

**Irish  
Architecture  
Foundation**

# **Open House Dublin**

## **2023 Impact Report**



7–15  
October  
2023

**The Irish Architecture Foundation**

Open House Dublin is the flagship architecture festival of the Irish Architecture Foundation. Established in 2005, the Irish Architecture Foundation (IAF) is Ireland’s independent organisation for the advancement of culture and communication of architecture.

**Open House Dublin 2023**

People build cities, but cities build people too. Dublin is a city and county built of rooms, buildings, streets, railways, pitches, parks and more. Together, these built parts of Dublin shape and guide the public and private lives of nearly one and a half million people. In turn, the city is formed and changed by millions of individual imaginations, countless conversations, and ordinary, daily actions. Through visits, talks, tours, lectures, workshops, podcasts and more, Open House Dublin 2023 revealed how Dublin and people reflect and depend on each other.

Open House Dublin is a free festival of architecture with hundreds of tours and events taking place each October. We are part of the Open House Worldwide network of more than 50 organisations hosting festivals and conversations about architecture, design and cities across the globe.

In 2023 the Irish Architecture Foundation expanded the Open House Dublin festival to nine days, increasing engagement, participation and impact. We kicked off the festival with an Open House Junior weekend dedicated to young people and families, developed new modes of engagement with our new Open Table Conversations series, journal articles and podcasts, and brought together all four local authorities in Dublin to build a programme of tours, talks, exhibitions, films and more across the city and county.

The invaluable support of our Friends, supporters, building owners, architects, collaborators and volunteers make Open House Dublin possible, and it is with their continued generosity, expertise, passion and advocacy that the IAF will continue to deliver and develop the festival in the future, creating a space for all people to contribute, to learn and to have their voices and stories reflected in the creation of their city.



## PROGRAMME SCHEDULE

This year we launched the Open House festival with Open House Junior, allowing our younger audience to experience and learn in their own creative way. Open House Dublin continued over the following week with tours, talks, screenings and events taking place throughout the 9 day festival.

### 7–8 October

Open House Junior, a weekend of tours, workshops and activities for children and families in Dublin city and county

### 13–15 October

A weekend of building tours, outdoor tours, exhibitions, talks, and workshops across Dublin city and county

### 14 October

#### **CITIES HAVE FEELINGS, NEW NOW NEXT**

A conversation and film with Rhael 'LionHeart' Cape and Finn Williams at the Lighthouse Cinema, Smithfield

### 7–15 October

Curved Street, Temple Bar

#### **REIMAGINING ELDERHOOD**

An exhibition and film by SOA (Self Organised Architecture) on co-designing neighbourhoods to enhance the possibilities for positive ageing in Ireland

#### **OPEN TABLE CONVERSATIONS**

**9 October** Ageing and City with Rose-Ann Kenny

**10 October** Climate and the City with Séan McCabe

**11 October** Justice and the City with Katherine O'Donnell

**12 October** Housing and the City with David Madden

**13 October** Play and the City with Aaron Copeland





20k+  
Audience

800  
Tours & Events

130  
Buildings

42  
Outdoor Tours:  
Walking, Cycling, Boat

36  
Open House  
Junior Events

25  
Journal Articles  
& Podcasts

4  
Irish Sign  
Language Tours

4  
Exhibitions

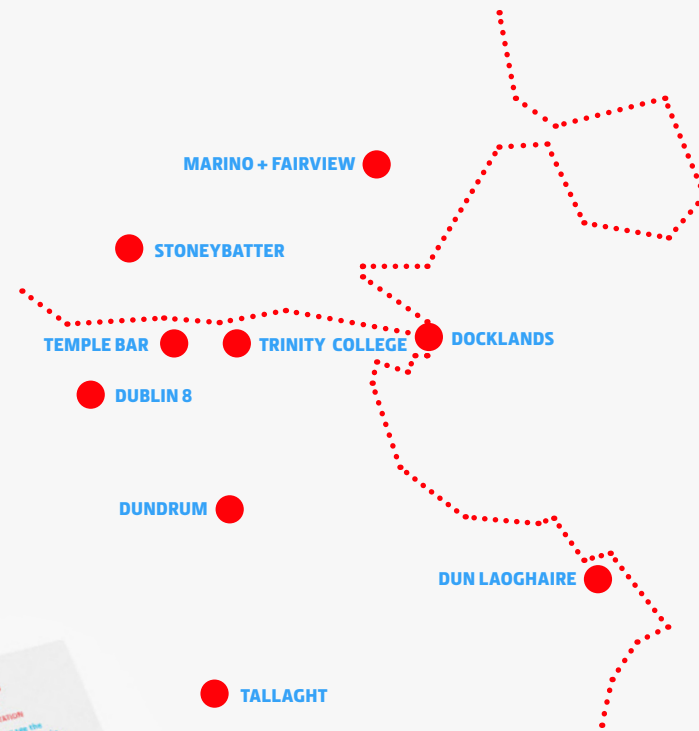
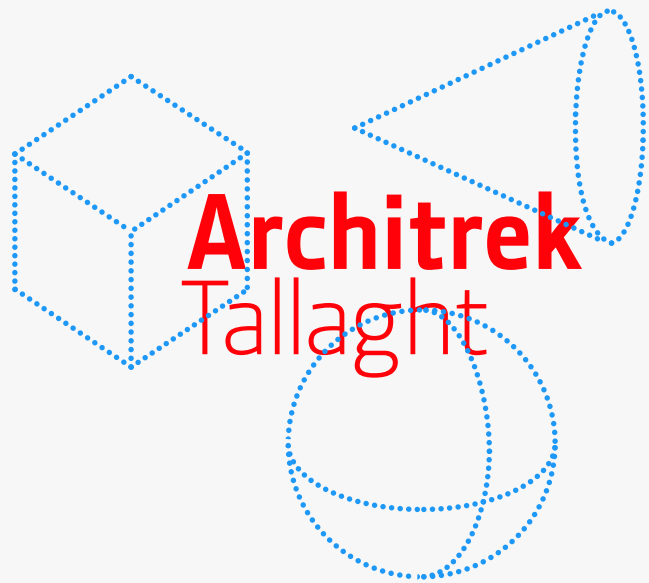
5  
Open Table  
Conversations



**PROGRAMME**

**Open House Junior**

This year, we introduced a dedicated weekend for children and families. Through activities, tours and workshops, we invited children to use their imagination and to become active citizens with a greater awareness of architecture, design and the built environment of Dublin city and county.



We commissioned two new **Architreks** focused on Tallaght and Trinity College Dublin. The full set of 9 IAF Architreks (self-guided activity walks) was available for families to download or collect locally over the week of Open House and families could join guided Architreks in person, led by architects Stephen Mulhall and Evelyn D'Arcy.

We hosted IAF workshops in collaboration with the National Museum of Ireland at Collins Barracks and at Think Big Space in Tallaght, a space provided by Amazon Web Services in partnership with South Dublin County Council to provide young people from local communities a place beyond the classroom to explore and cultivate an interest in science, technology, engineering, arts and maths.

This year's Junior programme included animation at the Irish Museum of Modern Art, creative writing with Fighting Words in Dublin 1, Lego building at the National Print Museum, sketching at the Hugh Lane Gallery, tile making at St Patrick's Cathedral, and an interactive, educational, augmented reality game based on the new Fernhill Park and Gardens in Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown.

Guided family tours of Farmleigh House, the Museum of Literature Ireland, Rathfarnham Castle, Killiney Obelisk, the National Library of Ireland, the National Gallery of Ireland, Casino Marino and the Old Library at Trinity College Dublin were also part of the Open House Junior line-up.







## PROGRAMME

### Open House Dublin building tours and outdoor events

**Highlights** included Clerys Quarter and Central Plaza by Henry J. Lyons, new schools by Grafton Architects and McCullough Mulvin Architects, tours of Met Éireann designed by celebrated Irish architect Liam McCormick, tours of the old Kilmainham Mill with Dublin City Council and tours of the Rubrics, the oldest building in Trinity College. Grangegorman Development Agency and TU Dublin hosted a series of tours, talks and an exhibition about the new and historic buildings on the University's campus. Expert guides and architects at Dublin Port led visitors on tours centered on the visionary redevelopment of the Port precinct, including a rare glimpse inside Odlums Flour Mills and tours on board the St Bridget for a waterfront perspective on the city.

**OHD favourites** included Michael Scott-designed Áras Mhic Dhiarmada, James Gandon-designed The Custom House and The Four Courts, the Government Buildings complex including Leinster House and 23 Kildare Street, Scott Tallon Walker-designed Miesian Plaza on Lower Baggot Street, Pigeon House Power Station, Dún Laoghaire Baths, Provost's House (a Palladian mansion in Trinity College), and the US Ambassador's Residence in Phoenix Park.



#### Housing and home

Housing featured strongly in this year's programme with visits to social housing projects in the city, including Dominick Street Regeneration and Cornamona Court by Dublin City Council (DCC) and new public housing at Rolestown and Church Fields by Fingal County Council. There were guided tours of private homes by architects including GKMP, Scullion Architects, Brennan Furlong, DMVF Architects and Gró Works.

#### Outdoor

Our popular outdoor programme included a walking tour through the evolving civic core of Tallaght, a cycling tour around some of Dublin's modern treasures led by the authors of *The Dublin Architecture Guide 1937–2021*, an Irish-language walking tour of Parnell Square with Colm O'Cathalain, and architectural walking tour in Dublin 7 guided by Bohemian Football club historian Gerry Farrell.



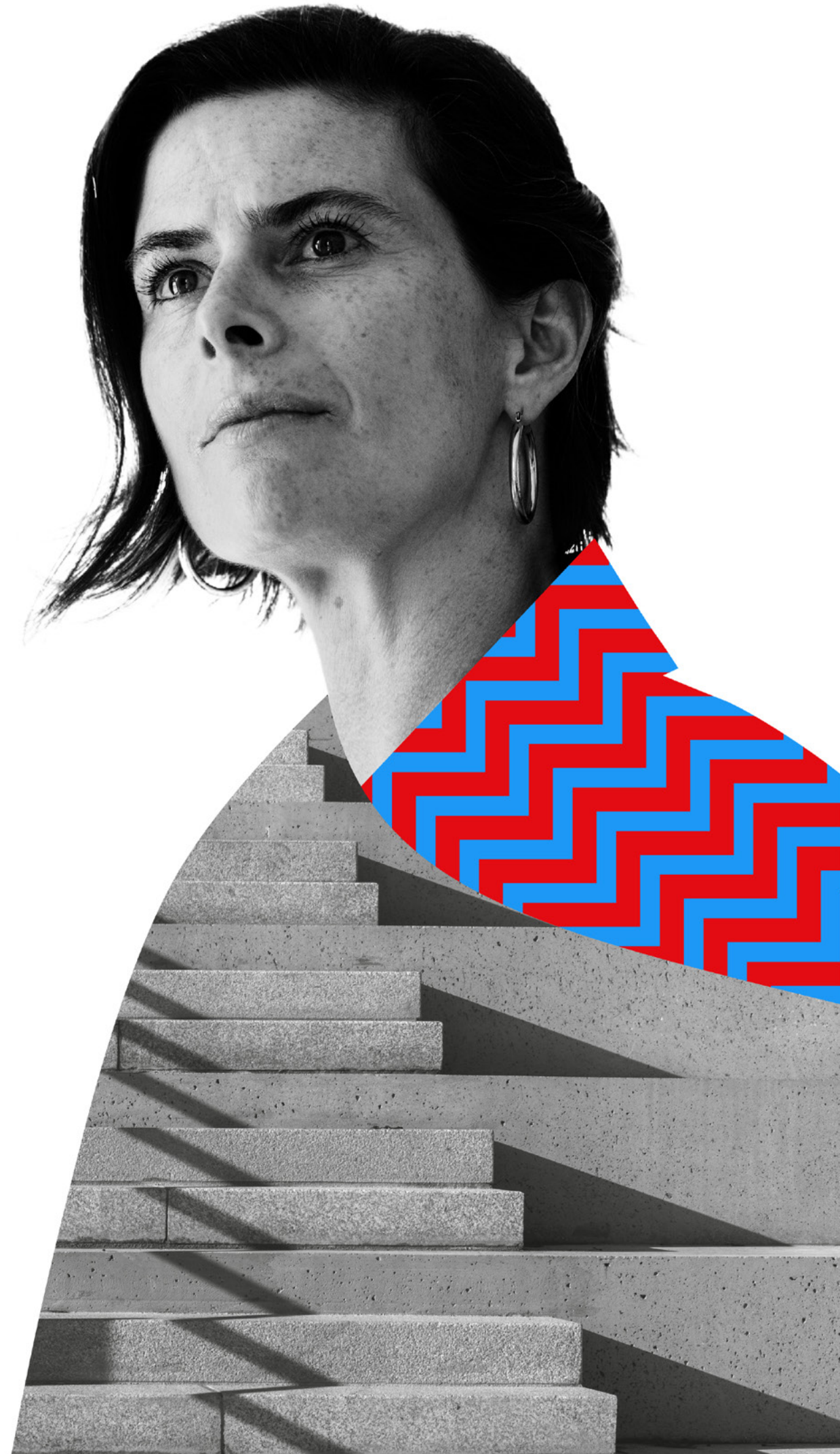
**PROGRAMME**

**Dublin City and County**

This year OHD brought together all four local authorities in Dublin.

Along with walking tours and visits to exemplary social housing projects, DCC welcomed visitors to the Kilmainham Mills complex, which has just undergone a conservation process, with a view to it ultimately opening to the public as a community and cultural hub. Fingal County Council opened the doors of Swords Castle and Malahide Castle and the beautifully restored glasshouses at Ardgillan Castle.

South Dublin County Council invited the public to tour Rathcoole Courthouse and Ballyroan Library and to join the Council on a unique walking tour of Tallaght. Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council included visits to Dún Laoghaire Baths and Shanganagh Castle Estate in their programme of events and hosted public talks, workshops and tours for children and families.





## PROGRAMME

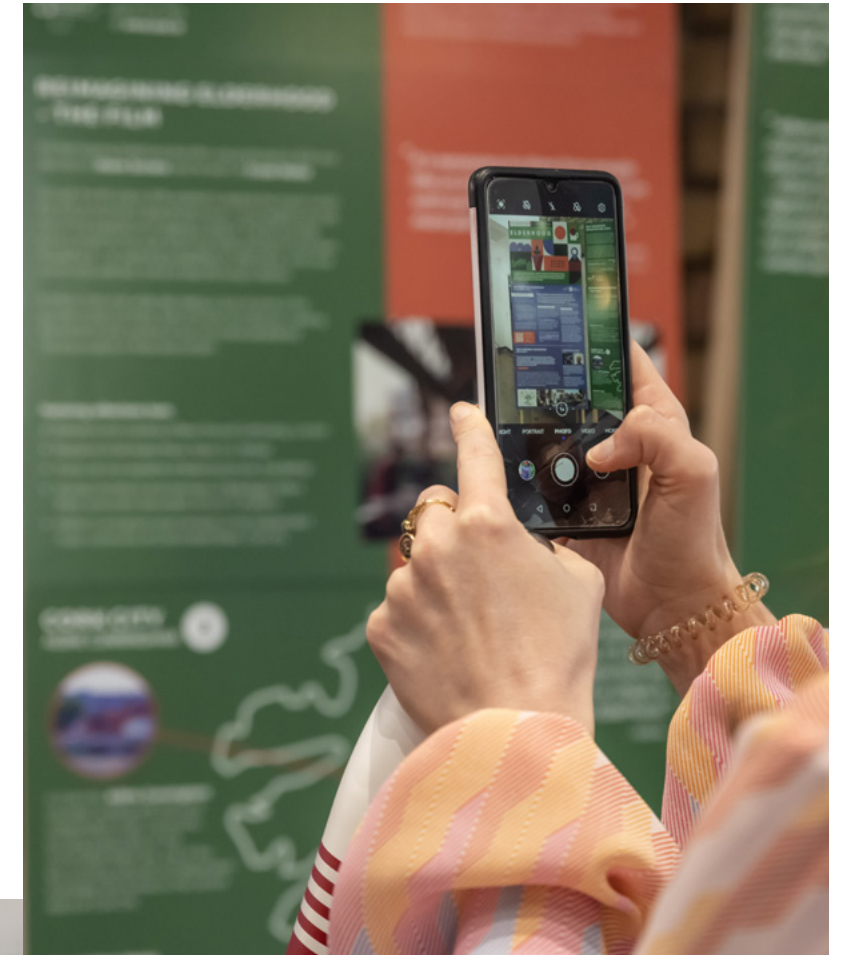
### Open House Extra

#### Talks, Podcasts and Journal

- Dervla MacManus spoke about Gender and Professional Identity in Irish Architecture.
- Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council hosted a public conversation about the future of sustainable transport and public space with a panel of thought leaders.
- Open House Journal included 17 new articles related to architecture, housing, accessibility and inclusion, conservation, community, mobility, policies and design.
- A curated selection of podcasts were included in this year's digital programme. In these podcasts IAF Director Emmett Scanlon speaks to a range of experts about architecture in Dublin.

## Exhibitions and Films

- Reimagining Elderhood, an exhibition and film screening curated by Self Organised Architecture (SOA) explored the future housing needs of people in mid-life in Ireland.
- CoLab presented their research on the legacies of carceral and welfare institutional sites in Rún – Ireland's (In)Visible Buildings Project exhibition.
- Reimagining the Iveagh Markets displayed artwork created by local school children representing their vision for the future of the iconic markets.
- CoisCéim Dance Theatre screened Ros Kavanagh's filmed interview with architect Jenny O'Leary about the design project A Reaction to Place.





**PROGRAMME**

**Open Table Conversations**

Our successful new series of lunchtime talks at Curved Street, Temple Bar encouraged the sharing of stories and ideas on Dublin as an inclusive ‘open city’. At each conversation, a host and festival guests gathered around a table to eat together and discuss Ageing, Climate, Justice, Housing, and Play in the city.



**Cities Have Feelings**

As part of the IAF’s New Now Next talks series, supported by Arup, Finn Williams, City Architect of Malmö, and artist, poet and broadcaster Rhael ‘LionHeart’ Cape from London joined us for an evening of conversation and film on how emotional, physical and social connections between people and their cities are formed and sustained.





## PROGRAMME

### Audience and Access

- We want as many communities as possible to take part in Open House Dublin. We always strive to improve the accessibility of our programme and our communications to reduce barriers to participation and engagement.
- All locations in 2023 were supported by Aira, an on-demand service connecting blind and low vision individuals with certified visual interpreters.

- 4 Irish Sign Language (ISL) tours were offered in this year's programme of events, and ISL was included as part of our key public talk, Cities Have Feelings.
- This year's programme included a sensory tour of architecture at the National Gallery of Ireland.

Bespoke training, curated with the National Gallery of Ireland, was offered to all Open House Dublin volunteers, tour guides and collaborators, focusing on accessibility awareness and tour delivery techniques.

## VOLUNTEERS

### The volunteers who make Open House Dublin a success

288 volunteers joined us this year to help us bring Open House Dublin to thousands of people across the city and county.

Volunteering with the festival offers new experiences and skills and an opportunity to share knowledge and interests with others.

‘There is a great buzz to Open House at every event and an enormous amount of fun and generosity’

‘Volunteering with OHD engages my curiosity in our diverse and significant city and citizens and its hidden gems... I love meeting so many people from so many disciplines who joyfully share their expertise and I get to share my knowledge and passion for Dublin’









## OUR PARTNERSHIP

### Open House Europe

The Irish Architecture foundation is part of Open House Europe, co-funded by the European Commission. This cooperation project unfolds a multi-layered view of quality architecture across Europe and unites people of all professions, interests and visions - from volunteers and enthusiasts to young people and experienced professionals. Together we aim to connect through our built environment. Open House Europe encourages people to imagine, to shape, and to build a future together.

The project connects Open House festivals in Athens, Bilbao, Brno, Dublin, Essen, Stockholm, Lisbon, Slovenia, Milan, Tallinn, Thessaloniki and Vilnius. Open House Europe is coordinated by Architektūros fondas of Lithuania.

In 2023 Open House Europe highlighted sustainable architecture practices creating positive change in the face of the climate crisis and opened up discussions around cities as socially sustainable places to live, work and play.

In 2023 the IAF participated in the first volunteer exchange initiative with volunteers from Ireland traveling to Brno, Essen, Bilbao, Lisbon and Milan, and we welcomed volunteers from these cities to our festival in Dublin.

The Open House Dublin team participated in the first Open House Europe Annual Summit, hosted by the Trienal de Arquitectura de Lisboa in December. It featured a dynamic public programme with inspiring discussions, lectures, workshops, and guided tours. The IAF will host the second Open House Europe Annual Summit in Dublin in early 2025 with an exciting programme of events, workshops, talks and more.

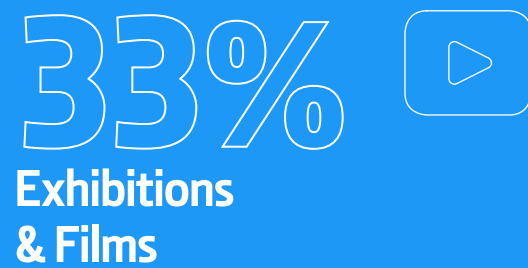
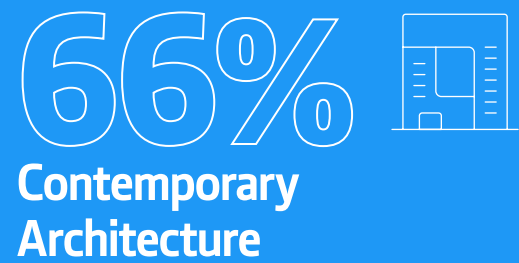
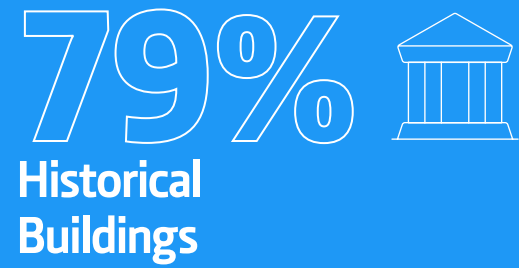
[www.openhouseeurope.org](http://www.openhouseeurope.org)





OUR AUDIENCE  
OHD 2023 in numbers

Top programme interests



Insights

82%  
feel that participating in  
Open House makes them  
proud to be a resident of  
Dublin city or county.

96%  
learned something  
new about Dublin's  
built environment.

97%  
as a result of Open House  
appreciate how good  
design can improve lives.

84%  
feel more able to engage  
in conversations about  
their built environment  
and neighbourhoods.

What our visitors said

'Open House has done such a wonderful job of increasing access to the city's heritage and architecture.'

'Open House does amazing things for the city and for civic engagement. Over the years I've developed a new appreciation for architecture, but it's so much more than architecture, and it's a really valuable event.'

'The guides and volunteers were excellent and there was such a great atmosphere. We would not miss Open House Dublin for the world.'



**MARKETING AND MEDIA**

# Spreading the word about Open House dublin

**Meta**

We developed a full suite of targeted social media campaigns across the festival programme to promote Open House Dublin and the IAF and worked with a skilled content creator to document the festival on the Open House Instagram channel.

**Irish Times Media Partnership**

We partnered with Irish Times Media Solutions to develop a marketing and advertising package which included digital and print advertorials, print and online advertising, and extensive digital marketing.

**On-street Campaigns**

We ran extensive on-street marketing campaigns with JCDecaux: Digital screens x 68, Bus shelters x 36, Luas posters x 74, large scale metropolises x 15.

**OHD Postcards**

Our 2023 postcards were designed to direct our audiences to the Open House Dublin website and programme. 8,000 were distributed across the city and county.

**Website**

More than 100,000 unique visitors used openhousedublin.com to explore the programme and digital content at this year's festival, more than double the web audience from 2022.





## FESTIVAL LAUNCH

OHD 2023 was launched on 6 September at our festival base, 2 Curved Street, Temple Bar, by Minister Malcolm Noonan.

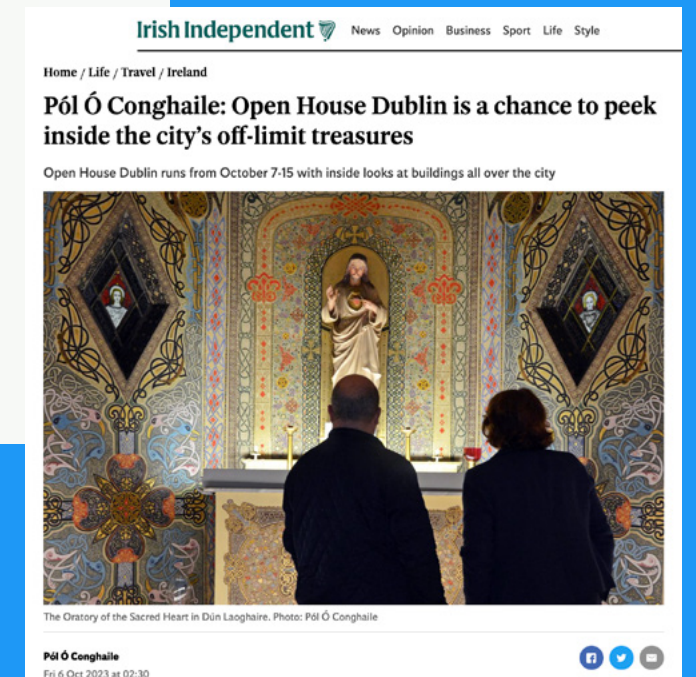
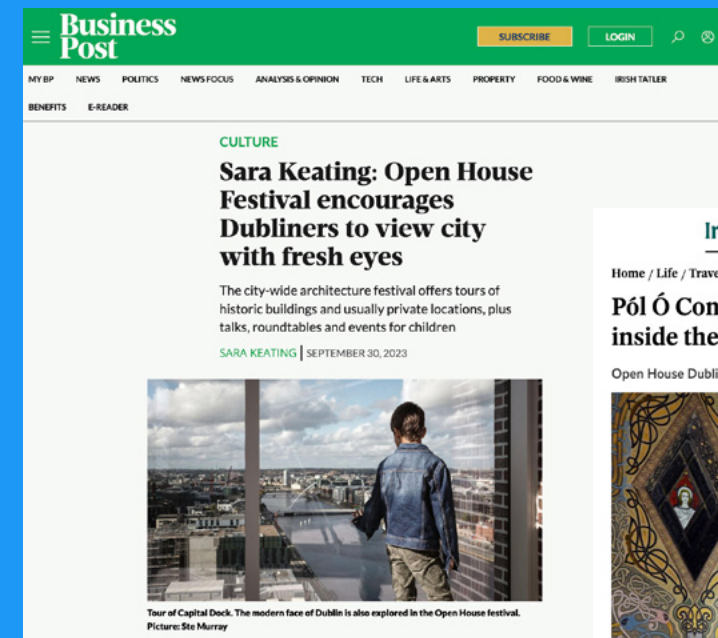


## PRESS COVERAGE

We worked with Alice PR on a comprehensive and highly successful media strategy and achieved a total audience reach of 10.5 million readers and listeners with 67 items of earned coverage across national and local broadcast, print and online media.

Media coverage began in early September, with the programme launch picked up by news and photo desks at the Irish Independent, Irish Times, and Dublin Gazette. Highlights of earned media coverage included feature articles in the Business Post (Culture), Irish Times (The Ticket), Irish Examiner (Property), Irish Independent

(Travel) and interviews on national radio, including Newstalk (The Home Show and the Pat Kenny Show), Morning Ireland, and Rhael 'LionHeart' Cape on RTÉ Arena. The festival attracted 34 pieces of earned coverage in Dublin regional papers and radio stations.





## MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

Open House Dublin is the flagship architecture festival of the Irish Architecture Foundation. Established in 2005, the Irish Architecture Foundation (IAF) is Ireland's independent organisation for the advancement of culture and communication of architecture to audiences.

The IAF is an ambitious organisation, one which is committed to demonstrating the relevance and power of architecture in our everyday lives. Architecture is of interest to all people, as all people live in the company of the built environment. Lives are formed and informed by the buildings we build, the homes in which we live, the schools in which we learn, and the pitch on which we play. The IAF has a role to advocate for the highest quality, most sustainable built environment and to empower people to find their own voice and to play their own part in the formation and care of the built world around them. It is a role we take seriously. It is a role that drives the IAF forward.

Working from Dublin but right across Ireland and increasingly internationally, over the last 20 years, the IAF has garnered a reputation for imagining, inventing, and producing a wide range of events, programmes and education initiatives that have informed, enthused and thrilled audiences. From an award-winning exhibition of architectural innovation in housing, to our national place-making programmes such as Hometown Architect, to placing architects in schools to foster young imaginations, the IAF has worked tirelessly to advance architecture in Ireland. With a new Director and a team with an exceptional range of skills, capacities, and intelligence, the IAF is keen to continue to respond to the needs of our audiences, enabling more people than ever to engage with our work and to help build a better culture of architecture and design in Ireland.

Open House in 2023 was a clear expression of the core mission and the increasing ambition of the IAF. From the outset, in our visual identity, we aimed to communicate how people and buildings are inextricably linked. We wished to state the obvious but the overlooked – that the stories of people and buildings are connected, and that people 'carry' their built world with them through and across their lives, from childhood to elderhood. The IAF's ambition for Open House Dublin meant we expanded the festival from 3 to an unprecedented 9 days, and for the first time all four parts of Dublin were invited, encouraged and supported to participate, with programmes and events in Dublin City, Dun Laoghaire, Fingal and South Dublin. The IAF knows that an architecture festival is built on stories, which in their telling serve to bind people and place. The festival grew to make more space and time for Dublin stories to be heard and told. Dublin is a city and county of stories. Stories are part of who we are.

They are part of what Dublin is, what it was and what this city and county might soon become. And, as this report has shown, the audience came out, listened, got involved and were empowered, enriched, and went home feeling proud. The IAF is also proud, proud that, after 17 years as a festival, Open House Dublin has reached new levels of maturity, purpose and impact. As Director, I am convinced Open House Dublin has a future ahead of it, one that will not rest on its laurels, but will continue to evolve and include the new and old stories of Dublin and Dubliners.

Of course, this festival is only possible thanks to the support of our partners, sponsors and corporate circle: a community of architects, businesses, industry leaders, and policy-makers who believe in a more diverse and sustainable city.

Your support of Open House Dublin demonstrates your commitment to a strong, sustainable cultural and economic recovery. As an Open House Dublin supporter, you will feature across our public programme and will benefit from special events and marketing opportunities with our audiences. We will work with you to create a rewarding partnership that meets your goals in this critical year and provides rolling benefits to your community.

By partnering with Open House Dublin you support our mission that seeks to champion the power of architecture to transform lives and improve the places where we live, learn, work and play while making a commitment to a strong, sustainable cultural and economic recovery.

We would like to thank you. Together we will renew and reopen Dublin, celebrate the people who create, live and work in our city, celebrate the extraordinary in the everyday.

**Emmett Scanlon**

Director, Irish Architecture Foundation







## OPEN HOUSE DUBLIN & IAF TEAM

Emmett Scanlon IAF Director  
Karen Lee Walpole Open House Dublin Manager  
Blaithín Quinn IAF Curator of Learning  
Alba Ferrero OHD Events Officer  
Anna Cassidy OHD Volunteer Coordinator  
Adson Aquino OHD Bookings Officer  
Felicity Maxwell IAF Communications Officer  
Felix Hunter Green IAF Project and Venue Manager  
Hannah Rickard IAF Development Manager  
Ann-Marie Ahearne IAF General Manager  
Bernardine Carroll IAF Engagement Curator  
Vanessa Menegaldo IAF Reimagine Manager  
John Fitzgerald IAF Finance Manager  
Niamh McDaid IAF Administrative Officer

## OHD PHOTOGRAPHERS

Ste Murray  
Louis Haugh  
Johnny Savage (poster portraits)

## GUEST PHOTOGRAPHER

Martina Morrissey (Open House Brno)

## DIGITAL CONTENT CREATOR

Tra My Nguyen Hoang

## META CONTENT COORDINATOR

Sarah Harding

## BRAND & WEBSITE

Unthink

## Open House Dublin is part of Open House Worldwide

A network of over 50 organisations hosting festivals and conversations about architecture, design and cities across the globe. Open House Worldwide is the largest celebration of the urban landscape in the world.

[www.openhouseworldwide.org](http://www.openhouseworldwide.org)

## OHD2023 PARTNERS & IAF CORE FUNDERS



An Roinn Tithíochta,  
Rialtais Áitiúil agus Oidhreachta  
Department of Housing,  
Local Government and Heritage



OPW  
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Office of Public Works



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JCDecaux

LIGHT HOUSE  
AN ELEMENT OF DNA

TOTALLY DUBLIN