

2021 LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS AUSTRALASIA AWARDS WINNERS AND COMMENDATIONS



Jury Citations and image links.

View the [gallery](#) of all the entries or click on an individual project.

OVERALL WINNER:

Judges: Mark Freeman (Victoria)
Craig Wattam (Victoria)
Sue Wittenoom (New South Wales)

OVERALL WINNER: [Lepperton School and Community Hall Redevelopment](#)
New Plymouth, New Zealand
Robertson Hidzir Architects
Photographer: Paul McCredie

Summary Citation:

Brief Citation

Within a strong field of entries in this year's awards programme, one project in particular stood aside from others. Lepperton School + Community Hall Development, located in the village of Lepperton, Taranaki, New Zealand immediately resonated with the jury, through its development journey and narrative, along with its succinct and well considered entry collateral. This school is truly at the heart of its community.

The project exemplifies the rewards and opportunities that arise through successful long-term collaborations of architect, educators, students and communities in realising learning environments which belong to both place and community. Over several years the architect has journeyed with the school to understand their educational programme, responding with a series of connected learning hubs, configured to acknowledge that each student learns differently. The project also demonstrates investment in community engagement in co-creating spaces of meaning, significance and purpose to this small country village.

Full Citation:

Within a strong field of entries in this year's awards programme, one project in particular stood aside from others. Lepperton School + Community Hall Development, located in the village of Lepperton, Taranaki, New Zealand immediately resonated with the jury, through its development journey and narrative, along with its thoughtful, succinct and well considered entry collateral.

Particularly, the project demonstrates investment in authentic community engagement in co-creating spaces of meaning, significance and purpose to this small country village – this school is truly at the heart of its community.

The project exemplifies the rewards and opportunities that arise through successful long-term authentic collaborations of architect, educators, students and communities in realising learning environments which belong to both place and community. Over several years the architect has journeyed with the school to understand their educational programme, responding with a series of connected learning hubs, configured across junior, middle and senior cohorts, with spatial outcomes that clearly acknowledge each student learns differently. The educational brief articulates the process undertaken to instigate design solutions and reiterations along the way. Spaces within the learning hubs support active, student led, project-based learning experiences and also junior play based learning – these spaces are readily adaptable to a range of learning modes. Finally, there is a commendable incorporation of well resolved sustainable design elements for energy efficiency, acoustics and future-proofing of facility.

CATEGORY 1: NEW CONSTRUCTION / ENTIRE NEW EDUCATIONAL FACILITY

This category applies to construction of a new school or educational institution on a new site.

Judges: Helen Anderson (New Zealand)
 Darren Cox (New South Wales)
 Matthew Todd (South Australia)

1x winner and no commendations

WINNER: [TechPark, Manukau Institute of Technology](#)
 Auckland, New Zealand
 ASC Architects
 Photographer: Mark Scowen

Summary Citation:

TechPark, Manukau Institute of Technology is an entire new educational facility intended to accommodate all of the institute’s professional engineering and trade schools, including carpentry, plumbing, gas fitting, electrical, mechanical, refrigeration, automotive, fabrication, civil and landscape construction. TechPark is an outstanding example of clarity of educational purpose delivered in the design outcome in context of shifting from traditional spaces and teaching modes to a facility that fully supports the learning future of Engineering and Trades.

Full citation:

TechPark, Manukau Institute of Technology is an entire new educational facility intended to accommodate all of the institute’s professional engineering and trade schools, including carpentry, plumbing, gas fitting, electrical, mechanical, refrigeration, automotive, fabrication, civil and landscape construction. The intensive and integrated design, planning and consultation process has resulted in an outcome that meets the economic and educational priority of ensuring highly skilled and future proofed employees for engineering and trades now and in a rapidly expanding group of industries.

This facility responds to the commonalities of the “Tech” industries and their training approaches as well as the highly specialised needs of the individual disciplines. Common-use learning and teaching

spaces sit alongside highly specialised workshops and laboratories and operate as exemplars of innovation and work styles for students preparing for their workplaces. Proximity of practical and classroom work as well as transparency of spaces supports pedagogies of engagement and accountability. The integration of high spec. simulators in trades such as welding further support the learning experience.

The facility is designed to integrate industry overlaps and changes to ensure that as trades merge and differentiate, and new trades emerge, the existing frames of the building have full adaptability to remain current and relevant to its industries.

TechPark is an outstanding example of clarity of educational purpose delivered in the design outcome in context of shifting from traditional spaces and teaching to a facility that fully supports the learning future of Engineering and Trades.

CATEGORY 2:- NEW CONSTRUCTION / NEW INDIVIDUAL FACILITY(IES) OVER AU \$8 MILLION

This category applies to New Construction or a New Individual Facility (or Facilities) Over \$8 million AUD

Judges: Liz Foo (Tasmania)
Peter Farrer-Smith (Western Australia)
John Ward (New South Wales)

1x Commendation and 2x Winners

COMMENDATION

1. [The Marian Centre, Brigidine College](#)
Queensland, Australia
Blight Rayner Architecture in collaboration with Brigidine College
Photographer: Christopher Frederick Jones

Summary Citation:

The Marian Centre is a beautifully refined modern learning environment. At its core is the central breezeway circulation space that connects across the multiple levels of the building and out into the landscape beyond via the amphitheatre and balcony spaces on all levels. The teaching spaces created are simple and adaptable, but they also offer a variety of learning modes and embrace non-traditional configurations. Overall, the outcome is simple, but well considered and highly refined. Its use of natural materials with clean and refined finishes creates a mature and sophisticated building.

Full citation:

The Marian Centre is a beautifully refined modern learning environment.

At its core is the central breezeway circulation space that connects across the multiple levels of the building and out into the landscape beyond via the amphitheatre and balcony spaces on all levels. The breezeway is enriched by the inclusion of landscaped areas and vertical voids to create a vibrant and active space that provides circulation through the building as well as informal gathering spaces and functional outdoor teaching spaces. The introduction of the amphitheatre space, the auditorium space as well as the voids allows the breezeway to be vertically integrated through the building.

A variety of teaching spaces and other functions are clustered around this central breezeway – providing all the spaces with great access to natural light and ventilation. The teaching spaces created are simple and adaptable, but they also offer a variety of learning modes and embrace non-traditional configurations.

The form of the building has been carefully considered to rationalise the existing levels and topography of the site – creating connections to the wider site at multiple levels.

Overall, the outcome is simple, but well considered and highly refined. Its use of natural materials with clean and refined finishes creates a mature and sophisticated building.

WINNER: [Albeus Fahey Building - Iona Presentation College](#)
Western Australia, Australia
EIW Architects in collaboration with NoTosh
Photographer: Frances Andrijich & Epigroup

Summary Citation:

The Albeus Fahey Building is an excellent example of a contemporary design that still retains its linkage to the past. The interior is visually stunning with extensive use of glazing and tall voids creating a feeling of light and space that inspires contemplation. Traditional learning spaces make way for less rigid and formal spaces that spill out seamlessly into common areas.

Excellent connectivity between spaces (both vertically and horizontally) contribute to a sense of cross curricular collaboration and cooperation. This will no doubt become a place where students and teachers feel inspired and energised.

Full citation:

The Albeus Fahey Building combines a bright contemporary interior cloaked by an exterior that perfectly complements the surrounding buildings – harking back to the early days of education in Western Australia.

The interior is visually stunning with extensive use of glazing and tall voids creating a feeling of light and space that inspires contemplation.

Irregular shaped rooms provide visual interest and the challenge of furnishing these spaces has been met well.

Traditional learning spaces make way for less rigid and formal spaces that spill out seamlessly into common areas. There are subtle differences between spaces that define their purpose without losing the overall continuity.

Excellent connectivity between spaces (both vertically and horizontally) contribute to a sense of cross curricular collaboration and cooperation – creating a multi-disciplinary “real world” environment.

A mixture of formal and informal teaching spaces lend themselves to different pedagogical styles with the opportunity to host class sizes ranging from the intimate to large-scale with little effort.

Extensive use of timber and natural textiles creates a warmth to the interior spaces and full-length glazing adds to the visual appeal internally and externally.

The external landscaping ties in well with the building and provides excellent linkage to the rest of the campus. The Presentation Walk in particular is a delight, cleverly illustrating the history and origins of the College in an innovative fashion.

An excellent example of a contemporary design that still retains its linkage to the past. This will no doubt become a place where students and teachers feel inspired and energised.

WINNER: [Hillbrook Anglican School Upper Campus Precinct](#)
Queensland, Australia
BSPN Architecture in collaboration with Hillbrook Anglican School
Photographer: Angus Martin Photographer

Summary Citation:

Hillbrook Anglican School Upper Campus Precinct showcases respect to the community and impressive connectivity between indoor and outdoor learning spaces. The architects were faced with site constraints and challenging topography, but created a rich and inviting terraced courtyard that doubles as both a performance space as well as an outdoor learning area - now known as the heart and focal point of the school. The outcome of this project is a harmonious blend of contrasting elements at play. The challenge of topography which was once a hindrance is arguably the largest contributor of success, resulting in a multi-tiered and interconnected precinct.

Full citation:

Hillbrook Anglican School Upper Campus Precinct showcases respect to the community and impressive connectivity between indoor and outdoor learning spaces.

New buildings have been carefully placed to maximise the available footprint of the site, inviting the street into a communal waiting area. The architects were faced with site constraints and challenging topography, but created a rich and inviting terraced courtyard that doubles as both a performance space as well as an outdoor learning area. This space is now known as the heart and focal point of the school.

Care has been taken to maintain views of greenery and natural light where possible from the learning spaces laced along the perimeter of the new structures. Breakout zones are also provided to keep a strong connection to the outdoor areas. An element of flexibility is added to purpose-built teaching spaces ensuring adaptation is an option in the ever-evolving education landscape.

The forms play a dominant role on the site with angular overhead structures whilst the irregularly curved concrete terraces and trees have brought balance to the overall scheme and act as a core that leads users to other parts of the School.

Whilst the material palette has been selected in relation to the existing site, modern design details have been weaved through internal timber lining, exterior shade screens and clever lighting throughout.

The outcome of this project is a harmonious blend of contrasting elements. The challenge of topography which was once a hindrance is arguably the largest contributor of success, resulting in a multi-tiered and interconnected precinct.

CATEGORY 3: NEW CONSTRUCTION / NEW INDIVIDUAL FACILITY (OR FACILITIES) UNDER AU \$8 MILLION

This category applies to New Construction or a New Individual Facility (or Facilities) under \$8 million AUD

Judges: Deb Auckland (South Australia)
 Vicki Steer (Victoria)
 John Hay (Queensland)

1x winner and 4x commendations

COMMENDATIONS

1. [Immanuel Lutheran College Building B \(Bunya\)](#)
Queensland, Australia
Bickerton Masters in collaboration with Immanuel Lutheran College

Summary Citation:

The Immanuel Lutheran College Bunya Building takes advantage of the unique topography and the breath-taking natural beauty of its site in the Sunshine Coast to deliver a project that responds to the College's brief for a 'futures thinking' approach to teaching and learning, flexible organisational structure and desire for strong connections to the natural environment.

Full citation:

The Immanuel Lutheran College Bunya Building takes advantage of the unique topography and the breath-taking natural beauty of its site in the Sunshine Coast hinterland to create a learning environment that both responds to and interacts with the natural environment.

Building on already established master planning principles, the planning processes incorporated detailed feedback and lessons learned from previous stages of work to refine a design outcome that responds to the College's brief for a 'futures thinking' approach to teaching and learning, flexible organisational structure and desire for strong connections to the natural environment.

Cantilevering over a steep retaining wall, the learning areas have the sense of sitting amongst the canopy of the old-growth forests adjacent to the site. Design elements are responsive to the demands of climate with generous outdoor learning decks, deep verandahs and screening while the building siting and overhang economically utilises available area on a tight site.

Accommodating high levels of flexibility while maintaining a unique flavour, the learning areas are defined by different entries, connections, relationships to outdoor learning and views to give each space their own individual relationship with the site.

The functional planning of flexible and interconnected spaces offers different types of spaces including Cave, Campfire and Watering Hole to support different learning modes. Spaces can be modified easily through the use of mobile furniture to suit a range of group sizes from a whole year level to smaller groups and individual reading nooks that provide a peaceful retreat from open planned collaborative workspaces.

2. [St Clare's Primary School, Stage 3](#)
Victoria, Australia
ROAM Architects
Photographer: Tatjana Plitt

Summary Citation:

St Clare's Primary School, Stage 3 follows the steady growth in student numbers from 2014. The new building encloses and completes the courtyard of previous stages. Work undertaken in previous stages was reviewed and lessons learnt identified and implemented. A clear response to the design brief is evident in the final design outcome. Adaptable, varying, sized learning areas to the first floor are located above specialist learning library art and undercover spaces below. Natural light, ventilation and materials selection were all sustainability issues that were well considered.

Full citation:

St Clare's Primary School, Stage 3 follows steady growth in student numbers to accommodate year 5 & 6 students. After considerable consultation and workshops carried out with teachers, students and the community it was determined that in addition to six new learning areas, additional specialist teaching spaces were also required. These consisted of art, library, resource and multi-media. Research was carried out into two storey school buildings in particular, best practice stair locations and introducing natural ventilation initiatives to learning spaces. During the consultation process, earlier stages were also reviewed to identify lessons learned for inclusion into Stage 3.

The design outcome, developed through a thorough planning process, is a clear response to the design brief. A wide range of learning opportunities are available through adaptable spaces, with flexibility offered through the type of learning space and the capacity to modify the space for different groups sizes and modes of teaching and learning. This is evident in the various upper floor spaces that can be closed off or opened up, different sized meeting rooms and study nooks. The upper floor also provides protected outdoor learning areas below which are located adjacent to specialist library and art teaching areas.

Light filled spaces have been designed to create learning environments that are enjoyable and exciting to learn in. Glazing to the north and south is maximised, whilst limited to east and west to minimise heat gain. A cost effective central skylight provides natural lighting into the body of the building. With the use of natural ventilation and natural materials, sustainability objectives have also been met.

3. [Killester College Performing Arts and Music Learning Facility](#)
Victoria, Australia
Crosier Scott Architects
Photographer: Casamento Photography

Summary Citation:

This striking building is entirely appropriate for music and dance while also providing general amenities and design elements that extend the use of the learning spaces beyond the performing arts. Visually stunning inside and out, the facility provides an exciting, vibrant environment through

abstract patterns derived from musical notes. There is ample evidence that the building design fulfils the goals and ambitions for the building developed through an iterative planning process.

Full citation:

Killester College caters for a wide range of student diversity and interests. The Performing Arts and Music Learning facility is the latest in a series of purpose-built facilities to cater for these. An iterative planning process refined through workshops, visits and assessment of context and site constraints identified the educational goal of providing a dynamic teaching, learning and performance environment. The priorities identified for the facility were that it would: complement the existing campus; support their progressive arts curriculum; provide a practical addition to accommodate a range of other activities; and enable flexibility for future needs or change in priorities.

The design is striking and entirely appropriate for music and dance. Visually stunning inside and out, the facility provides an exciting, vibrant environment through abstract patterns derived from musical notes incorporated in wall panels. There is ample evidence that the building design fulfils the goals and ambitions for the building, providing for specific learning, general amenities and adaptable and flexible indoor and outdoor spaces. Design elements that extend the use of the learning spaces beyond the performing arts are commendable. The ability to open up the agora to external landscaped areas to support different viewing and staging options is valuable and provides the opportunity for use of this space for the broader school community.

This is a sustainable building that uses space economically and efficiently incorporating environmentally sustainable elements. Attention is paid to design for ultimate acoustic performance. The site location exploited and celebrates the experience of arrival with a light-well providing natural light deep into the building.

The College has clearly articulated how valuable the indoor and outdoor learning spaces are to the whole school community throughout the day.

- [4. St Louis De Montfort's Primary School, Stage One, Phase B New Learning Centre](#)
Victoria, Australia
Minx Architecture Pty Ltd
Photographer: Rhiannon Slatter**

Summary Citation:

This project exemplifies the power of collaboration between architects and educators resulting in a light, sustainable open Learning Centre that elegantly attains the school's educational goals. The trial of envisaged learning opportunities afforded by the new spaces conducted concurrently with design development in mini "pilot" teaching and learning spaces is commendable. Innovative design solutions are applied in response to a capped budget, tight site constraints and the orientation of building.

Full citation:

A comprehensive Master Planning process to repurpose and replace structures with contemporary educational facilities resulted in a completely re-envisioned school through staged delivery. The New Learning Centre is a Stage One Project. Its scope and design were the result of a strong iterative consultation process between architects and the school which produced a clearly defined educational brief specifying flexible teaching and learning spaces that would support: the social and collaborative; the inquiry based; the focussed and didactic; small group and individual learning modalities; and indoor/outdoor learning opportunities. Notably, a trial of the envisaged learning

opportunities afforded by the new spaces was conducted concurrently with design development in mini “pilot” teaching and learning spaces.

The school’s educational goals are realised in the New Learning Centre. The flexibility of every space is built into the design with the provision of a choice of learning situations and varying sized spaces which can be selected by users according to the social and pedagogical context in which learning is intended to occur. Movement flows readily between indoor and outdoor learning areas and internal circulation spaces.

Innovative design solutions are applied in response to a capped budget, tight site constraints and the orientation of building. A wide range of design elements for sustainability is incorporated in the construction, such as sun shading elements, consideration of window openings and thermally efficient materials.

The project is an example of a powerful collaboration between the architects and educators marked by clear communication and collaboratively devised solutions. The result is a light, open Learning Centre that elegantly attains the school’s goals.

WINNER: [Lepperton School and Community Hall Redevelopment](#)
 New Plymouth, New Zealand
 Robertson Hidzir Architects
 Photographer: Paul McCredie

Summary Citation:

The Lepperton School and Community Hall redevelopment project is infused by the ethos of ‘learning to learn’ together. Extensive consultation and collaboration involving the entire village community informed a design solution that simply but clearly articulates the spatial requirements of the collaborative teaching practice the school has been developing for over a decade. The outcome is a beautiful community centre that is the heart and soul of this small rural village of Taranaki, New Zealand.

Full citation:

The Lepperton School vision is driven by the ethos of ‘learning to learn’ together. This ethos has been carried through all phases of this collaborative school and community project to rebuild the existing school and construct a new hall. The result is a beautiful community centre that is the heart and soul of this small rural village of Taranaki, New Zealand.

The project is the outcome of master planning that commenced in 2014. Extensive consultation took place over five years involving the entire village community and included research and study to develop the brief, articulation of the learning and teaching principles and testing of ideas and design solutions to ensure learning spaces supported collaborative teaching practices.

The design of the interconnected learning hubs simply but clearly articulates the spatial requirements of the collaborative teaching practice the school has been developing for over a decade. The Learning hubs recognise that one size doesn’t fit all and purposely support a wide range of group sizes and learning activities for students to learn at their own pace and in their own style. Flexibility in spatial use and education program allows these hubs to operate successfully with up to 75 students and 5 adults.

The design has rigorously assessed and responded to context, siting, natural daylight, ventilation and acoustic design. While purposely designed, the hubs have the capacity to adapt; open up and close down when required, be used for different types of learning activities as well as the flexibility to be

modified over time with non-structural partitions. Cost effective solutions have been chosen for multiple benefit including building performance, human comfort, opportunity for learning, energy efficiency and sustainability.

The facilities are used throughout the day and night by the community achieving their objective of being the centre of the community. The success of this project is further evidenced in the improved learner engagement, increase in learning outcomes, greater learning progress and ownership of learning the school has reported during the first year of operation.

CATEGORY 4 - RENOVATION / MODERNISATION VALUED OVER AU \$5 MILLION

Judges: Helen Anderson (New Zealand)
Darren Cox (New South Wales)
Matthew Todd (South Australia)

1x winner and no commendations

WINNER: [Catholic College Sale, St Patrick's Refurbishment](#)
**Y2 Architecture, FMG Engineering, Waterman, Wilde & Woollard, Three Acres
Landscape Architecture, ABS, Beveridge Williams
Victoria, Australia
Photographer: Lars Osland**

Summary Citation:

Catholic College Sale has renovated an historical boarding school to create six renovated learning studios with breakout spaces, a new conference room, offices, staff room, reception area, library and a Year 12 Study Centre. This is an outstanding renovation that has met its brief to preserve a beautiful heritage building while creating a future focussed learning environment that honours its catholic identity.

Full citation:

Catholic College Sale has renovated an historical boarding school to create six renovated learning studios with breakout spaces, new conference room, offices, staff room, reception area, library and a Year 12 Study Centre. New technology has been integrated and the new spaces have facilitated future focussed pedagogies while retaining the historical character of the building including its heritage listing and enhancing the catholic identity of the school.

Desirable shifts in learning and teaching were identified including personalisation of learning, variability of spaces and visibility across learning communities. These modes were implemented by opening up cellular classrooms to create variety and flexibility of spaces offering choice, flow and independence. The renovation of wide, traditional hallways and verandas into learning spaces is an effective and innovative use of space.

The incorporation of a senior study centre has reinforced the identity of the space as a “senior hub” establishing the physical and pedagogical beginnings of transition to tertiary education for final year students.

The Resource Centre has been designed to respond to current and future learning and offers an array of settings that respond to user needs. The book wall is a compelling feature.

This is an outstanding renovation that has met its brief to preserve a beautiful heritage building while creating a future focussed learning environment that honours its catholic identity.

CATEGORY 5 - RENOVATION / MODERNISATION UNDER AU \$5 MILLION

Judges: Scott Alterator (Victoria)
Jenni Webster (Victoria)
Chantelle Love (South Australia)

1x winner and 2x commendations

COMMENDATIONS

1. [Nyaal](#)
Victoria, Australia
k20 Architecture
Photographer: Trevor Mein

Summary Citation:

The focus on the connection between pedagogy and space was particularly evident in K20's design process for Nyaal. The lightbulb moment of a 'digital fireplace' as a place for sharing stories in 3D inspired the creation of a space that nurtures immersion. The symbiosis of technology and education was evident in the design of the space and the congruent integration of the language of the Wadawurrung people added a fourth dimension. Functional elements such as the switchable curved glass whiteboard demonstrates the way the space encourages innovative practice.

Full citation:

Meaning 'to open your eyes' in the language of the traditional owners of Djilang, the Wadawurrung people, the Nyaal Precinct at Deakin University is a learning space in which students can learn to see, feel, think and act in both formal and informal learning spaces. Housed in the faculty of Arts and Education, The Nyaal precinct brings to life Deakin University's hands-on learning philosophy. The end result of Deakin University's Nyaal Precinct vision is a space in which both staff and students are excited to occupy, use and learn in.

Using a highly collaborative process, k20 Architecture leveraged both the client's vision inside the original 1970s building, juxtaposing the digital and analogue nature of learning. The congruence between the spatial design and the vision for pedagogical practices was evident with k20 Architects creating spaces for breakouts, a 360o projection space for specialist teaching, a Think Tank, a digital editing suite and a communal rooftop garden.

The Design story of Nyaal Precinct is rooted in a 'Digital Campfire' in which learners are enveloped in a 360o Digital projection that empowers them to create their own narrative to transition through core phases of learning; 'I see' from 'I feel' to 'I think' then 'I act'. The Nyaal Precinct spaces acts as a third teacher to directly facilitate seeing, feeling, thinking and acting through each spatial design.

2. [Penleigh and Essendon Grammar School Music House](#)
Victoria, Australia
McBride Charles Ryan
Photographer: John Gollings AM

Summary Citation:

The Music House is a stunning architectural interpretation of the musical brief and successful adaptation of the original Victorian house it envelopes. The interconnection of strong design elements both internal and external is commendable and lifts the design outcome well beyond whimsical shape making. Multiple iterations of the plan form evident in the early sketches show a development and response to the brief that manifests in a diverse variety of intriguing and carefully crafted learning spaces.

Full citation:

The Music House is a stunning architectural interpretation of the musical brief and successful adaptation of the original Victorian house it envelopes. The interconnection of strong design elements both internal and external is commendable and lifts the design outcome well beyond whimsical shape making. Multiple iterations of the plan form evident in the early sketches show a development and response to the brief that manifests in a diverse variety of intriguing and carefully crafted learning spaces.

In a precinct of buildings with strong architectural expressions, the new Music House not only holds it's own but seeks to preserve and highlight both the original Victorian House and more recent 2009 building. Together, the 3 buildings become more than the sum of their parts creating a courtyard and mini-precinct within the School grounds.

The lyrical expression – or line of a frozen sound wave - that passes across the northern façade cleverly provides sun shading so that all spaces can be passively ventilated. This undulating form connects the individual music practice rooms and also creates numerous light filled internal propping spots that does away with the notion of the traditional corridor.

The connection to original Victorian House is commendable, maintaining and absorbing many of the period details, such as the patterned brickwork, but with a modern expression that is both elegant, robust and functional.

The planning process was perhaps less evident than some projects due to the ongoing relationship and obvious trust between client and architect. But the completed interior & exterior architectural design shows a strength and confidence that can only make this building a joy to inhabit and a true reflection of the school's aspirations.

WINNER: [The Bibliotheque](#)
 NSW, Australia
 BVN and International Grammar School
 Photographer: Tom Roe

Summary Citation:

The exercise in careful listening and alignment of education and design is evident in every feature of the Bibliotheque project at International Grammar School. In combining junior and senior libraries BVN has delivered a new focus in the heart of the school. Set against the hustle of Sydney streets and enveloped by the energy of the campus, the Bibliotheque offers a meeting place for visitors, and a sanctuary for students and staff to recharge, concentrate and focus.

Full citation:

An extensive process of consultation established the foundation for the masterplan works at International Grammar School. BVN employed stakeholder workshops, site visits, and a survey to reach out to students and community beyond the school. A detailed brief established the need for a calming, nurturing learning environment catering for visitors, students and staff. The combining of the junior and senior library into the heart of the school focused the various parts of the campus and gave it practical and metaphoric importance. The Bibliotheque became a retreat space for students and a meeting space for parents and the broader school community.

The ground floor entrance offers playful spaces for small group study, quiet reading and rendezvous. Settings include reading tunnels, small group 'ponds' where students huddle at ground level. There are cosy corners for quiet moments or lingering in the calm with a book or a thought. Thresholds provide clear signals for the learning setting beyond. Formal and informal activities are separated onto the two floors by an amphitheatre that is light filled and offers views between floors without significant disruption.

The first floor space is a responsive learning environment that offers reading rooms, study nooks and seating along the periphery. An outdoor learning terrace provides a further connection to nature. Adjacent sits a colleagues lounge that extends into the Bibliotheque after school hours. Such is the connectedness and coisiness of the space that the lounge doors remain open.

CATEGORY 6 - SMALL PROJECTS UNDER AU \$2 MILLION

Judges: Deb Auckland (South Australia)
Vicki Steer (Victoria)
John Hay (Queensland)

1x winner and 1x commendation

COMMENDATIONS

[The John B Fairfax Learning Centre](#)

NSW, Australia

BVN

Photographer: Bret Boardman

Summary Citation:

The John B Fairfax Learning Centre is a hands-on digitally rich and immersive learning environment for K-12 students, teachers and families within the State Library of NSW. The design outcome is a powerful yet restrained response to the education vision to foster the love and curiosity for books. The Learning Centre is a cleverly curated space that encourages students to be curious, go searching and create their own learning experience.

Full citation:

The John B Fairfax Learning Centre is a hands-on digitally rich and immersive learning environment for K-12 students, teachers and families within the State Library of NSW. The design outcome is a very powerful yet restrained response to the education vision to foster the love and curiosity for books.

The adventure starts at the secret entrance tucked away behind a painting (a huge LCD screen). Beyond is a four metre tunnel lined with interactive elements and displayed artefacts that gradually tapers to child scale, leading children and adults alike into the Learning Centre. Surprise and delight await as the space opens up into the large light filled learning space framed by arched windows overlooking the Domain and Botanic Gardens.

The Learning Centre is a cleverly curated space that encourages students to be curious, go searching and create their own learning experience. The space itself could be viewed as a blank canvas on which children set the scene for their own learning through exploration and discovery. Learning resources and artefacts are incorporated in carefully articulated and concealed joinery units considering different heights for different users. A fold out wall reveals a green screen for multi-media activities and there is extensive integration of digital technology. Throughout the day, students set up the space differently depending on their tasks, interests and learning activities. The added complexity of providing a contemporary learning experience within a historic building has been respectfully achieved by celebrating key features such as the large arched windows as part of seating nooks and incorporating writeable surfaces to columns to integrate them as part of the learning canvas.

The success of this project is underpinned by a rigorous consultation process involving a diverse range of stakeholders including educators, librarians, digital technology integrators, exhibitions staff, indigenous services and the incorporation of interactive engagement tools drawn from museums, galleries and libraries.

WINNER: [St Thomas Ecology & STEAM Centre](#)
 South Australia, Australia
 Grieve Gillett Andersen
 Photographer: Sam Noonan

Summary Citation:

St Thomas School has utilised, adapted and added onto an existing industrial building for primary year students. Established as an Ecology & STEAM Centre, the project team undertook an in-depth consultation process in developing the brief. This established a strong foundation to develop specialist teaching spaces that also have a multipurpose educational function. By retaining and extending the existing building, indoor and outdoor learning areas a wide range of educational learning opportunities have been provided, within a sustainable architectural solution.

Full citation:

St Thomas School had a strong desire to establish a new facility to strengthen their eco-literacy programs for primary year students.

Extensive and in-depth consultation and research was undertaken by the school's architects involving Catholic Education, the School Leadership team and Board, parents and students to establish the design brief. Research was also undertaken to investigate ecology and agriculture programs and also home economics in a primary school setting. Workshops were carried out with teachers in particular performing art teachers. Landscape architects were also consulted with and involved in detailed design workshops.

With an informed planning process, the final design outcome provided more than what was initially envisaged by all involved. The existing building was used to advantage with a strong relationship retained to its industrial past. The ecology hub and veggie garden are well integrated as important, adjacent outside educational functions.

Specialist learning areas also have an adaptive multipurpose purpose role consisting of: STEM, home economics (cooking), visual art and performing arts (music dance and drama). This has had an effect on the way the school approaches learning opportunities. Indoor and outdoor breakout areas allow students to experience varying opportunities for self-learning whilst allowing for teacher visual supervision to be maintained.

Sustainability considerations have greatly influenced the design whilst enhancing the educational experience. The design solution involved adaption of an existing industrial building, sensitive additions, considered planning and the integration of new lighting, glazing and thermal initiatives. The refurbishment was intended as a short-medium term solution with eventual plans to demolish and replace the original buildings however the successful adaptive reuse has transformed the school's thinking. The buildings will now be retained and enjoyed as a much-loved addition to this school community.

The awards panel congratulates the school and architects for achieving a high quality educational facility outcome for this category.

CATEGORY 7: LANDSCAPING/OUTDOOR LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

Designed to showcase outdoor learning environments targeted to improving educational outcomes.

Judges: Helen Anderson (New Zealand)
Darren Cox (New South Wales)
Matthew Todd (South Australia)
Paul Johnson (South Australia)

1x winner and 2x commendations

COMMENDATIONS

1. [Korayn Birraleee Family Centre](#)
Victoria, Australia
Ochre Landscape
Photographer: Ochre Landscape

Summary Citation:

Korayn Birraleee Family Centre is an outdoor educational space where early years children may engage in an extensive range of play activities to foster multidisciplinary learning. Korayn Birraleee Family Centre is commended for their consummate planning and consultation process. The wide-ranging engagement with experience and expertise across their professional and local communities demonstrates significant excellence. Further, including children and carrying out a Post Occupancy Evaluation creates an exemplar of how to achieve innovation and continuous improvement through expert planning.

Full citation:

2. [Woodcroft College ELC](#)
South Australia, Australia
Swanbury Penglase
Photographer: Peter Barnes Photographer

Summary Citation:

Woodcroft College ELC is an early learning centre that embraces Emilio Reggio philosophies of learning and teaching where the natural environment is an integral part of children's learning. Woodcroft College ELC is commended for the cohesive implementation of a singular concept centred on water successfully translated into a built outcome. The concept arising from the water cycle is strong and taken to a logical conclusion in the design and in the exciting and constantly varying opportunities for learning in a space that is naturally dynamic.

Full citation:

Woodcroft College ELC is an early learning centre that embraces Emilio Reggio philosophies of learning and teaching where the natural environment is an integral part of children's learning. The site for the centre was challenging for its proposed location across a grassy swale and associated water courses, the implications for meeting the City's technical requirements, the teaching approach

of engaging with the natural environment and the issues of child safety. The choice to include the water course across the site (rather than hide or divert) created an opportunity for the children to engage with the seasonal variations of the water and its presence as part of their play. Woodcroft College ELC is commended for the cohesive implementation of a singular concept centred on water successfully translated into a built outcome. The concept arising from the water cycle is strong and taken to a logical conclusion with the design and the exciting and constantly varying opportunities for learning in a space that is naturally dynamic.

WINNER: [Scotch College Teaching and Learning Building](#)
Western Australia, Australia
Four Landscape Studio
Photographer: Silvertone Photography

Summary Citation:

Scotch College has enhanced its learning and teaching precinct by creating a landscape that is a coherent extension to the buildings and takes the Mathematics and Music curriculum into the outdoors. This is an outstanding project where the landscape design outcome demonstrates that the brief has been realised in an elegant, functional and pedagogically robust space for learning, teaching and socialising.

Full citation:

Scotch College has enhanced its learning and teaching precinct by creating a landscape that is an extension to the buildings and takes the Mathematics and Music curriculum into the outdoors. Nineteen mathematical learning opportunities have been embedded in the environment overtly or with subtlety and the motifs of music have become part of the design. Music has a significant role in the school's culture and history and this has been honoured in these spaces. Students engage with the outdoor spaces both as breakout rooms and presentation spaces for learning and teaching and for relaxing during breaks.

The effectiveness of moving learning outdoors while retaining the opportunity for students to switch to non-classroom mode and socialise is clearly seen in the mix of semi-enclosed and open spaces plus casual corners with variable use seating.

The implementation of "Learnsapes" has provided the opportunity for teacher and students to shift from traditional forms of delivery to engaging with 21stC notions of learning and teaching, well supported by the construction of the learning spaces.

This is an outstanding project where the landscape design outcome demonstrates that the brief has been realised in an elegant, functional and pedagogically robust space for learning, teaching and socialising.

CATEGORY 8 - AN INNOVATIVE EDUCATION INITIATIVE

Judges: Jenni Webster (Victoria)
Chantelle Love (South Australia)

2x winners and no commendations

WINNER: [Timber Outdoor Classrooms Program](#)
Auckland, New Zealand
Andrew Barrie Lab
Photographer: Patrick Reynolds

Summary Citation:

Finding freedoms within a constraining environment is the mark of a great designer. Andrew Barry Lab has certainly proven itself by finding innovative ways to provide beautiful outdoor classrooms for low-SES neighbourhoods in Auckland. The Timber Outdoor Classrooms Program consults with school educators and leaders to build needs-based outdoor learning spaces on a pro-bono basis using students from the nearby School of Architecture.

Full citation:

The innovative way of leveraging small existing accordsances has provided beautiful outdoor learning spaces for schools that may not have otherwise afforded such building works. The project's model a way of improving learning facilities at schools that would otherwise struggle to provide such resources.

The project has had a significant effect on learning through these new spaces informing a change in pedagogy. Teachers are far more likely to take learning outdoors and student learning is better for it. As well as serving as student rest areas, each structure supports small group teaching and incidental learning around a specific pedagogical theme. The Timber Cloud, for example, was designed to funnel rainwater into a collection zone, and includes a small lab where water collected can be viewed under a microscope and compared with reference samples to study their purity.

The structures benefit multiple communities of learners with learning flowing in multiple directions. The production and use of the structures combines University-level teaching with the efforts of staff, students, and parents at the client schools.

The Timber Outdoor Classrooms Project is an innovative educational initiative worth highlighting both for its ingenuity and its practicality.

WINNER: [Unboxy](#)
Victoria, Australia
Y2 Architecture
Photographer: Y2 Architecture

Summary Citation:

The concept for Unboxy is an ingenious and generous response to assist schools in the transition through our new COVID environment. Designed by Y2 in conjunction with i=D+E, the idea of Unboxy is a kit of parts that students can manipulate to create their own environment that affords some sense of control over what has been a disruptive time of learning between the school and home environments.

As an Innovative Education Initiative, Unboxy is particularly inspiring as a truly student centred tool for learning, and one that has no prescribed outcome other than to allow students the freedom to create their own environment in a safe, simple and fun way. The design of the component parts means Unboxy is generic enough to take on any form yet cleverly detailed to ensure constructability and allow a sense of achievement.

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Essentially a kit of parts, the design team approached the brief with the concept of simple, geometric shapes forming a series of panels and connectors. The materials are low cost, accessible, simple and inclusive to all. Unboxy is designed to complement a classroom or learning environment – providing a moment for play, wellbeing, respite, creativity, experimentation or similar within even the most traditional classroom spaces.

The process of development of Unboxy is a credit to the team, first prototyping and challenging the kit of parts, then undertaking hands-on testing with Ambassador schools before launching into the final Unboxy product, ensuring student and staff agency at all times. The potential for the Unboxy project to expand and evolve as a future learning tool into the future is another truly exciting aspect of this project.

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