

Creative Climate Cities Profile MELBOURNE



GEOGRAPHICAL AREA

9,991 sq. km



POPULATION

4,850,740



GDP

US \$204,346
(PPP) million

CITY STRATEGY LINKS

Creative Strategy

Climate Change Adoption Strategy

Council Plan: a city that cares for its environment

Welcome to Melbourne



Culture Fact

The First Nations Arts Festival, **YIRRAMBOI**, was delivered in 2017. YIRRAMBOI means 'tomorrow' in the shared languages of the Boon Wurrung and Woi Wurrung people of the Kulin Nation, Narm.



Climate Fact

In 2015, Melbourne produced 5.32 million tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions; its "extremely serious" climate risks include flooding, extreme hot temperatures and sea-level rise¹.

Introduction

Melbourne is the capital of Victoria and the second most populous city in Australia. It is internationally renowned as a creative city and for its diversity and multiculturalism. It is home to people from more than 200 countries, who speak 260 languages and follow 135 faiths, and has long been a significant gathering place for the Aboriginal people of the Kulin Nation². The Australian Government has been working with Indigenous communities, particularly in natural resource management and heritage related activities, recognising the knowledge Indigenous people have in managing Australia's land, water and biodiversity.

Melbourne is a city vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change; in recent years, it has experienced extreme conditions, including record-breaking low rainfall as well as record-breaking high temperatures and extreme heat events. This is a major cause for concern as heat is the biggest – silent – natural killer in Australia; furthermore, it is estimated that 23% of the City's current tree population will be lost by 2020, and 39% by 2030 as a result of drought³.

Environmental Ambition

Melbourne is now taking a leadership role in civic action on environmental sustainability, embedding it as a basis of all future City of Melbourne goals, ensuring it speaks to social sustainability and the health and wellbeing agenda. The City of Melbourne recognises that creativity must be integrated into the fabric of city life and has consequently launched a new **Creative Strategy** which addresses societal challenges, such as environmental sustainability, through 'principles understood by Indigenous and ancient civilisations whereby art is not a product or a service but, rather, it informs how the world is and how to be in it'⁴.

¹C40. <https://www.c40.org/cities/melbourne>

²World Cities Culture Forum. <http://www.worldcitiescultureforum.com/cities/melbourne>

³C40. <https://www.c40.org/profiles/2014-melbourne>

⁴City of Melbourne Creative Strategy, 2018-2028. https://s3.ap-southeast-2.amazonaws.com/hdp.au.prod.app.com-participate.files/7615/3931/8091/City_of_Melbourne_Creative_Strategy_2018_2028.pdf

Highlights

1

Creative Programmes & Campaigns

The Green Transfer public art project is the winning artwork commission from a series of 11 proposals for a sustainability-themed public artwork (commissioned by the City of Melbourne, Positive Energy Place and Fort Knox Self Storage). The work raises awareness of the environmental performance of the built environment.

2

Resources & Support

The City of Melbourne offers free sustainability training courses that support and educate city staff on how to understand their opportunities for influence in supporting the city's sustainability goals.

3

Partnerships & Innovation

Melbourne's Urban Sustainability team partnered with ArtPlay to offer free workshops for families to creatively engage with themes of sustainability. The workshops were co-delivered by two arts organisations engaged with sustainable art practices: Trash Puppets and Baluk Arts.

4

Policy & Strategy

The Creative Strategy vision is to tackle the nine goals Melburnians have set for their city – one being 'to care for its environment' – through the lens of arts and culture, engaging creative practitioners with issues such as transport, climate change and urban planning.

Creative & Climate Action in Melbourne

1. Creative Programmes & Campaigns

Creative content and activities that engage audiences on themes of climate and the environment

- Wild City is a project from [ArtPlay New Ideas Lab](#), by artist [Kathy Holowko](#). Through sculpture, Holowko engaged with children, ecology experts and departments for Urban Sustainability and Parks to explore how humans could better share the urban environment with native animals. As part of the project, children fed into the Birrarung Marr Master Plan by looking at how to adapt real-life infrastructure in the park; the project concluded with a film and exhibition.
- [Performing Climates](#) is a public arts and cultural program from the 2016 Performing Studies International Conference which explored the intersection of art and climate change.
- [Water Futures](#) is a multi-disciplinary event bringing together more than 120 artists and subject experts to consider the future of our water resources.
- The [Green Transfer](#) public art project is the winning artwork commission from a series of 11 proposals for a sustainability-themed public artwork (commissioned by the City of Melbourne, Positive Energy Places and Fort Knox Self Storage). Each day, The Green Transfer artwork displays a graphic that relates to energy efficiency with the intention to engage people in the environmental performance of the built environment.

2. Resources & Support

Investment, training and materials that support environmental knowledge and practical action

- All City of Melbourne grant applicants are required to respond to the Council's environmental goals. In addition, KPIs related to environmental outcomes are included in all funding agreements and in city events.
- The City of Melbourne offers free sustainability training courses that support and educate city staff on how to understand their opportunities for influence in supporting the city's sustainability goals.
- The City of Melbourne has managed several artist residencies related to sustainability themes and outcomes, such as [Lab-14](#).
- [Climart](#) was a 4-year multidisciplinary research project (which received funding over several years from the City of Melbourne) run by a team of international researchers in psychology, natural science and the arts. The project is led and housed at the Institute of Psychology at NTNU, Trondheim, Norway, and designed to collect data to inform the fields of environmental psychology, visual arts, sustainability and climate change communications.
- Several projects have successfully emerged with the support of the [Melbourne Accelerator Program](#) and the [Translating Research at Melbourne](#) program, such as the renewable energy technology company [Allume Energy](#).

3. Partnerships & Innovation

Diverse disciplines and communities sharing and co-developing ideas and resources that accelerate environmental action

- The **Creative Strategy** was designed to inspire a collaborative approach between cultural and environmental departments and creative organisations to address the city's goals as they relate to environmental sustainability and other key topics.
- Melbourne's Urban Sustainability team partnered with **ArtPlay** to offer free workshops for families to creatively engage with themes of sustainability. The workshops were co-delivered by two arts organisations engaged with sustainable art practices: **Trash Puppets**, which use only recycled materials, and **Baluk Arts**, which follows Aboriginal art making practices that only use natural materials.

4. Policy & Strategy

Guiding policy and strategy frameworks that drive climate and environmental action, investment and accountability

In 2018, the City of Melbourne released a new **Creative Strategy**, representing a shift in the way culture would operate within the city. The vision of this strategy is to tackle the nine goals Melburnians have set for their city – one being 'to care for its environment' – through the lens of arts and culture, engaging creative practitioners to work with subject experts on managing transport, climate change, urban planning and other critical opportunities and challenges. This model does not focus on a project-by-project basis but a true integration of sustainability within the creative process, and creativity embedded within civic sustainability programmes.

At its core, the strategy aims to create new connections and bridge different disciplines across everything the city does, between public and private organisations, the city and its communities, and between creative practice and civic life. Through this approach, Melbourne intends to support the transformation of the city through 'bold, inspirational, sustainable creative thinking that draws on the remarkable, expansive expertise of our creative community'.



Spotlight

REFUGE

Refuge is a five-year project based in Arts House and is led by artists working with emergency management experts and communities. Refuge explores the role of artists and cultural institutions in times of climate catastrophe. Through annual simulated emergencies, all participants look deeply at the implications and consider with new insight how cities plan for the future and build resilience in the face of climate disasters such as floods, heatwaves and pandemics.

Future Initiatives

The Resilience Proposal will build on the success and proof-of-concept of Refuge, developing a strategic partnership with Emergency Services and the Red Cross. The program will bridge a range of sectors – including the arts, community engagement, environmental organisations, local government and emergency management – and support Melbourne in its resilience to climate-related disasters.

A number of opportunities have been identified:

1. **Share good practice**

Research creative and cultural initiatives across the city which engage with environmental themes and practices, making them publicly available through an online resource. This will encourage new collaborations and good practice exchange and help build environmental knowledge, awareness and inspiration within the sector. It would also recognise traditional ecological, indigenous and local knowledge and encourage citizens and practitioners to appreciate local culture, ethics and skills.

2. **Collaborate**

Organise a regular meeting – or working group – to support ongoing collaboration between cultural and environmental departments and implementation of city strategy. Meeting topics could include: environmental management advice for cultural buildings and events; public art commissions and artist advocacy; and citizen outreach and engagement activities. Connecting with local creative and environmental businesses, academics, community leaders and other city stakeholders could produce new knowledge, partnerships and resource.

3. **Build the business case**

Work with the Urban Sustainability team to develop the business case for investing in cultural buildings and events to reduce their environmental impacts. This could include carbon and cost-saving projects such as building upgrades, low-carbon technologies and staff training, etc.

4. **Connect environmental and cultural strategy**

Connect cultural and environmental policy and strategy so that they are aligned and mutually-reinforcing; this will support a resilient and efficient cultural infrastructure which can publicly champion climate and environmental action. For example, ensure environmental sustainability is embedded within the Arts Infrastructure Framework 2016-21 and the new Creative Investment Framework, considering sustainable design and operational management.

5. **Include environmental themes within public art**

Ensure environmental sustainability is a theme within the upcoming Public Art Framework, in terms of creative programming and practical guidelines relating to the environmental impact of materials, sourcing, construction and transportation.



What Next?

With special thanks to:

Rose Bruhn, Strategy Lead, Arts Melbourne



Julie's Bicycle
SUSTAINING CREATIVITY

— BOP
Consulting