



one square metre initiative

ONE SQUARE METER INITIATIVE

Our proposed response to the brief is addressing the under utilised third spaces of existing telephone booths within the environment. This iconic Australian urban typology, were once high traffic visual signifiers enabling users communication and connection to others through the process of dialing numbers. Through the advancement of hand held mobile devices, technology has rapidly altered and still continues to shift how we communicate and connect to others. Mobile phones have fixed themselves as essential objects within the everyday, but through this process how does the telephone booth now operate within the urban fabric and who do they serve? A recent study from communication company Telstra reports that through their 15,000 existing telephone booths, last year 11 million phone calls were made, and more than 230,000 were to emergency services and hotlines (Telstra, 2022). Instead of rendering these spaces as obsolete, it shows that they still provide critical and necessary services to people. At large, these people are vulnerable community groups that utilise these free services to connect with others and community groups and the removal of these integral micro spaces will further disadvantage and isolate people.

Our intervention aims at not providing a one band aid solution to these social issues, but attempting to help assist in the process of re-connecting individuals to the resources and amentities they deserve. As the telephone booth is an already exisiting built infastructure, they are an ideal third space to be retrofitted to maximise and enhance their function and purpose. Through minimal design interventions, these designated communication spaces transform into site specific essential capsules, now containing showers, laundries, co-op food pantries, lockers/storage and community notice board and resource information. Still included in these adapted telephone booths is the phone itself, but they now exist alongside a compartmentalised space that operates as an intermediate infastructure to people in need.

Much like the 'overlooked' perception of the telephone booth; they exist, they are prelevant in society and are need not to be disregarded.

Penn, Andrew. "Why We're Making Payphones Free for Calls around Australia." Telstra Exchange, May 6, 2022. https://exchange.telstra.com.au/why-were-making-payphones-free-for-calls-around-australia/.