

**DESIGN  
CANBERRA  
FESTIVAL  
2018**



**Festival Report**

# 2018 Festival Report



## Rachael Coghlan

CEO + Artistic Director

For the 2018 DESIGN Canberra festival – the fifth festival presented – we sought to deepen engagement with quality and responsible programming, while continuing to nurture its growing and popular reach within Canberra and beyond.

A high profile and ephemeral project was at the heart of our expanded vision fostering international collaboration and design education. Scholarly and popular engagement with the significant contribution of architect Enrico Taglietti was another. New hands-on making workshops promoted the work of Canberra's designer-makers and brought the delight of making to new audiences.

A new series of forums deepened the festival's engagement with current debates in design including urban renewal and a partnership with Helsinki Design Week resulted in Design Diplomacy public conversations to build vital international links.

A curated city program of events, talks and tours, artist installations and a people's choice competition brought the festival's city programs to a new level of quality, visibility, creativity and impact. All-time favourites - Living Rooms and Open Studios - celebrated the best in contemporary craft, architecture and design and supported emerging makers.

The small but mighty Craft ACT team and our board of management are pleased to present this report of the 2018 DESIGN Canberra achievements, reflections and opportunities for future growth.

Thank you for sharing this journey with us. We are delighted and inspired by the many people who support, attend and engage with the festival. We will be back again in 2019!

# 2018 attendances

**112,844**  
**people**  
**attended the**  
**festival**

A record of 112,844 people attended the 20 day festival in 2018, a 19% increase on the 2017 record of 94,455. 51% of audiences were experiencing the festival for the first time, a great result for audience development.

Over 85% of events were free, ensuring accessibility amongst a diverse audience.

**Free events**

**85%**



**Events**  
19,852



**Exhibitions**  
84,446



**Living Rooms**  
3,137



**Open Studios**  
3,840



**Tours**  
824



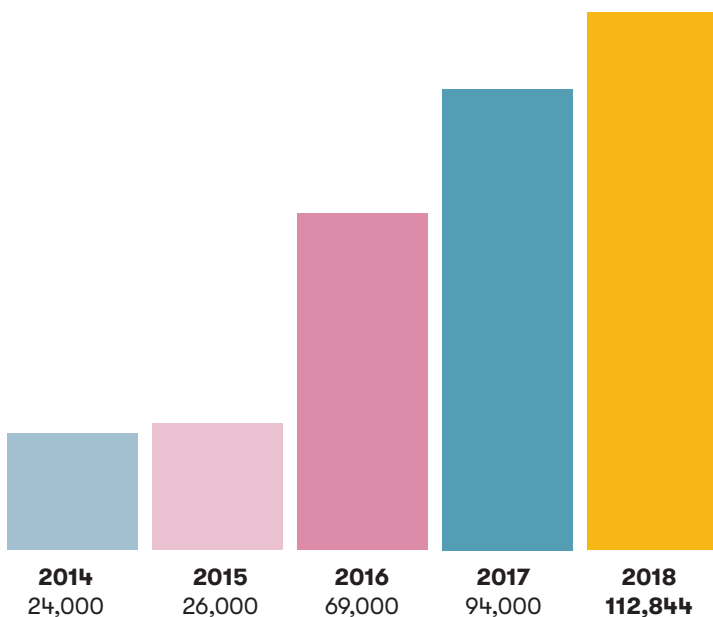
**Taglietti Symposium**  
96



**Auction**  
381



**Workshops**  
288



**203**  
events presented in  
the 2018 DESIGN  
Canberra program

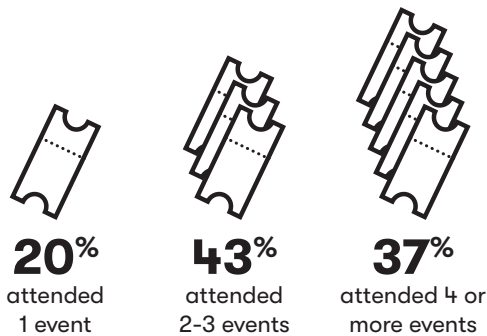
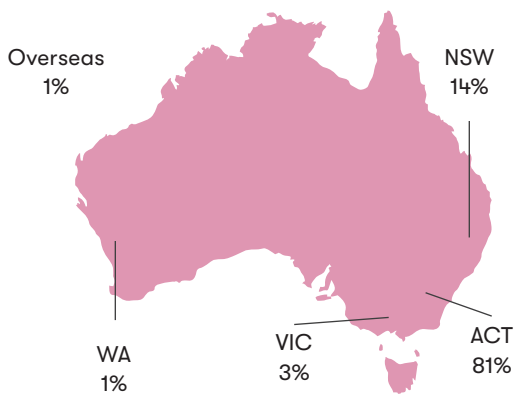
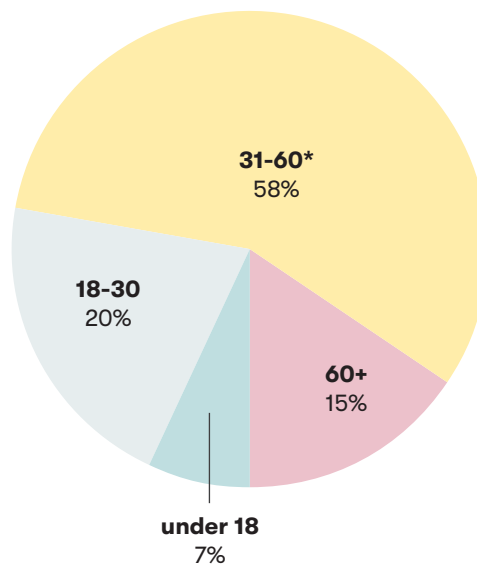
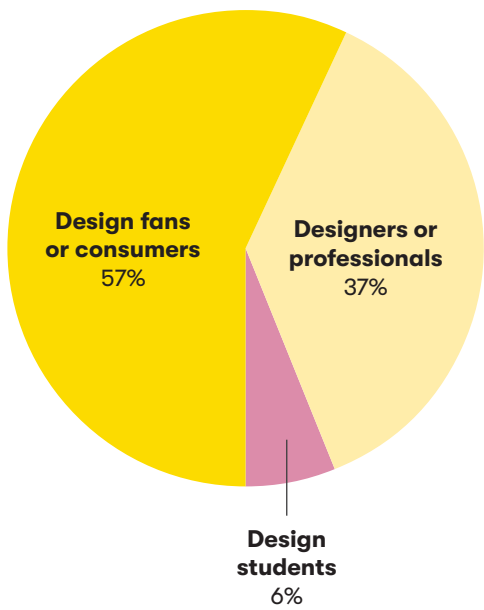
The DESIGN Canberra festival has enjoyed continued growth since it was established in 2014.

**19%**

**annual increase  
from 2017**

# 2018 audience & demographics

What do we know about our audiences?



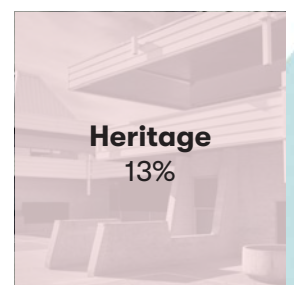
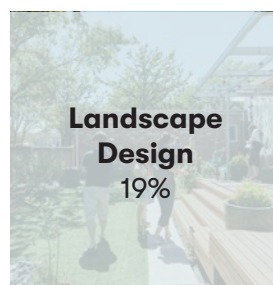
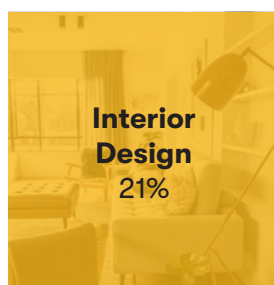
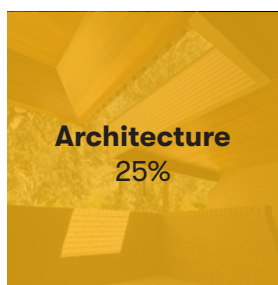
**51%** were first time visitors

**98%** were satisfied or very satisfied with DESIGN Canberra 2018

**98%** would recommend DESIGN Canberra to others

**94%** plan to attend in 2019

## Fields of interest



# 2018 collaborations

Over 64 partners and supporters from the business, government, retail, education, cultural and tourism sectors helped to make DESIGN Canberra festival 2018 a success.

Selected festival programs were generously supported by the ACT Government under the City Renewal Authority's City Grants program and the ACT Heritage Grants. The Japan Foundation, Sydney supported the design and production of NAMAKO catalogue of the Kengo Kuma ephemeral architecture installation.

## Proudly presented by



Craft ACT: Craft and Design Centre is supported by the ACT Government, the Visual Arts and Craft Strategy - an initiative of the Australian, State and Territory Governments, and the Australia Council for the Arts - the Australian Government's arts funding and advisory body.

## Government Partner



## Major Partner

CANBERRA CENTRE

## Platinum Partners



## Accommodation Partner

## Gold Partners



## Media Partners

## Silver Partners



## Supporters

ACT HERITAGE LIBRARY • AKIBA • AUBERGINE • BAR ROCHFORD • BETTER PHOTOGRAPHY MAGAZINE • CANBERRA HOUSE.COM • CANBERRA REGION VISITORS CENTRE • CANBERRA MUSEUM AND GALLERY • CATALDOS • DIONYSUS • KING O'MALLEYS • MOCAN AND GREEN GROUT • MONSTER • NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF AUSTRALIA • NATIONAL GALLERY OF AUSTRALIA • ONA • PHOTO ACCESS • PODILATO • POP INN • RAKU



# 2018 media coverage

DESIGN Canberra enjoyed an outstanding increase in interstate media coverage thanks to the Progressive PR team, who engaged media attention in the lead up to and during the festival.

This was a key strategic priority in 2018, to support our goal to increase interstate and international visitation and engagement with the festival.



4.6 million

audience reached from media coverage



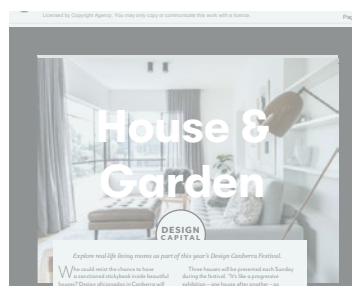
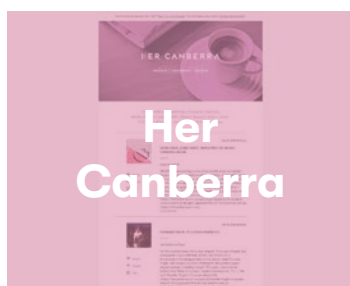
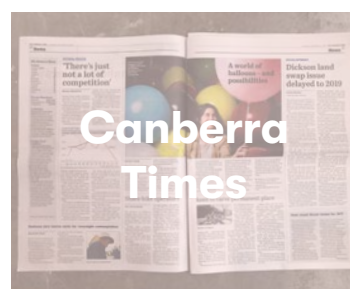
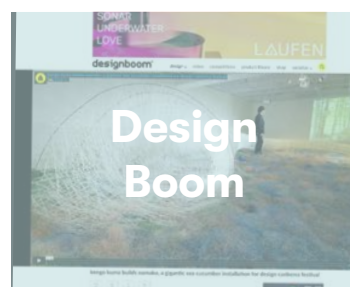
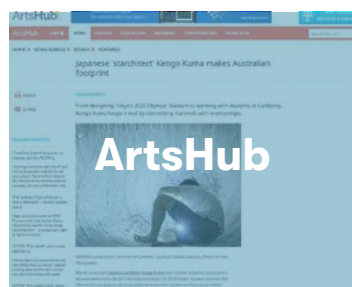
269+

unique earned media placements (150% increase on 2017)



2 million+

value of media coverage using ASR\* (advertising space rate)



And many more!

# 2018 brand + marketing

Canberra-based designer and maker known for her work with timber, Chelsea Lemon, was selected as the designer in residence for the 2018 DESIGN Canberra Festival. For the past two years, DESIGN Canberra has invited a local designer to create the look and feel of the festival. In 2018, the design aligned with the theme of 'geometry' and referenced the geometric buildings and visual forms which shape our city.

Chelsea's work questions archetypal furniture and showcases a new and fresh approach to parquetry, a traditional woodworking technique she learned during her honours year at the Australian National University School of Art and Design's Furniture Studio.

Our valued partners Cre8ive design agency expertly interpreted Chelsea's beautiful work across print and digital materials.



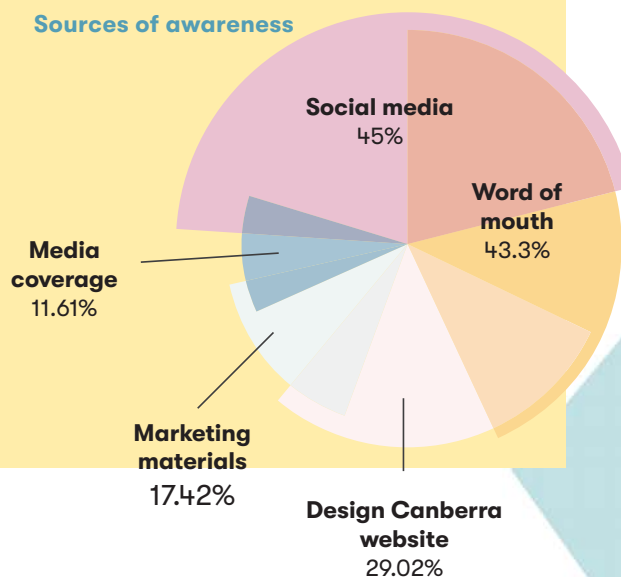
Festival program



Tote bag



Festival program





# 2018 our makers

**Craft ACT: Craft + Design Centre is a nearly 50 year old membership organisation which supports artists, craft practitioners, designers and makers at every stage of their careers. We promote and celebrate excellence and innovation in contemporary craft in everything we do, and our primary outreach program is the annual DESIGN Canberra festival.**

*“I met lots of excited and interested first timers doing the Open Studio rounds. They were genuinely thankful that DESIGN Canberra and the artists provided this great opportunity for the public”*

*Annie Trevillian , textile artist and long-term Craft ACT member*

DESIGN Canberra is an effective platform to achieve Craft ACT's strategic goals and support our members, in particular to promote contemporary craft and design, forge marketplace connections, develop new and expanded audiences and provide a source of inspiration and collaboration.

Craft ACT members received the following benefits:

- 10% discount on the Undercurrent Design Market stall fee
- Free participation in Open Studios
- Invitation to participate in signature exhibitions
- Invitation to curate pop-up exhibitions in Living Rooms homes
- Opportunity to sell their works at Living Rooms
- Works for sale at pop-up shops by Craft ACT at key festival events
- Works featured in CIRCULARITY: festival opening party and auction
- Free entry into the City Art (graphic intervention) competition
- Invitation to attend an Open Studios Information + Discussion session to learn tips and tricks
- Works included in HOME:MADE exhibition at the Canberra Centre
- Participation in Ready Set Market, a member development program to develop market stall presence, promotion and sales, culminating in a stall and sales at Undercurrent Design Market



Phoebe Porter talks to visitors at her Open Studio. Credit: 5 Foot Photography



Sarit Cohen explains process during her Open Studio. Credit: 5 Foot Photography

**Over \$177,842 of income was generated for artists and designers as a result of the DESIGN Canberra Festival. This marks a 25% increase in the artist income generated compared to 2017 and is an outstanding effort to help artists make a living from their practice.**



Work by Richilde Flavell, Elliot Bastianon, Alison Jackson and Zoe Brand. for the CIRCULARITY design party and auction. Photo: Anisa Sabet



# 2018 digital marketing

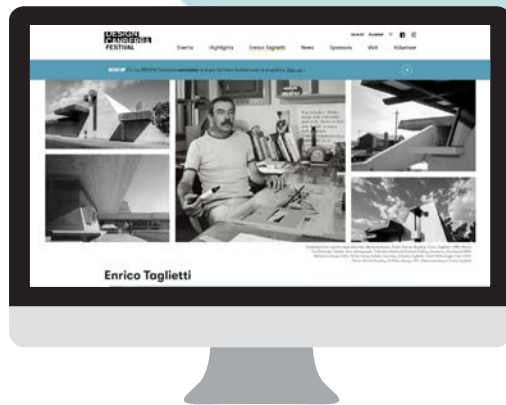
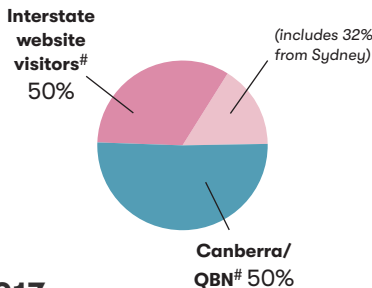
23% of total website visitors were based overseas

164,774 web views

41,850 web sessions

24,758 web users

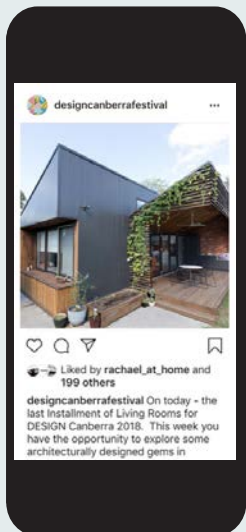
39% increase compared to 2017



After outstanding social media results in 2017, it was pleasing to see even higher digital marketing engagement in 2018. An energetic team of Craft ACT staff and marketing brains trust volunteers worked across Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, EDMs and Twitter to achieve outstanding results for the festival.

### Top posts

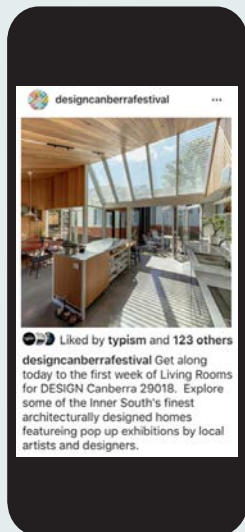
3,304+ impressions



2,929 impressions



2,727 impressions



### #DesignCanberra

# 712,000+

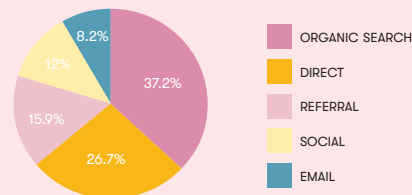
social media impressions



13% increase in Facebook followers



32% increase in Instagram followers



Top website channels: how people found designcanberrafestival.com.au

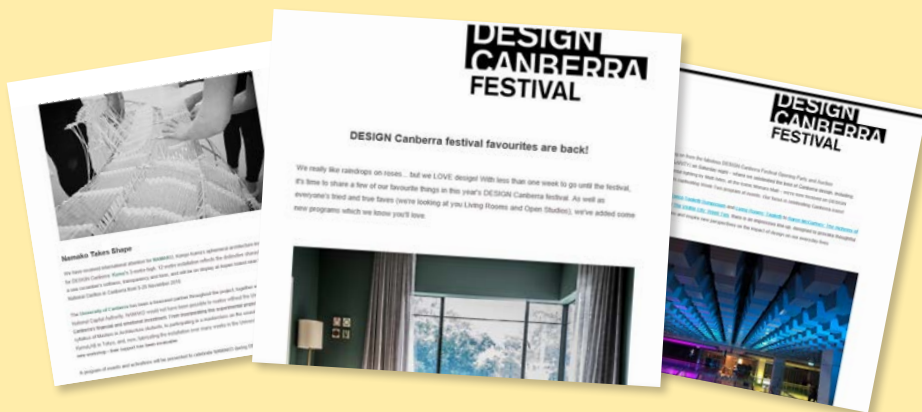
### Email marketing

21,327 opens  
35% open rate\*

4,077 newsletter subscribers  
A 40% increase from 2017\*\*

20 newsletters sent  
An increase from 2017\*\*

\*Industry average is 20.2% according to Mailchimp statistics  
\*\*Statistics taken from 1/8/2018 - 26/11/2018 compared with 26/8/17 - 26/11/17



# 2018 highlights

**DESIGN Canberra 2018 featured several signature programs which captured the imagination of a growing audience of designers, design fans and the broader community.**

## NAMAKO

One of the most significant Japanese figures in contemporary architecture, Kengo Kuma, unveiled his installation 'NAMAKO' at Aspen Island to launch this year's DESIGN Canberra Festival in November. DESIGN Canberra was honoured to work with one of the world's leading architects to design our inaugural ephemeral architecture project. The project promoted experimental and authentic design and fostered international collaboration and design education between the University of Canberra and the University of Tokyo. Inspired by the Japanese word for sea cucumber (namako), Kuma's installation reflected the unique characteristics of the animal's softness, transparency and form, which allowed audiences to interact with the installation and created a rich relationship to the surrounding context. Events were presented to activate Aspen Island and a catalogue was produced to celebrate this beautiful installation and collaborative project.



## Taglietti Programs

In 2018, the DESIGN Canberra festival celebrated the work, poetics, personal style and contribution to the nation's capital of architect Enrico Taglietti. We sought new perspectives from Australia and the world to assess the significance of Taglietti's work and better understand its value for the future. The international architecture symposium, held at the National Gallery of Australia, brought together international and national architects and designers, architectural historians, curators and scholars, and some of the many people who have been touched by Taglietti's designs – school children, designer-makers, home owners and more. Speakers at the symposium included some of the world's most celebrated design professionals including Milanese design journalist and independent curator, Annalisa Rosso; esteemed architecture and design editor, curator and author, Karen McCartney; renowned architect and colleague of Taglietti, Gianmatteo Romegialli; international authority on modern Australian architecture, Philip Goad; and Zurich-based innovative designer, researcher and educator Dave Pigram. A series of tours, exhibitions and interviews completed this significant program, and a special edition journal of symposium papers, photographs and poetry will be published in 2019.



## Circularity

The festival opening party is one of the biggest events of the DESIGN Canberra festival program and 2018's CIRCULARITY event was no exception. DESIGN Canberra gave design-lovers the chance to have their own piece of contemporary Canberra design at an online auction where 21 of the 22 works sold on the night. Limited edition and one-off pieces from Canberra's leading designers were available including work by Phoebe Porter, Alison Jackson, Zoe Brand, Katie Ann Houghton, Madisyn Zabel, Chelsea Lemon, Elliot Bastianon, Rolf Barfoed, Tom Skeehan, Rene Linssen, Peter Bollington, Richilde Flavell, Megan Hinton and Marilou Chagnaud. The iconic Monaro Mall was selected as the venue for the opening party after it picked up multiple awards in this year's Australian Institute of Architects awards. Experimental lighting designer House of Vnholy transformed the space with colour and sculptural installations. Music, food, local wines, cocktails, craft beer and popular lucky door prizes created a great night for the many people who attended and celebrated the festival's opening weekend.



# 2018 highlights

## City programs

DESIGN Canberra's curated city program of events, talks and tours, artist installations and a people's choice competition brought the festival's city programs to a new level of quality, visibility, creativity and impact. The highlight was when Montreal-based artists Daily tous les jours transformed City Hill into a vibrant field of balloons and invited the community to share their hopes and dreams for Canberra's city centre. Installations by 15 local designers and artists – found on pavements, windows and bus shelters – placed the works of artists front and centre in our city streets and on CBD businesses. A design-lovers map for the CBD, and supporting tours, celebrated the outstanding architecture, design and heritage throughout Civic, and a series of exhibitions activated the city centre including the HOME:MADE showcase of work by some of the most exciting designers from across Australia.



## Design Responsibility

A new series of forums deepened the festival's engagement with current debates in design and our sector's broader social responsibility. The Visible City panel discussions brought together international, inspirational and sometimes radical perspectives with contemporary case studies in urban renewal to inform and inspire decision makers and everyday citizens. The series asked the question, how can Canberra's contemporary urban renewal efforts make visible our city's distinctive design identity, inclusive processes and the hopes and dreams of our community? DESIGN Canberra was proud to introduce Design Diplomacy into the 2018 program as part of a new partnership with Helsinki Design Week. Design Diplomacy held public conversations at the New Zealand High Commission and the Embassy of Italy Ambassador's residence. The concept combines prestigious diplomatic settings and architecture with informal discussions between designers from the hosting country and Canberra. Importantly, it builds vital international links for the embassies, speakers and audiences.



## Volunteers

One of the greatest highlights of the festival were the many volunteers who helped to deliver such a diverse, creative and important program for the design, craft and Canberra communities. Over 110+ volunteers responded to our call out and donated their time, expertise, attention and care to the 2018 festival – in the program's lead up, development, delivery and evaluation of over 200 events. This significant growth demonstrates the strong engagement from the community in support of the festival and we are truly heartened by this generous commitment.





# 2018 reflections



## After the 2017 festival, we identified the following opportunities for growth 2018-2020:

### Marketing – maintain increased marketing budget and increase the visibility of the festival at aligned events and satellite exhibitions through brand visibility.

- Marketing budget maintained at modest \$66,000. **Achieved**
- New media partnerships extended the marketing effectiveness. **Achieved**
- Additional marketing budgets and resources are needed to achieve more diverse awareness of the festival, especially outside of the ACT and NSW. **Work to do**

### Reach – expand visibility beyond the ACT border via tourist sector collaborations and interstate media coverage.

- Outstanding increase in interstate media coverage thanks to Progressive PR. **Achieved**
- Significant growth in web audiences interstate and internationally **Achieved**
- Initiated closer relationship with Visit Canberra but more work needs to be done to integrate DESIGN Canberra into interstate and international tourism programming, itineraries and marketing. **In progress**

### Buy-in – further enhance buy-in from the design and tourism sectors to help DESIGN Canberra realise its potential by clearly communicating mutual benefits, responsibilities and results throughout the festival as well as in the wrap up.

- Increased and deepened engagement and support from the vast majority of key festival stakeholders who signed on for two years or more including: government partner; sponsors; participants; audiences; designers. **Achieved**
- Learnt more about our audiences and participants to help shape a successful future for the festival. **Achieved**
- Note that a very small number of stakeholders seek additional benefits from their involvement in the festival. **In progress**

### Value – define the value proposition of the festival for participating designers, partners and organisations to ensure the legacy, sustainability and success of future festivals.

- Booking processes streamlined to improve customer services and introduce transparent commission structure. This will be consolidated in 2019. **Achieved**
- New sponsorship benefits in development for partnerships in 2019 and beyond to take account of significant increase in visibility and value of the festival, and growth in interest from potential sponsors. **In progress**

# 2019 opportunities

## As we reflect on the 2018 festival, the following opportunities have been identified for 2019:

- **Engagement** – curate quality, responsible and collaborative programming, while continuing to build the festival's popular reach
- **Marketing** – additional dedicated marketing program and resources need to be funded to support future festivals.
- **Reach** – expand visibility beyond the ACT border via tourist sector collaborations, build on significant increase in interstate media coverage, and nurture new international partnerships.
- **Value** – implement piloted commission framework and new sponsorship benefits to ensure the legacy, sustainability and success of future festivals.





# 2019 collaboration

**Next year's DESIGN Canberra  
festival will be held 4-24 November  
2019.**

**For more information about the 2019 festival and how  
to collaborate with DESIGN Canberra, the ACT's fastest  
growing festival, please contact**

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Left: Mid-century bus tour to the Embassy of Switzerland. Right: Circularity DESIGN Canberra opening party and auction. Below top Transport Canberra bus shelter featuring signature artwork by Chelsea lemon. Below bottom: Pop Inn wine bar and a pop up shop activate Civic Square. Photos: 5 Foot Photography