



The Office of the Victorian Government Architect provides leadership and strategic advice to government about architecture and urban design.

Our aim is to encourage high quality buildings and public spaces that are:

- engaging, diverse and inclusive
- environmentally, economically and socially sustainable
- culturally rich and poetic

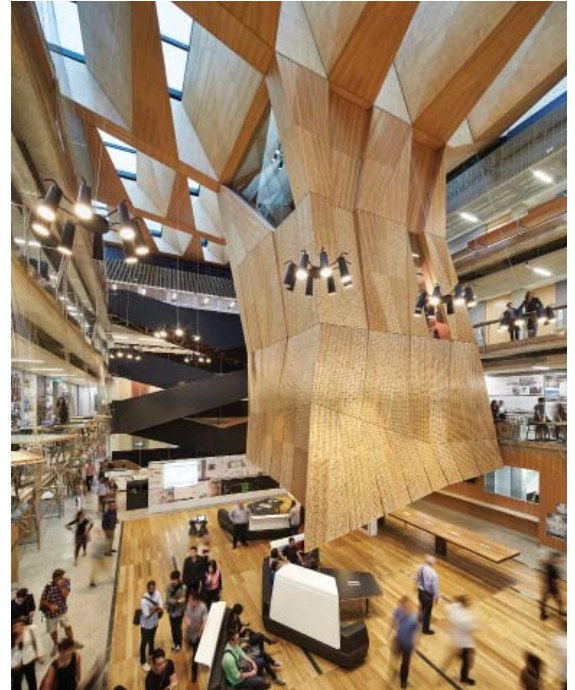
About this publication

This publication by the Office of the Victorian Government Architect (OVGA) is the revised version of the first 'Good Design' series aiming to raise awareness of good design, its benefits, its value and how to achieve it. It provides guidance on good design principles that should be integral to projects, best practice procurement processes that are necessary to achieve good design outcomes and promoting a design culture, which embraces good design to create maximum value.

The focus is generally on public buildings and the infrastructure that impacts our public places and landscapes. It is not a fixed set of guidelines but a starting point from which to develop greater recognition of the many aspects of design. Other OVGA publications provide further specific information and guidance on particular issues and project types including:

- 'Good design + infrastructure'
- 'Good design + education'
- 'Government as smart client'

'Good Design' supports a number of Government priorities and policies such as the 'Value Creation and Capture Framework', the 'Better Apartments Design Standards', Victoria's positioning as a 'Creative State' and design leader, numerous infrastructure and education priorities as well as Victoria's 2050 zero carbon target.



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The OVGA's independent and iterative voice continues to remind government that 'design as legacy', helps define Victoria as a place that is vibrant, economically thriving, healthy, sustainable, loved by its citizens, great to live in and visit.

Jill Garner

Victorian Government Architect, 2016

The primary audience for this publication are the decision-makers in Government involved in strategic planning for the built environment as well as capital works and infrastructure. However, industry and stakeholder groups may also benefit from the guidance as it informs their work as an integrated part of ensuring a better quality environment and a more liveable Victoria.

Informed clients recognise that good design adds significant value and public benefit, driving value for money, reducing whole-of-life costs, reducing environmental impacts and improving public places for the community. They understand the value of good design and apply the most appropriate procurement method for every project, embed good design principles and build an innovative design culture.

Cover

Hamer Hall Redevelopment

Architect: ARM Architecture

Photographer: John Gollings

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Melbourne School of Design

Architect: John Wardle Architects & NADAAA

Photographer: Peter Bennetts

What is good design?

Good design comes in many forms and is defined by much more than how something looks. It starts from refining the purpose and aspiration of a project, improves how it works, creates additional benefits and elevates how people feel and behave in the final outcome. Good design creates lasting value such as an inspiring place, a cultural symbol, a shared identity. And of course, good design also looks and feels good.

Why good design is important

Good design is critical in creating high quality buildings and public spaces that are:

- fit for purpose and adaptable to changing needs;
- engaging and create a strong sense of place
- able to engender civic-pride and well-being in the community;
- inclusive, culturally rich and diverse;
- sustainable environmentally, economically and socially;
- an enduring legacy in the built environment.



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Good design is not just about the aesthetic improvement of our environment, it is as much about improved quality of life, equality of opportunity and economic growth.

Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE)

'The Value of Good Design', United Kingdom



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Good design & the OVGA

The OVGA supports good design outcomes for Victorians through advice, advocacy and collaborations. The OVGA's independent and iterative voice continues to remind government that the legacy of good design across all project types helps to define Victoria as a place that is vibrant, economically thriving, healthy, sustainable, loved by its citizens and great to live in and visit.

Advocacy

The OVGA promotes an awareness of the importance and value of good design in making great places and sustainable urban environments. The OVGA does this through publications and actively engaging with other parts of government, industry and research to inform higher design aspiration and better procurement processes to further strengthen the design culture in Victoria.

Advice

The OVGA offers a critical understanding of the processes and principles that affect the quality of outcomes in the built environment. The OVGA advises ministers, state government departments, agencies and local government on how to improve design outcomes for capital works programs, specific projects or broader planning and policy initiatives. The OVGA also manages the Victorian Design Review Panel (VDRP) to ensure that significant projects deliver the best possible public benefit, value and quality.

Collaboration

The OVGA fosters partnerships and collaborations within and between government, professional, academic, industry and community bodies to maximise excellent design outcomes in the built environment. We also form dedicated partnerships on projects that are of State significance.

The benefits of good design

The OVGA's message highlights the significant responsibility to ensure change in our built environment is never dictated purely by economics, but is always overlaid by deep considerations about the quality and long term impact of the places we build, and concern for the community for whom we build. Research shows that well designed buildings and spaces have measurable positive impact on the well being of their users.

Living

Homes and neighbourhoods which are well designed offer greater comfort, more enjoyable spaces and contribute to a vibrant community. Whether they are single houses or apartments, good design can instil a sense of joy and pride in the residents. Well designed housing is proven to be essential in creating successful and supportive communities.

"Almost all Australians (98%) believe that it is important that designers of residential buildings consider how buildings integrate with the community, particularly at the street frontage." Galaxy Research for AACA (2015), The Benefit of Design



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South East Water Headquarters
Architect: BVN
Photographer: Dianna Snape

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Albert Park Environmental College Arts Hub
Architect: Six Degrees
Photographer: Simon James



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Working

Healthy buildings are proven to increase work place well-being, morale, productivity and staff retention. Better spatial arrangements support the changing nature of work while improving asset value and financial returns.

'Well designed office layouts can reduce spatial requirements by up to 30% leading to reductions in rentals or capital investment.'

Duffy, F. (1997) The New Office. Conran Octopus Limited. London

Learning

Well designed schools improve children's educational opportunities. They provide better spaces supporting new pedagogies and environmental conditions for learning.

'Well-designed classrooms can boost learning progress in primary school pupils by 16%.'

The University of Salford, (2015), Clever Classrooms.

Recovering

Good design in health care has been shown to support patient recovery through providing views, natural light, improved air and acoustic quality.

'...patients with open views [to nature] had shorter post-operative stays – 7.9 days compared with 8.7 days.'

Ulrich, R. (1984), View through a window may influence recovery from surgery. Science, Vol 224

Engaging

Good urban spaces are more engaging, nurture civic and cultural life and make public places safer. They can also raise the value of property in a city or town

'Almost all Australians – 97 percent – believe that cities and towns are better to live in when public buildings and public spaces are well designed.'

Galaxy Research for AACA (2015), The Benefit of Design



If you think good design is expensive, you should look at the cost of bad design.

Dr. Ralf Speth
CEO, Jaguar

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Evidence

The OVGA is continuously adding to the body of knowledge defining the value of good design.

The following sources demonstrate the social, economic and environmental benefits of good design.



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In 2015 **The Property Council/IPD** 'Australian Green Property Index' showed that office buildings designed to perform to high environmental standards provided significantly higher total returns than their peers. Green Star rated offices in CBD markets achieved an annual return of 12.9% from 6.6% income return and 5.9% capital growth; outperforming the broader CBD office market by 270bps.

In 2008 the **Green Building Council of Australia** produced 'The Dollars and Sense of Green Building' clearly setting out the benefits and value of good ecologically sustainable design. In 2013 they added the publication 'Valuing

Green' to provide guidance on how to quantify the value of better designed and performing buildings.

The **Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE)** study 'Improving Standards of Design in the Procurement of Public Buildings', in association with the Office of Government Commerce in 2002, found that building operating costs often constitute 85% of the total building cost. The greatest impact on reducing the operating costs can be made at the design stage, which is likely to only be 0.3-0.5% of the total cost.

The **UK Design Council** has published much evidence proving the value of good design. 'Buildings and Spaces: Why Design Matters' includes evidence on the importance and value of good architecture and design, with respect to health, education, homes, crime prevention, environment, community and economy.

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Australian Garden
Landscape Architect: TCL
Photographer: John Gollings

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Tanderrum Bridge
Architects: John Wardle Architects & NADAAA
Photographer: Kristoffer Paulsen

How government can lead good design

As one of the largest procurers of design services and development, Government has an enormous impact on the quality of the built environment and on Victoria's liveability and appeal as a state with which to do business.

Government has significant opportunities to lead on good design by:

- developing, reviewing and implementing policy that supports good design;
- leading by example on Government-led projects and Government's own operations;
- prioritising longer term benefits;
- supporting, seeking, facilitating and celebrating good design, at all scales, through awards, selection and assessment panels, research and evaluation.



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Dynamic interplay between creative industries maximises the social, cultural and economic benefits for the broader community.

Andrew Abbott

Deputy Secretary, Creative Victoria, 2017

How the private sector can lead good design

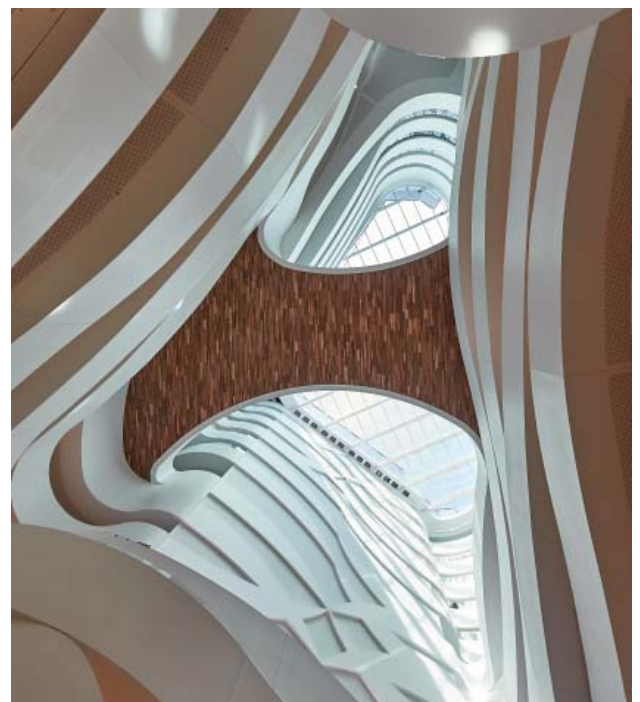
The private sector can lead through:

- responding to demand for good design;
- advocating for best practice procurement;
- engaging in the improvement of design and construction practices;
- innovating and recognising that good design can give a competitive advantage;
- sharing learnings from the design, construction and actual operations of buildings and infrastructure.

Good Design Culture – what to do

Victoria's reputation as a creative state relies on good design being an essential ingredient of the built environment. To strengthen our design culture we encourage government and industry to:

1. Foster an understanding that public investment in the built environment is a contribution to quality of life, community vitality and personal well-being;
2. Develop integrated guidelines and processes that endorse good design and its qualities and raise awareness of its value;
3. Embed public art and creative place-making strategies to generate civic-pride;
4. Promote good designers and develop emerging talent so projects can benefit from both experience and new ideas;
5. Adopt best practice design and procurement processes that allow appropriate time and budget for good design;
6. Seek advice from appropriately qualified assessors and build in-house capability and foster champions to guide good design.



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Good Design Process

Good projects do not just happen: They require an informed client, a good design team, a skilled builder, and good will between them.

At each stage – feasibility, briefing, procurement, construction, ongoing operation and management – stakeholders play an important role in helping to raise the expectations for the quality of the built environment.

The method by which a building project is procured has a significant impact on the quality of the final building. While good design can be achieved with all procurement methods, some make it more challenging unless their potential threats to design quality are understood and well managed.

The OVGA advocates that there is substantial opportunity to improve design outcomes by improving design procurement practices that support quality outcomes.

1. Write an informed project brief that embeds high quality design and encourages innovative solutions.

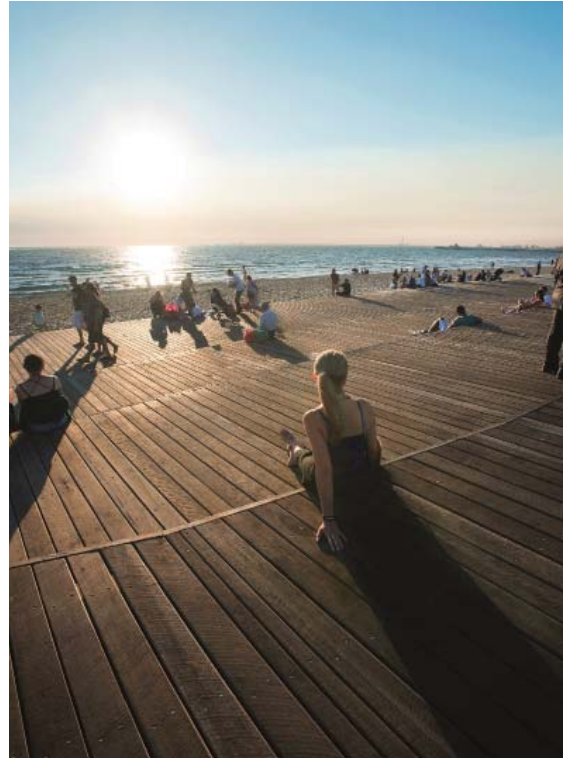
2. Develop procurement processes for engaging architects and other designers that protect design quality;

3. Ensure that good design is established as a project selection criterion, given significant weighting in the bid evaluation, and is embedded in the contractual documentation;

4. Allocate enough time for projects of real design quality and innovation to emerge.

5. Ensure budgets are realistic and consider whole-of-life costs.

6. On significant projects or strategies, establish a mechanism for early and repeated independent expert review, such as through the OVGA's Victorian Design Review Panel (VDRP)



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St Kilda Foreshore Precinct

Jackson Clements Burrows & Site Office

Photographer: John Gollings

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AAMI Park

Architect: Cox Architecture

Photographer: Dianna Snape

Good Design is ...

1. Inspiring

Good design embeds the very essence of a project into an inspiring narrative and vision. A thorough analysis of a project's purpose, objectives and influencing factors establishes a vision to elevate a project beyond its primary purpose and deliver a vibrant and welcoming addition to the built environment.

2. Contextual

Good design is informed by its location and responds to its environmental, social and cultural contexts. Strong contextual relationships are essential to creating well-connected places.

3. Functional

Good design develops synergies between the functional requirements and the project vision creating value beyond meeting primary technical needs. Efficient spatial arrangements which enhance amenity and connectivity are integral to good design.

4. Valuable

Good design enhances the quality of experience, creates stronger connections and supports a vibrant public realm which are all key to realising the full potential for value creation and capture. A commitment to a good design process at the inception of a project is fundamental in reducing the full life-cycle costs.

5. Sustainable

Good design respects our environment and resources by promoting efficiency, anticipating future adaptability, enhancing ecology and creating a sustainable long-term legacy. Resilience to climate change must be embedded within the project vision to deliver sustainable, liveable and enduring places.

6. Enjoyable

Good design delivers inclusive and equitable environments which contribute to broader positive social and economic outcomes. Well-connected and safe places are enjoyable at all times of the day, celebrate diversity and engender community pride.

7. Enduring

Through the synthesis of vision and function, good design embeds lasting value into our built environment. Good design is essential in place-making which engenders community pride, providing a truly enduring legacy which will continue to serve, inspire and delight.

Further information

The Office of the Victorian Government Architect website provides resources and links that can assist local government in achieving good design outcomes for their communities: <http://www.ovga.vic.gov.au/resources>

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Accessibility

Contact us if you need this information in an accessible format.

You can also get a PDF format on our website.

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