exhibition of Entries:
https://members.architecture.com.au/EventDetail?EventKey=VIC230321B

More information on the Presentation to Juries can be found here:
https://members.architecture.com.au/EventDetail?EventKey=VIC230325

A full list of entries and jurors can be found here:
https://www.architecture.com.au/vic-awards

ENDS

Note to editors:
When using attached images, please credit the appropriate photographer.

For more information, interviews and images please contact:
Jasmijn van Houten
Communications Collective
+61 457 485 179
jasmijn@communicationscollective.com.au

About the Australian Institute of Architects – Victorian Chapter Awards

The Victorian Architecture Awards enables public and peer recognition of the innovative work of the Institute's members and promotes architects and architecture across Victoria and Australia.

About the Australian Institute of Architects

The Australian Institute of Architects is the peak body for the architectural profession, representing over 11,500 members across Australia and overseas. The Institute actively works to improve the quality of our built environment by promoting quality, responsible and sustainable design. Learn more about the Institute, log on to www.architecture.com.au

Direct Award Categories in Victoria:

Commercial Architecture

Educational Architecture

Heritage Architecture

Interior Architecture

Public Architecture

Residential Architecture – Houses (Alterations and Additions)

Residential Architecture – Houses (New)

Residential Architecture - Multiple Housing

Small Project Architecture

Urban Design

Indirect Award Categories in Victoria:

COLORBOND® Award for Steel Architecture

Melbourne Prize

Regional Prize

Sustainable Architecture

Additional Awards in Victoria:

- Enduring Architecture Award – open to buildings in Victoria of at least 25 years of age with outstanding merit when considered in a contemporary context. Entries close **Tuesday 28 March 2023.** Nominations are welcome from Institute members, non-members and non-architects, but must provide adequate content for consideration by the jury. Full information and entry form: https://www.formpl.us/form/6638355645333504
- EmAGN Project Award – recognises the contributions of members of the Emerging Architects and Graduate Network demographic.
- Victorian Architecture Medal – the highest honour awarded by the Victorian Chapter each year and judged to be the most outstanding project from the category winners.