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Annual Open
House Europe
Activity
Report

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Athens
2024

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Open House Athens 2024

Introduction

General information about the event

Event No.:	E7.6
Legal Name:	OPEN CHAOUS GKRIΣ
Date:	5-15 April, 2024
Name:	Open House Athens
Number of buildings/areas included in the programme:	73 buildings + 2 walking tours, 20 creative spaces
City:	Athens
Country:	Greece
Duration:	11 days (2 days for the main event, the rest for parallel events)

Festival participants

In total, Open House Athens 2024 attracted 13296 attendees: 4703 men, 8425 women and 158 non-binary people.

In terms of volunteers, the festival had 100 men and 378 women; 478 volunteers in total. The festival had 896 volunteers.

Open House Athens 2024 was organised by 1 man and 7 women; 9 people in total.

Introduction



Melas Mansion. Photo by Elpida Spyrou © Courtesy of Open House Greece

The tenth anniversary of Open House Athens, which took place from April 13–14, 2024, represented a decade dedicated to showcasing the city's cultural heritage. With over 70 buildings opening their doors and a plethora of parallel activities, this year's Open House Athens received an exceptional response, attracting thousands of visitors once again. During Open House Athens, free architectural tours were conducted in both private and public spaces by the event's 459 volunteers. This year's team consisted of 8 members of the organising committee and 19 area curators.

This year's Open House Europe (OHEu) theme, Accessibility and Inclusion, highlighted two crucial aspects of design that impact people's lives. Accessibility ensures that buildings and spaces are accessible to everyone, regardless of any restrictions or disabilities, while inclusion promotes respect for diversity and the needs of the community, ensuring that all people, regardless of gender, nationality, religion, visible or hidden disabilities, have equal opportunities and rights.

Also, by addressing this year's theme, Open House Athens highlighted the work of Michalis Orros, an architect who has a visual impairment. One of his projects was the house and studio of the distinguished visual artist and ceramist Panos Valsamakis, which was also part of this year's programme.

Additional activities

Other activities unrelated to the Open House Europe programme in Open House Athens 2024:

Made In Athens

Open Walks

3D Virtual Tour

Design The Poster

Open Photo

Open Vote

Open Your Map

Open Travel Contest

Open Your Portfolio

Fokionos Negri St. Photo by Andonis Gkika
© Courtesy of Open House Greece



Made In Athens

Approximate number of attendees:

800

20 venues opened their doors and gave participants the opportunity to explore the production process of various products and to talk to designers.

3D Virtual Tour

The programme included 2 themed walks ('The Mansions of Kifissia' and 'Kypseli through Fokionos Negri St.'), which introduced visitors to the architecture and history of these areas.

Open Walks

Approximate number of attendees:

1000

20 venues opened their doors and gave participants the opportunity to explore the production process of various products and to talk to designers. Visitors: 800

Approximate number of attendees:

650

Visitors to the American School of Classical Studies in Athens were given the opportunity to watch the results of a 4D laser scan of the building.

In addition to the programme, there were also 8 competitions:

Design The Poster

A contest to decide the visual identity of Open House Athens 2024, reflected in the printed material and the t-shirts volunteers wore. The winner was awarded with a scholarship.

Approximate number of entries:

110



The 1st place winner of Open Photo competition. Photo by @dimitramilaiou © Courtesy of Open House Greece

Open Photo

Approximate number of entries:

700+

A photo competition on Instagram, titled 'People to Architecture, Architecture to People', awarded 3 winners with photo cameras. This competition was one of the most popular. It has been running every year, and visitors were familiar with it. Most visitors already post photos from the event on Instagram, so it was really easy for them to participate.

Open Vote

Approximate number of votes:

2115

The Audience Award allowed event visitors to vote for their favourite tour, rewarding the volunteers of the respective building/route, who then received rewards, praise and souvenirs.



The 2nd place winner of Open Photo competition. Photo by @christina_tselepis © Courtesy of Open House Greece

Open Your Map

Approximate number of entries:

20

Visitors created a special souvenir from Open House Athens 2024, a personal map, by collecting stamps from the buildings they visited. By posting their maps on Instagram, they had the chance to win a photo camera.

Open Travel Contest

Approximate number of entries:

500+

An online contest that asked visitors to upload stories from the Open House Athens event on Instagram and awarded one of them with a trip for two to the next Open House Thessaloniki event.



The 3rd place winner of Open Photo competition. Photo by @kala_kwnio © Courtesy of Open House Greece

Open Your Portfolio

Approximate number of entries:

24

Portfolio competition with a prize of a scholarship for the master's programme in Architectural Design at the Vakalo Art & Design College.

Lastly, from 1-2 June, a pop-up event in Kalamata, 'Made In Kalamata', concluded the programme of parallel events. It opened 12 creative spaces where visitors had the opportunity to explore the production process of various products and talk to designers.

Activities for volunteers



Volunteers at 10am Lofts. Photo by Giorgos Psarris © Courtesy of Open House Greece

Training of volunteers

Every year, the festival receives many applications from potential volunteers. A prerequisite for participation in the volunteer team is being above the age of 18 and having availability on the days of the event. The volunteers of Open House Athens become a large community through rehearsals with

Approximate number of attendees:

478

their team, working together at the info point, gathering at Open House Athens' meetings and celebrating together at the closing party.



Volunteers at Kykladon St Atelier. Photo by Elpida Spyrou © Courtesy of Open House Greece

Promotional material

Approximate number of total attendees:

478

Two days before the main event, we organised a gathering at our info point to distribute all necessary materials to the volunteers. This meeting was essential as it provided volunteers with everything they needed for the weekend: T-shirts, posters, signs, flyers, energy bars and gifts from our sponsors. It served as the final preparation before the event, allowing volunteers to socialise and strengthen the connections within our team.

Instagram stories contest

Approximate number of total entries:

200+

In this online contest, volunteers were asked to upload stories about their preparations for Open House Athens on Instagram for the chance to win a photo camera. The goal was to motivate volunteers during their training and increase engagement. The contest was successful, especially since the volunteers were mostly students between the ages of 18-24, for whom sharing Instagram stories is a daily habit. Their stories not only promoted the event to their followers but also attracted more young people and potential volunteers, expanding the festival's audience and team.

Integration of the Open House Europe programme

Buildings and/or guided tours

Examples of the buildings/guided tours that were dedicated to showcasing the Open House Europe (OHEu) annual theme, Accessibility and Inclusion.

31

Approximate number of guided tours in these buildings

600

Approximate number of attendees

List of buildings:

1. Deligiorgis Mansion—
Allouche Benias Gallery
2. Piraeus Tower
3. Residence/Studio of Panos
Valsamakis

Deligiorgis Mansion—Allouche Benias Gallery



Deligiorgis Mansion. Photo by Allouche Benias Gallery Archive © Courtesy of Open House Athens

In collaboration with 'Mind the Map', tactile maps and a three-dimensional model of the Deligiorgis Mansion were created to provide information for visitors who are visually impaired through touch. The 'Mind The Map' project by the company Dalkafouki Oikos creates 3D-printed tactile maps for archaeological sites and public spaces and focuses on the study, design, research and manufacturing of tactile maps for people with reduced or no vision to aid their smooth navigation through these areas. Members of the Lighthouse for the Blind of Greece visited the building during a special tour organised for them.

Piraeus Tower

Piraeus Tower is a local landmark. Although its construction began in 1972, it remained unfinished for decades until it was finally completed in 2023. This year, the building opened its doors for the first time to Open House Athens' visitors. Furthermore, due to this special occasion, several school groups (220 people) and a group from the Chinese community of Athens (20 people) had the opportunity to visit it during the 'Open School' event.



Piraeus tower. Photo by Minas Antonakis ©
Courtesy of Open House Greece

Residence/Studio of Panos



Residence-Studio of Panos Valsamakis. Photo by Ioanna Alexopoulou © Courtesy of Open House Greece

As part of this year's OHEu annual theme of 'Accessibility and Inclusion', the festival focused on being more inclusive in terms of the included architects who showcased their projects. One of these architects was Michalis Orros, who has a significant visual impairment. A project of his, the residence/studio of the distinguished visual artist and ceramist Panos Valsamakis, was included in this year's programme, attracting more than 300 visitors.

Additional events and/or activities



Ambassador Laida. Instagram Screenshot © Courtesy of 48h Open House Barcelona

Open School

The 'Open School' parallel event included specially tailored and scheduled visits to creative and production spaces, as well as certain buildings from the Open House Athens programme for school classes, educational institutions, and other organised groups with an educational focus. This year, in addition to

Approximate number of total visitors:

500

educational groups, the event also welcomed members of the Chinese community of Athens and the Lighthouse for the Blind of Greece. Guided tours were arranged by prior appointment and reservations were made via email.

Design The Poster

Approximate number
of total attendees:

80

Approximate number
of total entries:

110

The visual identity of Open House Athens 2024 emerged from a competition open to all kinds of designers focusing on the design of printed materials and volunteers' t-shirts. The winner was awarded a scholarship. The goal was to engage more people with the festival and provide young and/or possibly unknown creative minds with an opportunity to emerge.

Multilingual Tours

Approximate number of total attendees:

780

Tours in all Open House Athens buildings were conducted both in English and Greek. As needed, tours were also able to be conducted in other languages such as French, German, Italian or Spanish, depending on the volunteers' proficiency. Furthermore, the festival's website and printed programme were bilingual (Greek and English), while the Open House Athens Instagram account uses English as its main language to reach a worldwide audience.

Enhancing Accessibility

Information about buildings accessible to people with disabilities was included in this year's programme. Other features in this year's edition included an accessibility filter and menu on the website and special signage on the outside of accessible buildings.

Online activities

Live-streamed Tours

Approximate number of total views:

14000

“Live-streaming Tours” involved tours of two buildings participating in this year's programme: House for a Musician and Transition – Private Residence in Tzitzifies. The tours were broadcast live on Instagram and are now available as reels on the OHA's Instagram account.

Open Office

Approximate number of total views:

2,170

‘Open Office’ is a series on the Open House Athens YouTube channel, featuring a series of interviews with architects discussing their work and showcasing their workspaces. This year, three videos were added highlighting three offices operating in Athens or globally, which are excelling in their field: DIMAND Real Estate Development, Divercity Architects and Kokosalaki Architecture.

The interviews also addressed the topic of accessibility in the design process of buildings. All videos have automated subtitles.

A link to the YouTube Channel:

<https://www.youtube.com/@OpenHouseAthens-2014/videos>

Different audiences at the local Open House festival



Volunteer Exchange. Photo by Katerina Fykari © Courtesy of Open House Greece

Open House Athens 2024 had 100 guided tours for English speakers

There were 8 additional activities and events organised for people with special needs.

Number of attendees for tours in English:

780



Deligiorgis Mansion. Photo by Maria Chatzidourou © Courtesy of Open House Greece

Experience in attracting non-native participants

Athens stands out as a premier destination for tourists worldwide. Open House Athens 2024 captivated both native and international visitors, offering guided tours in English across all its venues. The festival celebrated the city's rich architectural heritage and urban design, allowing individuals from diverse backgrounds to delve into the intricacies of Athens' buildings and public spaces.

Every year, the festival is eagerly anticipated and draws considerable attention. Tourists visiting Athens in April heard about Open House Athens from various sources, including their hotels, taxi drivers, local media and

more. The festival's website and promotional materials were thoughtfully provided in English to accommodate a wider audience.

As before, the event also enjoyed robust participation from the expat community in Athens. To foster inclusivity and cultural exchange, several embassies were included in tour itineraries to embrace a variety of languages and cultural perspectives. This inclusive approach ensured that Open House Athens 2024 remained accessible and engaging for everyone, enriching the experience for both locals and tourists alike.



Deligiorgis Mansion. Photo by Maria Chatzidourou © Courtesy of Open House Greece

Experience in attracting people with special needs

In the context of highlighting the OHEu annual theme of 'Accessibility and Inclusion', the following actions were taken and activities were scheduled:

- Information was made available about buildings accessible to people with disabilities through an accessibility filter on the festival's website, special signage on accessible buildings, in the printed programme and on the website.
- Online activities such as 'Livestream Tours', which featured guided tours of two buildings from this year's programme, were broadcast on Open House Athens' Instagram account. Also, the 'Open Office' YouTube video series was updated with interviews and tours of three offices in Athens that have distinguished themselves in their respective fields.

- The 'Open School' parallel activity included guided tours for educational groups, the Chinese community in Athens, and schools for individuals who have visual impairments. Open House Athens, in collaboration with the 'Mind the Map' project by the company Dalkafouki Oikos, created tactile maps and a three-dimensional model of the Deligiannis Mansion to provide information about the space to people with partial or total blindness through tactile engagement.
- The inclusion in this year's programme of the residence/studio of the distinguished visual artist and ceramist Panos Valsamakis by architect Michalis Orros, who has a significant visual impairment.
- All tours of Open House Athens were conducted both in Greek and English.

The experience of making Open House Athens 2024 more inclusive for individuals with disabilities taught several important lessons. One key takeaway was the significance of prioritising accessibility and inclusivity in all aspects of the festival's planning and execution, understanding that additional attention must be given to the needs of people with disabilities and that the festival should continuously strive to make its activities more accessible. This commitment has become a core part of Open House Athens' mission moving forward.

Throughout this journey of organising this year's edition, the team experienced a profound sense of enthusiasm, joy and gratitude. Seeing firsthand how individuals with disabilities were eager to be active members of society and their appreciation for being able to participate was deeply moving. These individuals had a thirst for knowledge and engaged in events with remarkable dedication and focus.

Moreover, by incorporating accessibility features such as tactile maps, accessibility filters on the festival's website and special signage for accessible buildings, Open House Athens 2024 was able to not only enhance the experience for volunteers and visitors with disabilities but also raise awareness among all attendees about the importance of inclusivity. This approach fostered a more welcoming and engaging environment for everyone involved. The feedback received from visitors was overwhelmingly positive, reinforcing the value of the efforts to make the festival more accessible and inclusive.

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Open House Bilbao 2024

Introduction

General information about the event

Event No.:	E7.16
Legal Name:	ASOCIACIÓN OPEN URBANITY
Date:	1–6 October, 2024
Name:	Open House Bilbao
Number of buildings/areas included in the programme:	72
City:	Bilbao
Country:	Spain
Duration:	6 days

Festival participants

In total, Open House Bilbao 2024 attracted 21346 attendees: 10673 men and 10673 women.

In terms of volunteers, the festival had 172 men and 412 women; 584 volunteers in total.

Open House Bilbao 2024 was organised by 4 men and 5 women; 9 people in total.

Introduction

Open House Bilbao 2024 was held from 1 to 6 October, and for the festival's eighth edition, the focus was on reflecting the diversity of the city's architecture as a way to also reflect the diversity of the city's inhabitants, emphasising inclusivity. Once again, the festival was an unmissable event as it was much more than an event about architecture—it was an opportunity to bring the public closer to a discipline that is often distant or alien to their everyday language. Open House Bilbao 2024 was consolidated as the largest architecture festival in the city with more than 21000 visits over the festival weekend.

72 spaces typically closed or unknown to the public were opened and of the 72 spaces spread throughout the city, selected based on their architectural and historical value, 55 were accessible for people with reduced mobility. Through this broad catalogue, a wide vision of the city's architectural richness and variety was offered, incorporating, with respect to previous editions, 8 novelties.

The festival programme was complemented by various activities, such as tours in which the architects themselves accompanied visitors through their works. Several urban walks allowed visitors to discover two neighbourhoods of very different social classes, reflecting on social diversity through architecture. Workshops for children were also organised to learn about inclusivity in architecture through play, reading books and activities on this topic. An exhibition was held with works from different architectural studios in Europe. Additionally, a debate on feminist urbanism was organised.

Additional activities



'Architecture In Transition' exhibition and debate. Photo by Zerikusi
© Courtesy of Open Urbanity



'Architecture In Transition' exhibition and debate. Photo by Zerikusi
© Courtesy of Open Urbanity

'Architecture In Transition' exhibition and debate

Approximate number of total attendees:

791

An architecture exhibition was held for 6 days, led by architects Nicola Regusci and Xavier Bustos, and part of the Cities Connection Project (CCP) programme which aims to establish a cultural connection between European cities with important architectural traditions.

The exhibition, part of the CCP's seventh edition, was itinerant and cumulative, bringing together quality projects of transitional architecture. The presented pieces of architecture demonstrated a move towards a more ethical building culture and an architecture of impact. The opening of the exhibition was accompanied by a debate on the practice of architecture in Europe. Several international and local architects participated in the debate such as Benjamin Robinson of the Belgian studio Artau, Philippe Nathan of the Luxembourg studio Luxembourg 2001, Tomeu Ramis of the Catalan studio Flexo Arquitectura, and Ibon Salaberria of the studio Beste Arkitektura. This event mainly attracted an expert audience.

Film forum

Approximate number of total attendees:

75



Film Forum. Photo by Zerikusi © Courtesy of Open Urbanity

Cinema, the 'seventh art', is undoubtedly one of the most widespread forms of entertainment. It also offers a magnificent opportunity to reflect on and discover new horizons in all aspects of life, including architecture. Through the well-known format of a film forum, helmed by Bernardo I. García de la Torre—architect and author of the book 'Architecture for the cinema in Bilbao'— an individual and collective reflection on the profession was carried out. After a brief introduction, the film 'The Spring' was shown. From 1949, the film was directed by King Vidor and starring Gary Cooper and Patricia Neal. The film raised profound questions about the identity of the architect in society and the role of art and creativity in the construction of the modern world. After the screening, the audience was invited to reflect on different aspects and interpretations of the film, allowing them to learn about architecture in a relaxed way.

Open Passport

Approximate number of total attendees:

585



Open Passport. Photo by Zerikusi © Courtesy of Open Urbanity

In line with the playful nature of the event, and already a classic feature of the Open House Bilbao programme, the Open Passport allowed visitors to receive stamps upon visiting buildings from the festival programme and enter a draw for the chance to win an exclusive experience at the Guggenheim Museum in Bilbao. The passports were available to the public at the festival information points. To participate in the draw, visitors had to collect at least 3 stamps or, in other words, visit at least 3 spaces and then, register the passport on the Open House Bilbao website.

Tours with architects

Approximate number of total attendees:

210

Following the success of previous editions, it was possible to visit some of the workplaces and headquarters of local architecture studios.

Studios such as BABELstudio, BEAR, ELE Arkitektura, MUGA, Equi, Behark, and G&C gave first-hand accounts of how they work and the challenges they face. It was also possible to visit spaces from the programme in the hands of special hosts—their architects. The uniqueness of these tours arose from the relationships the people guiding the tours had with the buildings, knowing better than anyone the ins and outs of these spaces, allowing them to share their knowledge and experiences, focusing on the curiosities of how the building works. Through such tours, visitors were able to discover buildings such as the Carreras Múgica art gallery and the Hotel Tayko.



Urban walks with neighbourhood itineraries. Photo by Zerikusi © Courtesy of Open Urbanity

Urban walks with neighbourhood itineraries

Approximate number of total attendees:

180

Two guided tours were conducted in the format of a neighbourhood itinerary, selecting two neighbourhoods of very different social classes to train and raise awareness among participants about inclusivity. Using architecture and the development of social life in the city and its neighbourhoods as an excuse, issues related to inclusivity were discussed. Each of the two itineraries was linked to a specific and contrasting typology of urban sprawl. In this way, it was possible to analyse the pros and cons of each of them and how they have had to adapt to respond to the new climate, social and urban challenges.

Activities for volunteers



Volunteer party. Photo by Zerikusi © Courtesy of Open Urbanity

Training of volunteers

Approximate number of attendees:

420

In September, a complete training programme for volunteers was carried out to ensure their effective participation during the festival. It was composed of several activities that took place in the weeks leading up to the festival:

1. General training meeting for volunteers (1 hour 30 mins). In response to demands from volunteers, this session was held on a Saturday in an emblematic building of the festival's catalogue, Bizkaia Aretoa. During the meeting, the general festival operations were presented, various roles were explained and the volunteer kit was handed out. In addition, the training focused on developing public speaking and communication skills, with the participation of an expert in the field.
2. Pre-visits to assigned buildings (1 hour). To familiarise themselves and get to know the details of the venue, volunteers visited their assigned buildings and spaces in advance. This year, as a novelty, there were experts in some of the buildings who were able to add precise information about the spaces. Having the opportunity to get to know the spaces where they were going to be volunteering was one of the most highly valued training sessions for volunteers.
3. Role-specific meetings (1 hour 30 mins). 38 people were divided into groups focusing on some of the most important volunteering roles.

One of the difficulties faced was that there were returning volunteers who already knew the dynamics of the festival and might have gotten bored at some points during the training. Therefore, this year, new trainings with experts in architecture and on the topic of public speaking were included.



Volunteer party. Photo by Zerikusi © Courtesy of Open Urbanity

Party for volunteers

Approximate number of attendees:
220



Volunteer party. Photo by Zerikusi © Courtesy of Open Urbanity

On the last day of the festival, 6th October, the party for volunteers was held. All volunteers were invited and the event was also attended by members of the organising team and international volunteers. The party was held at one of the most emblematic buildings in the city, which was also a novelty at the festival: a church that has been converted into a cultural centre. It was the last activity of the festival,

after the closing of the last visitable buildings, thus leaving time for all the volunteers to arrive. At the party, volunteers shared their experiences while enjoying ambient music, food (including vegan options) and drinks. As a novelty, a photocall was included so volunteers could take home a souvenir of the event.

Additional benefits

- Priority access. Volunteers had a wristband that gave them priority access to all the buildings that were able to be visited. In addition, they also had priority in receiving information to sign up for the rest of the festival's parallel activities. This was the most motivating incentive for volunteers.
- Exclusive gift. All volunteers were given an exclusive kit with the festival's merchandise. This gift, which has become a tradition, is so highly valued that some volunteers even collect it. The kit consists of a tote bag, a bottle and a guide, among other things.
- A certificate of participation. Volunteers received a diploma certifying their participation in the event.
- University credits. Students from two universities (the Faculty of Architecture of the Public University of the Basque Country and the Faculty of Design of the IED Kunstal University) received university credits for participating as volunteers in the festival. This was carried out thanks to the agreements that Open House Bilbao has with both faculties.
- Anonymous satisfaction survey. Volunteers were able to fill in an anonymous online satisfaction survey to make suggestions for future events.

Integration of the Open House Europe programme

Buildings and/or guided tours

Open House Bilbao 2024 had 3 buildings and/or guided tours from the festival's programme dedicated to showcasing the Open House Europe (OHEu) annual theme: Accessibility and Inclusion.

List of buildings:

1. APNABI Day Centre
2. Euskararen Etxea (The House of The Basque Language)
3. Artxanda Funicular Railway

27

Approximate number of guided tours in these buildings

229

Approximate number of attendees

APNABI Day Centre



APNABI © Courtesy of Open Urbanity

APNABI is an association for young people with autism and their families. The association guarantees assistance in different areas to achieve an improvement in the quality of life, personal development and social integration of people with autism.

The Barcelona studio AV62, led by architect Toño Foraster, has designed the new APNABI Day Centre built in Derio, near Bilbao. As for the architecture of the building, innovative techniques related to energy sustainability, ecological awareness and environmental awareness have been applied to its design.

The project was conceived as a large greenhouse with wooden volumes inside. The large envelope or outer skin was built with steel and translucent polycarbonate, and the volumes or interior workshops were made with prefabricated wooden panels. Thanks to its dry construction, the building's development has been more economical, faster and more efficient than other traditional processes. The building has a bioclimatic envelope, which regulates solar gain and ventilation through automatic opening and closing.

In 2024, this building was one of the nominees for the prestigious Mies van der Rohe Award.

Euskararen Etxea (The House of The Basque Language)



The House of The Basque Language © Courtesy of Open Urbanity

Euskararen Etxea opened in 2004 intending to be a reference point in Basque society for promoting and preserving the Basque language.

The building was built in the 1950s during the Franco era as the former headquarters of a fascist association that forbade the use of the Basque language. Nowadays, it stands as a symbol of evolution, integration, plurality and inclusiveness since, among other things, the building houses the Basque Language Interpretation Centre, which has been renovated and aims to convey the vital force and diversity of the Basque language. The centre also advocates personal involvement as each person contributes to the language. In short, the diverse nature of the language unites and adds to its speakers.

Artxanda Funicular Railway



Artxanda Funicular Railway © Courtesy of Open Urbanity

At the beginning of the 20th century, many residents of Bilbao regarded Mount Artxanda as a place of leisure and entertainment that offered a varied gastronomic experience. In 1915, Evaristo San Martin y Garaz approved a project to build a funicular that linked the city with the mountain. The funicular has a length of 770m, allowing passengers to enjoy a panoramic view of the entire city in 3 minutes. It connects the upper quarter of the city with the city centre and as such, it is a symbol of the connection of the most social neighbourhoods with the city centre.

Additional events and/or activities



Workshops for families. Photo by Zerikusi

Workshops for families

Approximate number of attendees:

162

In these workshops, entire families participated and children experienced the diversity of architecture through books, drawings and handicrafts, allowing them to enter the world of architecture.

Debate on inclusion in urbanism

Approximate number of attendees:
70



Debate on inclusion in urbanism. Photo by Zerikusi © Courtesy of Open Urbanity

In this event, the local community was invited to reflect on and debate the experiences, knowledge and examples of good practices that make cities more inclusive and egalitarian. Three female speakers from different fields, including architecture and sociology, briefly presented their careers, involvement or experiences in the ways gender influences the construction of the city. Afterwards, and through an open dialogue in the form of a round table, an attempt was made to rethink cities, neighbourhoods and architecture to favour a life without discrimination of any kind; it was a debate on feminist urbanism. At the end of the event, a small snack was offered to extend the exchange of opinions between the public and the speakers.

A workshop on how to make schoolyards more inclusive

Approximate number of attendees:

26



A workshop on how to make schoolyards more inclusive. Photo by Zerikusi © Courtesy of Open Urbanity

This training and co-creation workshop explored the topic of inclusive and healthy schoolyards through an interactive experience designed for educators, parents, students and professionals interested in promoting more inclusive, healthy and quality educational spaces. The workshop inspired, educated and empowered participants to create and transform schoolyards into higher-quality environments that benefit all students, regardless of their abilities or skills. Combining training and co-creation, the workshop began with a formative and inspiring theoretical presentation and analysis of case studies by a team of experts in the field. This was followed by a series of practical activities, group discussions and a collaborative design process in which a design proposal was developed for several playgrounds.

Different audiences at the local Open House festival



Workshops for families. Photo by Zerikusi © Courtesy of Open Urbanity

Open House Bilbao 2024 had 1 exhibition and 1 debate in English.

Number of attendees for tours in English:

791

There were 55 accessible buildings in the festival programme for people with reduced mobility.

Experience in attracting non-native participants

By having exchange volunteers, some visitors were assisted and provided information in English and other European languages such as Greek, Catalan, Slovenian and Portuguese. The exchange volunteers were placed in buildings that were popular among tourists or foreigners, either because of their location or their activity. In contrast to previous years, information stands were set up in the city with volunteers who could speak at least English and other languages, to inform the public about Open House Bilbao in different languages and make the festival more linguistically inclusive.

Experience in attracting people with special needs

This year, the Open House Bilbao website was completely redesigned to make it more intuitive and accessible, and to make information about the festival more user-friendly. Information about which buildings were accessible for people with reduced mobility was indicated both on the website and in the printed information material. An effort was made to select buildings that were accessible and a total of 72% of the programme's buildings were accessible.

In addition, a priority access bracelet was given to all those who had requested it and provided proof of disability documentation. This allowed visitors with disabilities to participate in the festival without having to wait in queues. This year, the festival had close cooperation with APNABI (a local association supporting people with autism) and their building was exhibited at the festival, which was one of the nominees for the prestigious Mies van der Rohe Award in 2024.

Through these actions, the festival moved towards becoming a more inclusive event, although, there is still a lot of work to be done.

Distribution

Two actions were undertaken to create digital content available throughout the year.

Informative videos were made on Bilbao's cultural and architectural curiosities and shared as reels via Instagram to reach a wide audience.

Example 1:

https://www.instagram.com/openhousebilbao/reel/C_3UhdyNQer/?hl=es

Example 2:

<https://www.instagram.com/openhousebilbao/reel/DAEcHK-t9pW/?hl=es>

The event's website was modified, as it had only shared content during the time of the festival (once a year), remaining without new content for the rest of the year. In 2024, Open House Bilbao worked with a web design team to reconfigure the website to display content during the months when the festival is not taking place, serving as a library of buildings allowing users to view all the information (data, descriptions, photographs and so on) about the more than 100 buildings that had participated in the event. The website is available in Spanish and Basque.

Link:

<https://www.openhousebilbao.org/>

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Open House Brno 2024

Introduction

General information about the event

Event No.:	E7.21
Legal Name:	Spolek Kultura a Management (Culture and Management club)
Date:	18–19 May, 2024
Name:	Open House Brno
Number of buildings/areas included in the programme:	116 buildings and guided tours
City:	Brno
Country:	Czechia
Duration:	2 days

Festival participants

In total, Open House Brno 2023 attracted 28165 attendees.

In terms of volunteers, the festival had 38 men and 77 women; 115 volunteers in total.

Open House Brno 2023 was organised by 3 men and 9 women; 12 people in total*.

*All organisers served as volunteers so they have been counted twice. The festival cannot monitor if an individual attended multiple times so the recorded number of visits is more accurate. Based on an internal survey, the estimated ratio of female to male visitors was 3:2, with an average of 2.8 locations per responding visitor. Therefore, a rough estimate of attendees is 12000 for the daylight programme, 22000 for the evening programme and 29000 attendees visited exhibitions two months before the festival weekend in May. The full attendance of Open House Brno 2024 was 55000 individuals.

Introduction



Sokol Brno. Photo by Marty_Morrissey © Courtesy of Spolek Kultura & Management

The 2024 edition of Open House Brno marked its seventh year, celebrating architecture and urban spaces in Brno. This year's festival introduced 35 new locations, expanding the already extensive programme to include 116 typically inaccessible spaces. The festival also featured 'ReSounded' concerts, 'Open Gastro Brno' partnerships with local restaurants, cafés and bars, discussions, workshops and exhibitions, contributing 27 additional activities and recording over 32000 visits.

The programme was further extended in collaboration with Brno Museum Night, which attracted an additional 23000 visitors on Saturday evening. Exhibitions such as 'Open House: Inclusion & Accessibility' and 'Visual Stories of Open House Europe 2023' recorded 29000 attendees. Collectively, these three events garnered a total of 124000 visits.

The number of festival volunteers nearly doubled compared to previous years, reaching approximately 146.

On March 6, the 'Open House: Inclusion & Accessibility' exhibition was launched, highlighting the Open House Europe (OHEu) 2024 annual theme. The exhibition informed visitors about the topic of inclusion and accessibility in relation to Brno's architecture, offering a detailed insight into the festival's focus and enabling visitors to plan their individual programmes.

The exhibition showcased 26 of Brno's buildings as examples of good practice in urban housing, health, education, social care, culture, sports and public spaces. These buildings were selected for their diverse functions, architectural quality and historical value, creating a unique network of participating organisations.

Photographic components accompanied descriptive texts in Czech and English, as well as audio (Spotify) and online versions (Calaméo) of the programme's catalogue, attracting almost 30000 attendees (23000 in person and 6000 online). The exhibition was installed in a fully accessible environment, with special tours for people with visual impairments.

The 'off programme' before the festival included a presentation by Romani architect Zdeněk Daniel on March 17, 2024, at the Museum of Romani Culture, showcasing his paintings and architectural work. Podcasts and videos of this event were shared on Spotify and YouTube.

To support Czech-Austrian cooperation within the OHEu network, a German translation of the exhibition catalogue is being prepared for installation during Open House Wien in September 2024, in collaboration with the Czech Centre in Vienna.

For the first time, the event received full media coverage, including from Czech Television, the national public broadcaster, increasing awareness and attracting additional supporters and visitors.

Additional activities

143 total activities in **130** locations

Villa Tugendhat hosted special garden tours attracting 1200 visitors in two hours.

Free tours of neighbouring Arnold Villa attracted up to 1300 individuals per hour.

The evening programme, in partnership with Brno Museum Night, enabled the programme to extend to previously unavailable time slots and greatly extended visitor capacity.

The OHEu annual theme facilitated the collaboration with TyfloCentrum, a society for people with visual impairments, helping to realise more than 8 events and enabling the participation of more than 100 individuals, about half of them being those leading guided tours.

6 'ReSounded' concert locations

6 discussions

5 'Open Gastro Brno' locations

4 podcast tours

3 video tours

3 exhibitions

3 workshops

Activities for volunteers



Volunteer party. Photo by Magdalena Goessinger © Courtesy of Spolek Kultura & Management

Training of volunteers

Approximate number of attendees:

135

The welcoming event for volunteers initiated 65 new volunteers, with the rest being returning volunteers. The organisers shared the festival's core values and instructions. Essential materials like t-shirts, maps, badges and other items were distributed. Once again, a sequential distribution process was implemented. Volunteers passed through various stations where they completed tasks including insurance registration, getting their assignments and receiving materials such as location banners, orientation signs, badges, t-shirts, as well as marketing materials. The event concluded with a Q&A session.

There was also a midway party for the volunteer community, hosting 150 attendees. It was held at Villa Engelsmann, a unique venue providing breathtaking views.

Promotional material



Goodie bag for volunteers. Photo by Susanne Bauda © Courtesy of Spolek Kultura & Management

Volunteer Thursdays have been a tradition of Open House Brno since 2018, allowing volunteers to visit various Open House Brno locations throughout the year. This initiative helps them familiarise themselves with multiple sites, choose their preferred one and even conduct trial tours. Attendance at these events ranges from 5 to 120 participants. Implementing a calendar system significantly improved attendance, as prior to this, an unrestricted open call resulted in 120 volunteers attending an event at Vila Engelmann.

Integration of the Open House Europe programme

Buildings and/or guided tours

Open House Brno 2024 had 72 guided tours from the festival's programme dedicated to showcasing the OHEu annual theme: Accessibility and Inclusion.

List of buildings:

1. Velodrome
2. BARKA Theatre

132

Approximate number
of attendees

Velodrome



Velodrome_ Activity for People With Vision Impairment © Courtesy of Spolek Kultura & Management

The Velodrome represents accessibility in sport, as the oldest standing building in the world with a symmetrical racing oval. It has served Brno residents for more than 130 years and provides a unique background for the sport of cycling. Moreover, two-seater bicycles enabled the participation of people who are visually impaired and otherwise wouldn't have been able to cycle on their own.

BARKA Theatre



Barka Theater. Photo by © Courtesy of Spolek Kultura & Management

The BARKA Theatre is celebrating its 30th anniversary in 2024. The theatre, housed in a constructivist building designed by Josef Novák in 1925, originally served cultural activities for the protestant 'Hus Choir'. After being largely unused during the post-war period, it was revived by opera director Miloš Wasserbauer in the 1960s and later transformed into a unique, accessible theatre primarily hosting ensembles of actors who are disabled.

Director Zdeňka Vlachovská discovered the space through her work with the 'League of Wheelchairs'. She appreciated its barrier-free design and deep stage, ideal for wheelchair movement. Despite initial financial challenges, a collaboration with the Music Faculty of JAMU allowed BARKA to use the space, continuing its tradition of inclusivity and accessibility.

The BARKA Theatre now hosts around 40 ensembles annually, including the Jára Pokojský Theatre with actors who have physical disabilities, the Fortel Theatre with actors who are visually impaired, and the Aldente Theatre with actors who have Down syndrome. The theatre supports nearly 100 performances and 1500 rehearsal hours yearly, attracting an average of 9000 spectators.

Additional events and/or activities

Inclusion and Accessibility Exhibition in Brno

Approximate number of total attendees:

450

Visitors with visual impairments:

16

On March 6, 2024, architecture enthusiasts gathered for the opening of the exhibition 'THEME: INCLUSION AND ACCESSIBILITY' at St. Anne's University Hospital. The event featured expert commentary from curator Šárka Bahounková and vice-dean of the Faculty of Architecture of BUT Rostislav Koryčánek. The festival director, Lucie Pešl Šilerová, delivered the opening remarks, emphasising the exhibition's focus on showcasing inaccessible buildings and highlighting examples of good practices in inclusion and accessibility.

The evening began with a clarinet performance by Martin Pelán, followed by welcoming remarks from Milan Vrbík. Lucie Pešl Šilerová spoke about the festival's theme and the importance of inclusive architecture. The exhibition, which ran until May 19, 2024, included a segment on 'Visual Stories' from Lisbon, part of the Open House Europe project, displaying photos and video posts from various cities, including works by Pavel Gurka and Nicola Sell from Brno.

Vice-dean Koryčánek discussed the role of inclusion in contemporary architecture and presented student projects focusing on the topic of poverty. Curator Bahounková introduced the exhibition, which was divided into six units covering housing, healthcare facilities, education, social care, culture and public spaces. Notable examples included urban apartment buildings, inclusive school buildings and accessible cultural institutions like the Jiří Mahen Library and the Museum of Romani Culture. The skatepark Mendlák and Moravský Square Park were highlighted as successful public space projects.

The exhibition was accessible, with English translations and Czech spoken audio commentary on Spotify, made available online for remote visitors. The event was extended by a walk around the hospital for people with visual impairments in the middle of March and for students of architecture in the middle of April.

Skatepark Mendlák

Approximate number
of total attendees:

22



Skatepark Mendlak. Photo by Marty Morrissey © Courtesy of Spolek Kultura & Management

During the Open House Brno event at the Mendlák Skatepark, visitors were invited to explore the unique urban space dedicated to skateboarding and BMX biking. The atmosphere buzzed with excitement as participants enjoyed guided tours, showcasing the park's innovative design and community-focused features. Many attendees took the opportunity to engage with local skaters and bikers, who demonstrated their skills and shared their passion for the sport. Additionally, various activities and workshops were organised, making the event a vibrant celebration of skate culture in Brno.

Activity/event: Velodrome

Approximate number
of total attendees:

320

Visitors with visual
impairments:

16

1 podcast + blog post about the event



Velodrome_ Activity for People With Vision Impairment © Courtesy of Spolek Kultura & Management

As part of Open House Brno's 'off programme', special tours for clients of the TyfloCentrum headquarters took place. In March, visitors who are blind got acquainted with St. Anne's University Hospital and, in the last week of April, with the Velodrome.

The guided tour of the Velodrome for visitors who are blind was full of experiences. They could experience the incline of the cycling track by climbing around the barrier to the steepest part. However, the most experiential part of the event took place before the tour when participants were able to try cycling on the track on a tandem bike with a pilot, which many of the participants did after a quick briefing. For some of them, this was their first bike ride after decades. Those who coordinated well with the pilot during the ride managed to cycle around the biggest pitch of the track just below the barrier.

Online activities

3 Guided Tours

Approximate number of total views:

3200

On the Open House Brno YouTube channel about accessibility in:

- Kristkuv dum
- Slovakova XII
- Tělocvična pod hradem

A link to the Open House Brno YouTube channel:

https://www.youtube.com/@Open_House_Brno

4 Podcasts

On Spotify about accessibility in:

- Božetěchův sad
- Rozhledna Holedná
- Sdílené bydlení pro seniory
- Velodrom Brno

A link to the Open House Brno Spotify channel:

<https://open.spotify.com/show/45TRMaakNezv74pPtcMC4M>

Different audiences in the local Open House festival

Open House Brno 2024 had 32 guided tours for English speakers.

Number of attendees for tours in English:
500

Additionally, 20 tours were organised in Slovakian. There were 11 guided tours in German that attracted 130 individuals. 10 additional activities and events were organised for people with special needs.

Experience in attracting non-native participants

Buildings for guided tours in English and other non-native languages were selected based on the availability of English or German-speaking guides/staff. This ensured the tours could be effectively communicated to non-native speakers.

The festival implemented specific strategies to engage non-native speakers. Firstly, English tours were marketed through the Brno Expat Centre and common media channels. Secondly, communities of individuals with hearing and visual impairments were reached through organisations such as TyfloCentrum.

A notable success story involved a special tour created for a group from Vienna. This group provided excellent feedback after touring eight buildings and attending a volunteer party. Potential challenges were overcome mainly through ensuring early planning and effective communication with participants.

The festival collaborated with various organisations to support non-native speakers such as Brno Expat Centre, Brno Museum Night, the Austrian Embassy in Brno, Masaryk University and the Janacek Academy of Music and Performing Arts.

Key lessons from the festival included the importance of early scheduling and having a dedicated person for communication. Ensuring that walking distances were manageable and tested beforehand helped prevent complications and improved the overall experience for non-native speakers.

Experience in attracting people with special needs

The festival implemented several measures to improve accessibility for people with disabilities. A dedicated web page with a special reading frame was created to facilitate easier access to information. Additionally, content was made available on Spotify and YouTube, and there were increased discussions about accessibility with building owners and the public to raise awareness.

Special information pages and dedicated tours were provided to ensure inclusivity. Informed and prepared guides, along with dedicated supporters, assisted attendees, including walking with them from public transport stations to festival buildings.

Several events were specifically designed for people with disabilities:

- Two hospital walks.
- Two Velodrome walks featuring two-seater bicycle rides for people with visual impairments.
- Six special walks and building visits during the festival weekend, including at a mosque, skyscraper rooftop, Ressig and Offerman villas, an ammunition factory, and a former city spa.
- All accessible locations were marked with a wheelchair sign.
- Podcasts were available for 20 locations.
- Online YouTube tours with subtitles in Czech and other languages were provided for 100 locations.

Partnerships and Collaborations



Vila Tugendhat. Photo by Marty Morrissey © Courtesy of Spolek Kultura & Management

The festival collaborated with organisations that specialise in supporting people with disabilities, including TyfloCentrum, Brno Expat Centre and the Centre for Hearing Impairments, among others.

These efforts contributed to making Open House Brno 2024 more inclusive and accessible, setting a benchmark for future editions of the festival.

Distribution

The 'Blog' series reflects OHEu events such as the annual meeting, volunteer exchanges, visual stories and exhibitions. Launched in 2023 by curator Sarka Bahounkova, Blog presents different articles published on the Open House website and is an integral part of the Open House Brno digital programme, allowing visitors to decide on programme formation and glimpse behind the curtain of the organising team. Since spring 2023, over 34 articles were published related not only to Open House festivals in Vilnius, Lisbon, Dublin and Bilbao, but also to the 'THEME: INCLUSION AND ACCESSIBILITY' exhibition and other events from Open House Brno 2024.

Link to the Blog: <https://openhousebrno.cz/cs/blog>

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Open House Dublin 2024

Introduction

General information about the event

Event No.:	E7.25
Legal Name:	Irish Architecture Foundation Limited
Date:	12–20 October, 2024
Name:	Open House Dublin
Number of buildings/areas included in the programme:	231
City:	Dublin
Country:	Ireland
Duration:	9 days

Festival participants

In total, Open House Dublin 2024 attracted 30000 attendees.

The festival had 478 volunteers.

Open House Dublin 2024 was organised by 4 people: 2 working permanently and 2 working temporarily.

Introduction

This year, Open House Dublin held a mirror to the city and county, inviting the public to debate and discuss everything they had seen, heard and felt. Mirrors allow people to see themselves— they can show the world, reflecting the vision and values that underpin society as it builds from the greenway to the runway, from the harbour to the home.

30000 people engaged with the Irish Architecture Foundation through Open House Dublin this year. Over 9 days, 900 tours and events took place across the city and county with 190 buildings opening their doors. More than 1000 building owners, managers, staff, keyholders, architects, tour guides, artists and facilitators participated in this festival of architecture.

Open House Dublin 2024 started with 'Open House Junior', a dedicated weekend for children and families on the 12th and 13th October, with the main programme of events, including tours of buildings, outdoor spaces and residences, taking place from 18th to 20th October. In between, the 'Open Table' conversations series returned and took place daily from 14th to 18th October at this year's festival info hub at Charlemont Walk in Dublin 2.

This year, the festival saw a 12% increase in the number of volunteers recruited compared to last year. 300 volunteers took part in Open House Dublin 2024, including 5 exchange volunteers from within the Open House Europe consortium.

Open House Dublin is a collective effort made possible by the generosity and enthusiasm of everyone who takes part, and it is made meaningful and vital to the cultural fabric of the city through its impact and ability to inspire people to think differently about architecture and Dublin.

Additional activities

‘Open Studios’ series

Approximate number of attendees:

800

New for 2024, ‘Open Studios’ offered behind-the-scenes access to the ideas and action that go into the design of Dublin, with 800 people joining tours and talks with architects at 13 design studios around Dublin.

‘Making Through Words’ workshop

Approximate number of attendees:

15

This workshop involved a storytelling aspect that helped participants to reflect on their relationship with built infrastructure. It started with descriptions and readings related to famous buildings of historical significance, shown in images and videos. To explore the subjectiveness of interpretation, participants discussed the relationship between the descriptions they had heard and what they saw. Then, the participants wrote a description of a space they felt they understood and were able to communicate. These descriptions were handed to the person next to them who then tried to draw their interpretation of it. The workshop finished with a group discussion. The idea of the workshop was that space-making is fundamentally a communicative act that relies on the linguistic and narrative abilities of those involved.

‘Longest Way Round, Shortest Way Home’ tour

Approximate number of attendees:

50

‘Longest Way Round, Shortest Way Home’ was curated and produced by Temple Bar Gallery + Studios in partnership with Dublin Port Company. The partnership presented two solo exhibitions at The Pumphouse Dublin Port: ‘dream sequence’ by Yuri Pattison and ‘Beep Beep’ by Liliane Puthod. This tour was part of a programme of weekly Saturday events.

Temple Bar Gallery + Studios director Clíodhna Shaffrey introduced the short tour around the exhibitions, focusing on ideas of art and place in relation to the works of Yuri Pattison and Liliane Puthod. The tour invited visitors to consider how the setting of Dublin Port and its buildings resonated with the artists’ exhibitions and how ideas of place were embedded in each of the artists’ works, but in very different ways.

'Squashed Living' exhibition at Charlemont Walk

Approximate number of attendees:

1000



'Squashed Living' exhibition at Charlemont Walk. Photo By Ste Murray © Courtesy of The Irish Architecture Foundation

This exhibition opened windows into the lives of others, documenting diverse living situations across Dublin and beyond. From young professionals to those living in the direct provision system, the exhibition allowed visitors to understand how others experience housing. Housing is supposed to make people's lives more comfortable but in the context of a crisis of scarcity, this often isn't the case.

Investigating Dublin's culture of habitation, 'Squashed Living' was a project led by Peter O'Grady and Laura Ferry. The project was supported by the Irish Architecture Foundation through the Open House Dublin 'Open to All' call for ideas.

'The Reason of Towns' exhibition

Approximate number of attendees:
1000



The Reason Of Towns Exhibition. Photo By Ste Murray © Courtesy of The Irish Architecture Foundation

'The Reason of Towns' was a new, engaging and ambitious touring exhibition presenting the work of one of Ireland's most renowned architects, Valerie Mulvin.

Curated, commissioned and produced by the Irish Architecture Foundation and hosted in partnership with local arts and cultural organisations and venues, this exhibition was a public occasion for the telling and retelling of the true stories, lost traditions and possible futures of Irish towns and the people who live in them.

'Writing Architecture' workshop

Approximate number of attendees:

25



Writing Architecture Workshop. Photo by Dominic Daly © Courtesy of The Irish Architecture Foundation

This workshop gave participants an opportunity to explore and develop an awareness of the impact of built space on their sense of self and identity, asking them to reflect on questions about who they were and where they fit in. This highlighted that the built environment is not neutral; instead, it is imbued with values and tells people stories about themselves.

Empowering participants in their roles as urban dwellers, the workshop demonstrated to them that they could engage their built environment on two levels: in recognising how they chose to receive the built space and the stories it told them about themselves, and how they wanted to change the built space and rewrite those stories.

During the workshop, strategies for these urban explorations were discussed and explored through different methods and prompts. Participants were asked to engage in a site-specific writing exercise at a location a few minutes' walk from the workshop venue at the festival's info hub. After this, they shared the ideas and texts that emerged.

Office Of Public Works (OPW) mystery tour

Approximate number of attendees:

40

This one-off tour was offered by the Office of Public Works (OPW) for this year's festival. Architects from OPW led this tour.

'SWIMirl' film screening and talk

Approximate number of attendees:

60

'SWIMirl' is a looping eight-minute immersive film celebrating the swimming structures dotted along the Dublin coastline and the transformative power they have had for the multitude of citizens who enjoy them. These simple static structures, some dating back to the 1800s, are human-made extensions of the landscape, providing safe passage from the rocky shoreline into the mercurial ocean.

The Loos Bar

Approximate number of attendees:

25

Hidden away in Trinity College, visitors were able to explore a replica of a legendary Viennese watering hole. In the common room of the Trinity College campus is a bar, inaccessible to the public, designed by deBlacam and Meagher in 1984. Modelled on the American Bar by Adolf Loos from 1907 in Vienna, this icon of classic modernity has been reproduced as a mirror copy. Shane deBlacam, known as the godfather of Irish architecture, took visitors through the story of how this became an offshoot of their refurbishment of the Dining Hall (Richard Castle 1741) after its near destruction following a fire in 1984.

New Children's Hospital (NCH)

Approximate number of attendees:
25



The New Children's Hospital (NCH), when completed, will be Ireland's largest-ever healthcare project, amalgamating the three existing children's hospitals at Crumlin, Temple Street and Tallaght. The brief set by the National Paediatric Hospital Development Board (NPHDB) was to create 'one of the finest children's hospitals in the world'. With the construction of the building approaching completion, a tour took visitors around all the main zones of the building including the podium consisting of outpatient, diagnostic and treatment areas, as well as the public concourse, an interstitial floor accommodating a non-clinical space, plants and the recognisable oval form of the wards block sitting within the surrounding landscape of the sky garden.

New Children Hospital. Photo By Ste Murray © Courtesy of The Irish Architecture Foundation



New Children Hospital. Photo By Ste Murray © Courtesy of The Irish Architecture Foundation



New Children Hospital. Photo By Ste Murray © Courtesy of The Irish Architecture Foundation

Activities for volunteers



Volunteers training. Photo By Ste Murray © Courtesy of The Irish Architecture Foundation

Induction training

Approximate number of attendees:

300

All volunteer tour guides and stewards received induction training covering volunteer requirements, information on their role, health and safety training and information about Open House Dublin. At the end, they had to take a short quiz to demonstrate they had read and understood the material correctly.

Accessibility awareness training

Approximate number of attendees:

300

All volunteer tour guides and stewards received bespoke training, designed in collaboration with Kate Drinane—tours, talks, training and interpretation officer from the National Gallery of Ireland. The training focused on audience engagement, tour delivery techniques and accessibility awareness, delivered by experts and activists in the field to ensure visitors were going to feel welcome and encouraged to attend. The training took place online via Zoom and was recorded.



Volunteers training. Photo by Tra My Nguyen Hoang © Courtesy of The Irish Architecture Foundation

Coffee and chat sessions

Approximate number of attendees:

50

All volunteers were invited to a coffee and chat session 3 weeks before the festival started. This was held from 12-2 p.m. at a local hotel, with tea, coffee and sandwiches provided. This event gave an opportunity for volunteers to meet in person with the Open House Dublin team and ask questions. Volunteers reported positive feedback saying these sessions provided them with confidence for the festival weekend.

Party for volunteers

Approximate number of attendees:

60

As a wrap-up of another incredible year of Open House Dublin, a party was organised to thank everyone who had generously volunteered their time, effort and enthusiasm. Drink tokens and food were provided at a local pub. This was a successful and appropriate way to thank the volunteers for their contributions and allow them to feel a sense of community.

Additional benefits



Volunteers training. Photo by Tra My Nguyen Hoang © Courtesy of The Irish Architecture Foundation

- Opportunities to attend tours over the festival weekend (volunteers were given VIP passes and priority access to tours and events)
- Cinema discount vouchers were provided to each volunteer, allowing them discounted tickets and coffee.
- References and Continuing Professional Development (CPD) points.
- Opportunities to participate in the Open House Europe volunteer exchange programme in 2025.
- Each volunteer was given an invitation to private tours of two buildings, specifically offered for friends of the Irish Architecture Foundation. This was to encourage volunteers to get more involved in the organisation throughout the year.

Integration of the Open House Europe programme

Buildings and/or guided tours

Open House Dublin 2024 had 20 buildings and/or guided tours from the festival's programme dedicated to showcasing the Open House Europe (OHEu) annual theme: Accessibility and Inclusion.

List of buildings:

1. Tour of the age-friendly development at Brady's Court, Dublin 24
2. 'Unlocking Mobility'—a tour of the Wayfinding CentreCollege Crescent
3. 'Discover Architecture by Touch'—A Tactile Tour for Blind and Visually Impaired VisitorsShanganagh Castle Estate

Tour of the age-friendly development at Brady's Court, Dublin 24

The scheme consists of twelve new, age-friendly houses and apartments on land partly on the footprint of a previous single-storey uninhabited dwelling. The proposal provides new age-friendly social housing units for older people to live independently around a secure central community courtyard that has passive surveillance for its residents and the surrounding neighbourhood. The scheme also contains a 'community room' facility to be used by new residents.

The development seeks to strike the balance between the provision of appropriate housing types and the preservation of the existing amenities while maintaining the character of adjoining dwellings in this established residential area. The design is based on a village model with a central courtyard, which adjoins the new rear private patios.

'Unlocking Mobility' — a tour of the Wayfinding Centre

Based in the former Smurfit Kappa Ireland Printworks in Glasnevin, the 2880 square-metre building has been dramatically transformed into a transport and mobility training centre to empower people with disabilities to use transport confidently and independently. It also serves as a space for training professionals responsible for future transport systems and designing the built environment such as transport operators, architects, designers, engineers and students.

A 100-year-old building with a beautiful heritage facade, the Wayfinding Centre boasts a Luas carriage, a DART carriage, a double-decker bus, an Expressway coach, an accessible taxi and a section of an Airbus 319. This is all surrounded by a streetscape, rough terrain, traffic lights, acoustics and an innovation space.

'Discover Architecture by Touch'—A Tactile Tour for Blind and Visually Impaired Visitors

A newly developed audio-described and tactile tour at the Royal College of Surgeons Ireland (RCSI), 26 York Street and Museum of Literature of Ireland (MOLI), Historic House. These tours, designed for visitors with vision loss, explored architecture through an immersive hands-on experience. Participants were able to touch and explore detailed models of the facade, floor plan and ornamental details that bring these buildings to life, developed by architect Tadgh Charles. Expert guidance provided clear and vivid descriptions throughout the tours, adding to the visitors' experience. These tours were developed with and led by Emilie Conway, vocal jazz artist and disability activist consultant, and Emma Gilleece, architecture historian.



'Discover Architecture by Touch'—A Tactile Tour for Blind and Visually Impaired Visitors. Photo By Ste Murray © Courtesy of The Irish Architecture Foundation



'Discover Architecture by Touch'—A Tactile Tour for Blind and Visually Impaired Visitors. Photo By Ste Murray © Courtesy of The Irish Architecture Foundation



'Discover Architecture by Touch'—A Tactile Tour for Blind and Visually Impaired Visitors. Photo By Ste Murray © Courtesy of The Irish Architecture Foundation

Additional events and/or activities



'Open Table' discussions. Photo by Brendan Keogh © Courtesy of The Irish Architecture Foundation

'Building a World Where Everyone Belongs' competition, part of 'Open House Junior'

In this LEGO brick competition that celebrates creativity, diversity and inclusion, participants used their imagination and building skills to create unique LEGO brick structures that represented a world where everyone is welcome. Whether a playground for all kids to play in, a city that makes everyone feel safe and welcome, a building or space that everyone can access and enjoy or a community where everyone is included, this competition encouraged young architecture enthusiasts ages 4–17 to envision and construct spaces for everyone to belong.



'Open Table' discussions. Photo by Brendan Keogh © Courtesy of The Irish Architecture Foundation



'Open Table' discussions. Photo by Brendan Keogh © Courtesy of The Irish Architecture Foundation

'Open Table' discussions

The popular series of lunchtime conversations on topical issues facing Dublin returned in 2024. 'Open Table', with lunch provided at the Open House Dublin info hub on Charlemont Walk, Dublin 2, empowered people to participate in expert-led discussions on housing, ageing in place, immigration, gender-sensitive place-making, the right to the city and the mental health of young people in Dublin.

Topics:

- Take Back the City (25 visitors) with Pauline O'Flynn from PPR. PPR (Participation and the Practice of Rights), based in Belfast, organises alongside those worst affected by the housing crisis: homeless young people forgotten in hostels, families in overcrowded conditions, asylum seekers, refugees, Irish Travellers and more.
- Ageing in our Place (25 visitors) with Declan Gaffney. With 833000 older people currently living in Ireland, this conversation addressed how society can support people to age in place and what kind of housing

is necessary to ensure people can live as part of their communities for as long as they wish. D. Gaffney discussed how organisations are working to address these important questions, relevant to all, young or old.

- What if Women Designed Our City? Dr May East hosted the third Open Table of this series. Dr East is an international urbanist specialising in nature-positive and gender-sensitive cities. She is the author of the book 'What if Women Designed the City?'. At this 'Open Table' event, East discussed gender-sensitive place-making in the context of Dublin, advocating for places which are open, more accessible and suitable for all.
- Our City of Welcome (25 visitors) with John Lannon, CEO of Doras. Doras provides direct support and dedicated services to migrant communities throughout Ireland. They work to affect lasting change by seeking to change the policies, perceptions and power structures that adversely affect those communities.

- Our Mental Health and the City (25 visitors) with Caroline Brogan, development officer for Mental Health Ireland and lead for Thrive. The discussion centred on the work needed to create a healthy and happy community in Balbriggan which engages the local community in initiatives promoting mental health and wellbeing, as well as their connection to the designed and built environment.

‘Echoes of Home’ exhibition

Approximate number of attendees:

200

An exhibition of prints, ‘Echoes of Home’ was on display in the Print Room, Dublin 1. This show of over 50 fine-art prints on the theme of ‘home’ was the fourth partnership with artists from Graphic Studio Dublin and Simon Communities of Ireland, supported by HLB Ireland. All sales were split 50:50 between artists and Simon Communities, supporting solutions to homelessness. Tours of the building, noting original architectural features and demonstrating its current use, with printing demonstrations by members, were available on the day.

Site-specific writing and drawing workshop

Approximate number of attendees:

25

In this workshop, participants were invited to walk through lesser-known parts of Dublin’s city centre, examining it from surprising and unusual angles. Guided by the workshop facilitators, each participant documented their individual perception of buildings, the spaces in between and what lies beneath, using fieldwork techniques such as on-the-spot sketching, audio recording, note-taking and site-writing. Using the material gathered, participants had an opportunity to create an individual response, in words or drawings, reflecting their personal experience of the streets. The focus of the workshop was on the process of documentary fieldwork in the city, rather than on specific outcomes.

'Bí Linn' exhibition

Approximate number of attendees:

1000

Aisteach Housing Co-operative Society, a group working on setting up a queer housing co-operative in Dublin, presented an exhibition of ongoing community work in Ireland, individual artistic and architectural pursuits and research, and international case studies which presented alternative housing arrangements and economic development models not currently widely represented in Ireland.

The 'Bí Linn' exhibition, hosted by the Irish Architecture Foundation in its exhibition space and info hub on Charlemont Walk, showcased works engaging with the notion of queer housing and domesticity. Its aim was not to



Bí Linn Exhibition. Photo By Ste Murray © Courtesy of The Irish Architecture Foundation

reveal a queer future, nor did it claim to know how to achieve one, instead, it simply engaged with the subject, critiquing existing housing structures and finding joy in confronting the normative ways people are expected to live with one another. Featured artworks included installations, photography, sculpture, illustrations, architectural studies, film, poetry and more.

'Building Belonging: Migration, Identity and Housing Futures in Ireland' discussion

Approximate number of attendees:

50

As part of the launch of the 'Bí Linn' exhibition, this discussion with Aisteach Housing Co-operative Society, Peter O'Grady and Laura Ferry asked what 'home' was to people in Ireland today and how that might reflect wider societal changes. This event was based on the belief that with Ireland's demographic becoming enriched by immigration, a diverse population needs to be represented in discussions about housing.

Online activities

Approximate number of total website visitors:

9000

'Outhouse LGBTQ+ Centre, 105 Capel Street: A Story of Transformation' article on the Open House Dublin website

In 2001, the Outhouse LGBTQ+ Centre began a new chapter for 105 Capel Street, aligning its mission of inclusion and support with the street's rich history of social and cultural diversity. At the time, the building was uninhabitable, having fallen into significant disrepair. Since then, extensive care and attention have gone into its restoration, preserving many of its original 18th-century features while thoughtfully integrating modern updates such as glazed timber doors and new basement access. Despite these efforts, further restoration work is still needed to fully realise the building's potential.

Link:

<https://openhousedublin.com/outhouse-lgbtq-centre-105-capel-street-a-story-of-transformation/12278/>

Different audiences at the local Open House festival



Writing Architecture Workshop. Photo by Dominic Daly © Courtesy of The Irish Architecture Foundation

Open House Dublin 2024 had 3 guided tours for people with hearing loss, 1 tactical tour with 3D models, 1 sensory architecture tour and 1 guided visit for neurodivergent visitors. All the locations were supported by the visual interpreting service, Aira.

Experience in attracting people with special needs

Open House Dublin's mission is to welcome everyone to equitably experience the architecture of Dublin through the festival. As such, one of the festival's key goals is to grow and deepen engagement with the public through a focus on improving the accessibility of the festival's programming and communication, working with as many communities as possible to make meaningful improvements year on year.

In 2024, meetings were arranged with multiple organisations and individuals that advocate for accessibility to gain insights on how to make the festival more accessible and create partnerships to reach these communities:

- Hearing loss: The Irish Deaf Society sent an open call for architects, engineers and artists with hearing loss to participate in Open House Dublin 2024.
- Physical Disabilities: Meetings were held with the Irish Wheelchair Association and Louise Bruton, journalist, activist, wheelchair user and editor of 'Legless in Dublin' a publication which offers reviews and personal essays that champion people with disabilities and educate those without disabilities.
- Visual loss: Vision Ireland and Emilie Conway, a visually impaired artist and art activist.
- Neurodiversity: As I Am (Ireland's Autism Charity) and Neurodiversity Ireland.
- Older adults: Age Friendly Ireland.
- General disability associations: Arts & Disabilities, National Disability Authority, Trinity Ability Co-Op, UCD Access & Lifelong Learning Centre, Chronic Collective and Clúid Housing.

The festival followed the guidelines of the Ombudsman for Children to make the 'Open House Junior' events more accessible and inclusive.

The festival organising team attended Ireland's first annual disability arts festival, Disrupt Disability Arts Festival, and Open House Prague to learn how to make Open House Dublin's events and tours more accessible. It was a really enriching experience that helped the team to curate a more inclusive and accessible programme for 2024. After attending one of the tours for people with vision loss at Open House Prague, it was decided that the same type of tour was going to be replicated in Dublin. Together with architect and 3D model maker Tadhg Charles, 3D models were made for the tactile tours for people with visual impairments. This tour was led by Emilie Conway, an artist and art activist at the Royal College of Surgeons of Ireland and the Museum of Literature of Ireland (MOLI) who has vision loss. The festival hopes to add more tactile tours and events to next year's programme.

After reviewing the websites of organisations that work with people who have disabilities, the following accessibility features were added to the Open House Dublin website: font size adjustment, contrast activation and grayscale images.

Website entries on each event and tour had accessibility information concerning entrance accessibility (if the building had steps and if so, how many, if it had a revolving door, etc.) and general descriptions of the building's accessibility, such as if there were lifts, accessible bathrooms and so on.

All locations were supported by the visual interpreting service, Aira, which was available for visitors with vision loss to support their festival experience. Aira also assisted with digital tasks including booking tickets for tours and events and assisting with website use. During the festival, it helped visitors navigate their surroundings while taking part in tours and events.

Same as last year, the festival kicked off with 'Open House Junior', a weekend targeted to kids and families, which, this year, integrated topics on accessibility and inclusion. For example, there was a tour of the Book of Kells Experience suitable for families with children who were neurodivergent or had sensory processing differences. Also, the 'Building a World Where Everyone Belongs' LEGO competition was held for individuals aged 4–17.

During the festival week, a series of lunchtime talks on issues of accessibility and inclusion facing Dublin were hosted. The included topics: 'Youth Mental Health in Dublin Towns' by Mental Health Ireland, 'Immigration' by Doras, 'Gender Sensitive Place-making' by Dr May East, 'Ageing in Place' by Age Friendly Ireland, and 'The Right to the City' by Participation and the Practice of Rights. Through the endeavour to make Open House Dublin more inclusive for individuals with disabilities, the organising team understood that it takes time to reach and engage with individuals who had been previously overlooked. The festival aims to have long-term partnerships with different organisations and individuals that advocate for accessibility to keep improving the accessibility of the festival.

Distribution

The Journal

The Journal was launched in 2020 with different articles published on the Open House Dublin website. It is now an integral part of the festival's digital programme, allowing the festival to expand its audience reach.

This year, 11 articles were published.

Link:

<https://openhousedublin.com/journal/>

'Site Specific' documentary series

'Site Specific', a collection of short documentaries, commissioned by the Irish Architecture Foundation, directed and produced by Dyehouse Films, crosses scales, times, types and uses to reveal the impact of designed space on culture, history and society. From a family home to a national power station, from a place for health to a place for legislation—it is no accident, within the current context of Dublin, that the 2024 edition chose to focus on spaces for health, energy, family, education, law and commerce.

This year, 18 short documentaries were shared.

Link:

<https://openhousedublin.com/whats-on/>

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Essen
2024

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Open House Essen 2024

Introduction

General information about the event

Event No.:	E7.34
Legal Name:	Forum Kunst und Architektur
Date:	7–8 September, 2024
Name:	Open House Essen
Number of buildings/areas included in the programme:	23
City:	Essen
Country:	Germany
Duration:	2 days

Festival participants

In total, Open House Essen 2024 attracted 780 attendees: 400 men, 380 women and 40 non-binary people.

In terms of volunteers, the festival had 15 men and 25 women; 40 volunteers in total.

Open House Essen 2024 was organised by 3 men and 6 women; 9 people in total.

Introduction



Kokerei Zollverein. Photo by Ravi Sejk © Courtesy of Forum Kunst & Architektur

This year's Open House Essen festival was a resounding success, showcasing the vibrant architectural and cultural heritage of the region under the title 'Transformation: Dialogue, People, Buildings'. Throughout the festival, 23 buildings across Essen and Gelsenkirchen opened their doors to the public, offering a unique glimpse into their history and renewed purposes.

The theme of transformation was chosen to highlight how spaces, communities and ideas evolve over time. It emphasised a dialogue between the past and the present, the people who shape spaces and buildings themselves as dynamic entities. This theme came to life through carefully curated tours, discussions and interactive events that explored stories of adaptation and renewal.

Additional activities

Workshops on upcycling wood

Approximate number of attendees:

68

Aligning with the theme of architectural sustainability, these workshops, held in areas of social significance, encouraged participants to engage with the principles of reuse and redesign, fostering an understanding of how materials can be repurposed in innovative ways within architectural contexts.

Bus tour connecting Essen and Gelsenkirchen

Approximate number of attendees:

33

The bus tour provided participants with a curated exploration of the 23 buildings from the festival's programme. This immersive journey illustrated the theme of transformation through spaces that have evolved to serve new purposes while honouring their history.

Activities for volunteers



Open House Essen. Party. Photo by Ravi Sejk © Courtesy of Forum Kunst & Architektur



Open House Essen. Party. Photo by Ravi Sejk © Courtesy of Forum Kunst & Architektur

Training of volunteers

The training consisted of 2 meetings with the festival's coordinator and project manager in Forum Kunst & Architektur, visits to buildings from the festival's programme, 15 online meetings with individuals and briefing documents prepared and shared with the volunteers.

Approximate number of attendees:
40

Party for volunteers

A party was held at a popular club in Essen, with DJs, catering from a local NGO, and a popup bar from a local Michelin-star chef.

Approximate number of attendees:
40

Integration of the Open House Europe programme

Buildings and/or guided tours

Open House Essen 2024 had 9 buildings and/or guided tours from the festival's programme dedicated to showcasing the Open House Europe (OHEu) annual theme: Accessibility and Inclusion.

Approximate number of attendees:

420

List of buildings:

1. Heilig-Geist Kirche
2. FATIH Mosque
3. Jugendamt Katernberg (Katernberg Youth Welfare Office)

Heilig-Geist Kirche



Heilig-Geist Kirche. Photo by Ravi Sejk © Courtesy of Forum Kunst & Architektur

Recently, Heilig-Geist Kirche was transformed into a gallery run by a renowned German art dealer and author of 'The Blind Gallerist', Johann König, and guided tours of the space drew significant attention. The building's transformation from a sacred space to an inclusive art venue resonated with the festival's emphasis on renewal and inclusivity. Johann's participation enriched the experience, demonstrating the power of art and dialogue to connect diverse communities.

FATIH Mosque

A guided tour was offered in German, English and Turkish. After the tour, there was a get-together in the mosque with members of the mosque, visitors of Open House Essen and exchange volunteers.

Jugendamt Katernberg (Katernberg Youth Welfare Office)



Jugendamt Katernberg. Photo by Ravi Sejk © Courtesy of Forum Kunst & Architektur

The tour culminated in a vernissage showcasing the works of children and young people from underrepresented groups, highlighting their creative perspectives on the neighbourhood. It emphasised inclusion by empowering diverse voices and celebrating cultural diversity through art.

Additional events and/or activities



Discussion. Photo by Ravi Sejk © Courtesy of Forum Kunst & Architektur



Discussion. Photo by Ravi Sejk © Courtesy of Forum Kunst & Architektur

Discussion: 25 years of Internationale Bauausstellung (Eng. International Architecture Exhibition)

Approximate number of attendees:

80

This discussion at the Forum Kunst & Architektur in Essen revisited the transformative legacy of the IBA Emscherpark (1989–1999), which began 35 years ago as a groundbreaking International Architecture Exhibition. Over a decade, nearly 120 innovative projects revitalised the industrial region, leaving lasting urban, social and ecological impacts. Experts Peter Brdenk, Dr Christina Anna Kloke, Christian Kohl and Dr Irene Wiese-von Ofen reflected on its achievements and debated whether the region's city centres need

a new IBA. Moderated by Marius Hanke, the event sparked engaging dialogue on the future of urban development.

The event included a German Sign Language interpreter for the panel discussion, marking a major step toward inclusivity. This helped to welcome participants from the deaf community, fostering a broader dialogue about accessibility in architecture and public spaces.

Online activities

Improving website accessibility

Approximate number of attendees:
1000

This year, Open House Essen significantly improved the accessibility of its website, focusing on accommodating individuals with disabilities, particularly those with visual impairments. Key updates included:

- **Alt text for images:** descriptive alternative text (alt text) was added to all images. This feature enabled screen reader software to convey the content of images to users with visual impairments, ensuring they had access to the same information as other visitors.
- **Enhanced contrast:** the contrast between text and background elements was carefully adjusted to ensure better readability, making the website more usable for individuals with low vision.
- **Simplified navigation and design:** the website's architecture was refined to be simple, functional and intuitive, ensuring ease of use for all visitors, including those with cognitive challenges.

Additionally, to address the needs of the deaf community, the festival incorporated videos in German Sign Language, providing accessible content for users with hearing loss and impairments.

These improvements reflect Open House Essen's commitment to inclusivity, ensuring that its online platform is welcoming and accessible to all users.

Podcast: 'Was mit Kunst' (Eng. What about art) with Johann König

Approximate number of attendees:
300

In this episode of Was mit Kunst, Johann König and interior designer Felix Hemmers talked about the sensible reutilisation of church buildings. The conversation was recorded as part of Open House Essen, where König was invited as a guest speaker.

Using the example of St. Agnes Berlin, Johann and Felix spoke about how to establish a former church as a gallery and a vibrant cultural centre, what opportunities such a remodelling offered other churches and how such spaces could become places of creativity and exchange. These and other questions were discussed during the podcast.

Link:

<https://open.spotify.com/episode/3ShU0RUprWGp3UeRJIJSfl>

Content for people with hearing impairments

In collaboration with KP12, a meeting point for people with hearing loss and impairments, Saruka made a reel that was shared on the official Open House Essen Instagram account about the importance of what Open House Essen achieved by including people with hearing loss and impairments in the festival.

Link:

<https://www.instagram.com/p/DARL4jHOFcT/>

Different audiences at the local Open House festival



Open House Essen 2024. Photo by Ravi Sejk © Courtesy of Forum Kunst & Architektur

Open House Essen 2024 had 23 guided tours for English speakers that attracted 75 people. Additionally, 4 tours were organised in Turkish, 1 in Arabic, 2 in Ukrainian, 5 in Polish and 1 in Persian. 8 additional activities and events were organised for people with special needs.

Experience in attracting non-native participants

All festival buildings were accessible to non-native speakers, with guided tours available in English, ensuring inclusivity and fostering engagement across diverse communities. The festival's strategy to engage non-native speakers involved hosting it in social hotspots—areas with significant populations of people with migratory backgrounds who were already familiar with and connected to Open House Essen. This approach helped to build on existing relationships and create an open, welcoming atmosphere.

The festival collaborated with key community groups to strengthen outreach and inclusion. These included a local mosque and its youth groups, an NGO led by a Turkish family and an architect from Algeria who was part of the festival's team. Their involvement not only enriched Open House Essen but also strengthened connections with diverse communities.

Some of the success stories from this year's edition include the enthusiastic participation of non-native speakers in both guided tours and workshops, many of whom were drawn to the festival through the previously mentioned partnerships. While challenges such as language barriers arose during some activities, they were addressed with the help of multilingual team members and the flexibility of the festival's volunteers.

A key lesson was that making the festival accessible to non-native speakers required more than providing translations or multilingual tours. It involved meaningful outreach, building trust and creating opportunities for these communities to actively participate and contribute. This insight will contribute to the future efforts of Open House Essen to make the festival even more inclusive.

Experience in attracting people with special needs

To make this year's festival more accessible, Open House Essen collaborated with a communication assistant and partnered with a local Deaf Association to produce a video in German Sign Language, inviting the community to the event. This initiative ensured that information about the festival reached individuals with hearing impairments, fostering greater participation.

Accessibility efforts extended to the festival programme itself. A key highlight was the panel discussion with a German Sign Language interpreter, which allowed attendees from the deaf community to engage fully in the conversation. Other activities, such as tours and workshops, were designed with accessibility in mind to ensure an inclusive experience for all participants.

The partnership with the communication assistant and the local Deaf Association played a crucial role in creating a welcoming and inclusive atmosphere. Their guidance and collaboration enriched the festival and broadened its impact within the community. One of the most significant lessons was that organising an inclusive event is only the beginning. It is equally important to ensure that people with disabilities receive the necessary information about the event and feel encouraged to participate. This experience has inspired the organising team to further improve outreach and accessibility initiatives in future editions of the festival.

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Milan
2024

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Open House Milano 2024

Introduction

General information about the event

Event No.:	E7.19
Legal Name:	Open House Milano
Date:	25–26 May, 2024
Name:	Open House Milano 2024
Number of buildings/areas included in the programme:	100
City:	Milan
Country:	Italy
Duration:	2 days

Festival participants

In total, Open House Milano 2024 attracted 23000 attendees: 10000 men and 13000 women.

In terms of volunteers, the festival had 60 men and 45 women; 105 volunteers in total.

Open House Milano 2024 was organised by 2 men and 3 women; 5 people in total.

Introduction

This year, Open House Milano made it possible to discover an open, interconnected and accessible city, with 100 buildings opened to the public, thanks to a dedicated team of five organisers and a network of 105 volunteers. The theme of the ninth edition, 'Ecosistema Città' (Eng. City Ecosystem), explored Milan as a space of coexistence, viewing the city not only as a human-made environment but as a broader ecosystem enriched by its diverse forms of life and interactions. This reflection fostered a dialogue on redefining urban balance, focusing on sustainable design, circularity, redevelopment, suburban recovery, technology, inclusivity and accessibility.

The festival highlighted Milan's transformation through a mix of large-scale urban reconfiguration projects and intimate private spaces, presenting a sustainable and increasingly accessible city. Notable initiatives included a collaboration with WeGlad, a startup known for its social impact. This partnership introduced a 'mapathon' initiative to map routes accessible to people with physical difficulties and disabilities, providing a valuable resource akin to Google Maps.

Among the featured sites were innovative design studios, historic landmarks and spaces exemplifying Milan's evolving cultural and social identity. Highlights included the Fornace Curti, a historic kiln showcasing traditional craftsmanship and modern creativity, and the Palazzo della RAI, which opened its iconic Giò Ponti-designed spaces to visitors. Additionally, the Palazzo Assolombarda demonstrated how Milanese heritage is adapting to modern openness and collaboration.

The programme emphasised linguistic inclusivity with multilingual tours across diverse neighbourhoods, reflecting the city's multicultural fabric. Attendees explored Milan's six historical districts ('sestieri'), experiencing their architectural and social evolution through themed itineraries. These journeys not only unveiled architectural gems but also fostered a deeper connection with Milan's identity as a dynamic and welcoming metropolis.

Open House Milano 2024 further embraced its mission of accessibility and education, offering citizens and visitors a chance to connect with the city's lesser-seen facets, from its artisanal past to its innovative present.

Activities for volunteers



Open House Milano 2024. Photo by Adriano Mura © Courtesy of Associazione Open House Milano

Training of volunteers

Approximate number of attendees:

70

Three online meetings were held with volunteers to inform and update them about the activities of Open House Milano, explain the annual theme from both the Open House Milano and Open House Europe (OHEu) perspective, and present the new activities introduced by the festival in 2024 such as the mapathon, survey for visitors, and exchange opportunities for volunteers.

Integration of the Open House Europe programme

Buildings and/or guided tours

Open House Milano 2024 had 40 buildings/guided tours that were made accessible, in line with the Open House Europe (OHEu) annual theme: Accessibility and Inclusion.

List of buildings:

1. Piazze Aperte
2. Envision Everythink
3. Ri.Abi.La

180

Approximate number of attendees

Piazze Aperte

Abitare, a design and architecture magazine published monthly in Milan, curated for Open House Milano an itinerary to help discover some of the most successful creations of the Piazze Aperte project, between Porta Venezia and the Nolo district. Since 2018, 42 squares in Milan have been returned to pedestrians thanks to Piazze Aperte: a programme which, through so-called tactical urban planning (the temporary experimentation in the different use of spaces) allowed the city to progressively arrive at definitive arrangements that improved the environment and the inhabitants' quality of life. The project was developed by the Milan municipality (with AMAT - Agenzia Mobilità Ambiente Territorio, in collaboration with Bloomberg Associates, National Association of City Transportation Officials and Global Designing Cities Initiatives), giving rise to many results.

Envision Everything

The topic of circular architecture and redevelopment is a crucial point for those who have to design the urban environment today: build less and recover as much as possible. The 'Envision Everything' exhibition was an immersive journey through time and architecture through technology that allowed viewers to relive projects that, unfortunately, disappeared over time. Therefore, the exhibition became a bridge between the past and the future, challenging viewers' perceptions of the built environment and opening a window into worlds that had never existed or disappeared over time. This exhibition was not only a tribute to human ingenuity but also a celebration of the infinite possibilities that architecture offers, both past and unrealised. It was an engaging experience in which the visitor became an explorer of the impossible.



Ri.abi.la. Photo by Adriano Mura © Courtesy of Associazione Open House Milano

Ri.Abi.La is an acronym that summarises the recovery project of the former Vittoria Parish Centre into a multifunctional space in which socio-educational, welfare, healthcare and residential activities coexist. It is a concrete example of the urban redevelopment of a peripheral area of the city through the recovery and reuse of an obsolete building. Ri.Abi.La has restored to the neighbourhood a new urban hub of services dedicated to people, within which coexist a day centre for people with disabilities, three social housing units, two supportive families, accommodation for minors with disabilities, a nursery, a clinic, a centre for job training for vulnerable people and finally, a small building to host several commercial initiatives (a bar, a shop and a hairdresser's), as well as a multipurpose room for a total area of approximately 2000 m².

Additional events and/or activities

Approximate number
of attendees in total:

23000



Open House Milano 2024. Photo by Adriano Mura © Courtesy of Associazione Open House Milano

New to the 2024 edition was the festival's collaboration with WeGlad, a startup with a strong social impact, focusing on diversity and inclusion, which can be best described as Google Maps for people with physical difficulties and disabilities. The theme of accessibility was addressed concretely and translated into an ongoing mapathon initiative which was launched during the festival and concluded in mid-June. The project gave life to a real mapping of the architectural barriers that prevent free movement in the city and access to its facilities. The collection of socially useful data offered a tool that could also be implemented in future editions, monitoring an evolving city that must increasingly be within everyone's reach.

Different audiences at the local Open House festival



Open House Milano 2024. Photo by Adriano Mura © Courtesy of Associazione Open House Milano

Open House Milano 2024 had 30 guided tours for English speakers that attracted 500 people. Additionally, 10 guided tours in Spanish and Mandarin/Cantonese that attracted 30 people.

This year, the festival focused on promoting tours in other languages mostly in architecture practices where there was the will and availability to do so due to part of their team being non-Italian native speakers. Besides this, the festival chose other iconic locations (such as the Pirelli Tower) to share with a broader range of visitors. The festival mainly worked to include visitors with disabilities through working with WeGlad and the mapathon initiative.

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Lisbon
2024

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Open House Lisboa 2024

Introduction

General information about the event

Event No.:	E7.13
Legal Name:	Associação Trienal de Arquitectura de Lisboa
Date:	11–12 May, 2024
Name:	Open House Lisboa
Number of buildings/areas included in the programme:	73 buildings, 5 urban walks, 1 sound walk, 13 'Plus' activities, 6 accessible visits, 6 'Junior' activities, 18 tours in English
City:	Lisbon
Country:	Portugal
Duration:	2 days

Festival participants

In total, Open House Lisboa 2024 attracted 24421 attendees.

In terms of volunteers, the festival had 77 men and 187 women; 264 volunteers in total.

Open House Lisboa 2024 was organised by 2 men and 6 women; 8 people in total.

Introduction

Open House Lisboa 2024 took place from 11–12 May and recorded 24421 visits, a number that greatly exceeded the expected capacity, only possible due to the flexibility and dedication of the more than 400 people involved, of which 262 were part of the volunteer team.

Curated for the first time by a sociologist and an architect, the sibling duo Sandra Marques Pereira and Alexandre Marques Pereira were responsible for defining the theme and selecting the 73 spaces (47 of which were new for the festival) that were opened to the public. Titled “The Hybrids of Transitions,” the curatorial team explored the changes Lisbon has undergone over time through transitions that lasted for varying lengths of time and occurred on different scales.

For the festival to be experienced by everyone, accessibility was a priority, so collaboration was key to making Open House Lisboa a melting pot of different approaches. This included concentrating on a dozen venues in Bairro Alto and offering personalised assistance to people with visual impairments. At these venues, audio descriptions were made available in collaboration with Locus Acesso (a consultant in cultural accessibility), so that visitors were able to choose their itinerary and experience the tours to the full.

An outdoors highlight was the bilingual tour of the Fonecas and Calçada neighbourhoods, which included a Portuguese sign language interpreter. The route through Telheiras Sul, adapted for people with reduced mobility, helped raise awareness of the relevance of inclusive city design.

The programme also included 13 ‘Plus’ activities in various formats (concerts, documentaries, workshops and exhibitions), 6 activities dedicated to families and 6 urban tours, one of which was a sound walk created by anthropologist Filomena Silvano, adding to the collection of sound walks Open House Lisboa began in 2020.

This year, even children became experts, guiding visitors through places they knew best, such as the Castelo School.

Additional activities



Palacio Palmela. Photo by Jose Martins © Courtesy of Associação Trienal de Arquitectura de Lisboa

To enhance visits and diverse experiences during the festival, a programme of 13 'Plus' activities was designed, including workshops, concerts and exhibitions. One of the highlighted activities was 'Thalia hali alia' spatial-sensory and movement workshop "at Teatro Thalia, designed to challenge participants to explore the relationship between the body and built space.

Activities for volunteers



Torreão Nascente da Cordoaria Nacional. Photo by Matilde Fieschi © Courtesy of Associação Trienal de Arquitectura de Lisboa

Training of volunteers

To train the extensive team of volunteers, they were given a presentation on the event, the concept of Open House Lisboa 2024, the parallel programme, available printed and digital information, tips on interacting with the public and guidance on providing support for people with special needs. This event also took

Approximate number of attendees:

141

place at the Ismaili Centre. Volunteers also received materials including t-shirts, tote bags, credentials and neckbands.

Closing party

Approximate number of attendees:

157



Closing Party. Photo by emontenegro © Courtesy of Associação Trienal de Arquitectura de Lisboa

The party was held on Sunday, May 12, from 19:00–23:00, in the courtyard of the Lisbon Architecture Triennale’s headquarters. This relaxed setting brought together the curatorial team, volunteers, team tutors, partners, specialists and property owners. The gathering aimed to create an opportunity for being

together and thank everyone involved in the event. There was a DJ, some snacks and wine generously offered by the Quinta da Lapa winery. During the party, volunteers received meal tickets as thanks for their participation.

Other benefits

There are three key benefits offered to volunteers, which are useful for their preparation and motivation:

1. Volunteer Manual (in Portuguese and English): Available in each building, this manual provided context on the protocols with the team, property owners and the extended team, as well as guidelines on welcoming and informing visitors, and handling a variety of unforeseen events that could have occurred during the event. This manual was sent before the training session so that any questions could be addressed during the session.
2. Study Material: Each team had a tutor responsible for compiling, editing and organising the study materials of each building. This information was shared with the volunteers, allowing them to prepare in advance for the visits and providing them with more autonomy and confidence in guiding the tours. The materials included were photographs, technical drawings, descriptive memories, published articles, reports and links, biographical information about guest experts, and a summary sheet with a descriptive and visual guide of the visit itinerary.
3. Pre-visits: One of the key preparation moments for volunteers was visiting the buildings they were responsible for ahead of time in an informative and exclusive moment. During these firsthand experiences, the volunteer team also served as the first audience of the event, gaining a better understanding of the crucial aspects of each space to better mediate and prepare each guided tour. This was also the first time when the entire team gathered and got to know each other in person.

Integration of the Open House Europe programme

Buildings and/or guided tours

4 guided tours with tactile materials, 6 guided tours with audio description, 11 pieces of accessible medical diagnostic equipment for people with reduced mobility, 1 tactile visit, 1 tour with a Portuguese Sign Language interpreter, 1 urban tour for people with limited mobility, and 1 relaxed visit for people with cognitive impairments, neurodivergence, and seniors.

Open House Lisboa 2024 had 25 buildings from the festival's programme dedicated to showcasing the Open House Europe (OHEu) annual theme: Accessibility and Inclusion.

List of buildings:

1. SAAL—Bairro das
Fonsecas e Calçada
2. The City Garden
Neighbourhood
3. Palácio do Grilo

SAAL—Bairro das Fonsecaas e Calçada



SAAL Bairro das Fonsecaas e Calçada. Photo by Clement Guillaume © Courtesy of Associação Trienal de Arquitectura de Lisboa

Guided tour by Jorge Neves, member of the Unidade do Povo Cooperative with interpretation in Portuguese Sign Language by Sofia Rocha. SAAL operations are named after the Local Ambulatory Support Service: a service and assistance comprising 'a specialised technical body (...) to support (...) the initiatives of poorly housed populations, aiming to collaborate in the transformation of their own neighbourhoods, investing their own resources.'. The service was created by architect Nuno Portas, Secretary of State for Housing and Urbanism of the First Provisional Government, three months after The Carnation Revolution in 1974. The resulting neighbourhoods from this process are emblematic of revolutionary Portuguese architecture and continue to be a unique example in the discussion about housing.

The City Garden Neighbourhood



Visita Telheiras Photo by Carlos Costa © Courtesy of Associação Trienal de Arquitectura de Lisboa

For the first time, an urban tour suitable for people with reduced mobility was offered. The architects who designed and led this tour through the modernist neighbourhood Telheiras Sul adapted it to ensure there were no barriers for wheelchair users. The creation of this urban tour was also supported by architect Manuela Oliveira, an ambassador for the Salvador Association, which promotes the inclusion of people with motor impairments. This urban route was open to everyone and brought together different types of audiences.

Palácio do Grilo



Open House Lisboa 2023: Palácio do Grilo. Photo by Hugo David © Courtesy of Associação Trienal de Arquitectura de Lisboa

A new feature of the 2024 programme was the relaxed tour of Palácio do Grilo, designed to be tolerant of noise and movement, and offering opportunities for pauses. It was aimed at individuals with cognitive impairments, neurodivergence, seniors, and families with young children, as well as anyone who preferred to experience the event at a relaxed and unhurried pace.

Additional events and/or activities



Torreão Nascente da Cordoaria Nacional. Photo by Matilde Fieschi
© Courtesy of Associação Trienal de Arquitectura de Lisboa



Torreão Nascente da Cordoaria Nacional. Photo by Matilde Fieschi
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Tactile Material

For independent exploration by people who are blind or visually impaired

Models, embossed drawings and room data sheets in large print and braille were produced and are now permanently available in 4 spaces managed by EGEAC, a municipal company responsible for managing some of Lisbon's key cultural spaces. The tactile materials, particularly the models, have their own

Approximate number of attendees:

325

aesthetic, suitable for independent exploration by people who are blind or visually impaired, to facilitate a comprehensive understanding and contextualisation of the shapes and spaces with their surroundings, in the pursuit of equity for the experiences of visitors.

Tours led by children and young people



Ecola Do Castelo. Photo by Jose Martins © Courtesy of Associação Trienal de Arquitectura de Lisboa

One tour was at the Ismaili Centre, guided by young people and families from the community, exploring how architecture can convey broad ideas, concepts and beliefs, as well as different forms of art within the diverse Muslim community. Another visit, 'Spectacular School', was led by children attending the Castelo school, helped by staff from the Lisbon Architecture Triennale. The children acted as experts, leading visitors through all the school's nooks and crannies.

Different audiences at the local Open House festival

Open House Lisboa 2024 had 18 guided tours for English speakers that attracted **285** attendees.

There were additional activities and events organised for people with special needs:

People who are blind or visually impaired:

- Audio descriptions were available in 6 spaces;
- Production of models, embossed drawings and room data sheets in large print and braille, available in 4 buildings and suitable for independent exploration.

People with reduced mobility:

- 1 urban tour adapted for people with motor impairments;
- 11 pieces of accessible medical diagnostic equipment in the spaces that were indicated to have full accessibility.

People with hearing impairments:

- 1 bilingual tour of the FONSECAS and CALÇADA neighbourhoods with a Portuguese Sign Language interpreter.

People with cognitive impairments, neurodivergence, seniors, families:

- 1 relaxed tour designed for tolerance to noise and movement, offering opportunities for moments of pause and regulation for those who preferred a relaxed and unhurried tour experience.

Experience in attracting non-native participants



Mesquita Central Lisboa. Photo by emontenegro © Courtesy of Associação Trienal de Arquitectura de

To select the 9 buildings that offered tours in English, some important criteria were considered: opening hours, the demand from international visitors and the buildings' proximity to each other. A schedule for visits was arranged to ensure no overlaps and to provide morning and afternoon visits on both days of the festival.

A notice with the itinerary of the tours was promoted on the homepage of the Open House Lisboa website to highlight these visits and make the information more accessible and immediate for the target audience. The English tours were also featured on our social media channels and in our newsletters. The festival has seen a growing number of foreign volunteers as a result of the large number of non-native citizens living in Lisbon.

Experience in attracting people with special needs



Visita Telheiras. Photo by Carlos Costa © Courtesy of Associação Trienal de Arquitectura de Lisboa

After several editions where the accessible programme was combined with the 'Junior' programme, this year, a new strategy was adopted, leveraging the theme of accessibility as part of Open House Europe. Given that Open House Lisboa serves as an excellent experimental platform for interactions with people with functional diversity, a more varied programme was designed for 2024. This new programme offered greater individual choice in selecting spaces to visit and to facilitate

autonomy in visits, especially for people who are blind or visually impaired.

Three approaches were implemented for this audience: a tactile visit to a private home—the Trindade Apartment; 6 spaces had volunteers who were trained in audio description and prepared to accompany visitors along this route; models, embossed drawings, and room data sheets in large print and braille.



Torreão Nascente da Cordoaria Nacional. Photo by Matilde Fieschi
 © Courtesy of Associação Trienal de Arquitectura de Lisboa



Torreão Nascente da Cordoaria Nacional. Photo by Matilde Fieschi
 © Courtesy of Associação Trienal de Arquitectura de Lisboa

For people with hearing impairments, an urban tour with interpretation in Portuguese Sign Language was selected for the SAAL – Bairro das Fonsecas e Calçada neighbourhood.

A new feature was the relaxed tour designed for people who are sensitive to noise and movement. This tour offered opportunities to pause and moments of regulation. This was aimed at individuals with cognitive impairments, neurodivergence, seniors, families with young children, and anyone else who preferred a relaxed and unhurried tour experience.

For the first time, an urban tour for people with reduced mobility was included in the programme. The building's design was refined to make all points accessible for wheelchair users, with the support of architect Manuela Oliveira, an ambassador for the Salvador Association, who also accompanied and guided the visit.

Many participating spaces indicated full accessibility for people with mobility impairments. During preparation for the festival weekend, with the support of the volunteer team, accessibility assessments were conducted during pre-visits to validate the evaluation and shortcomings were noted. For future editions, providing visitors with more reliable and detailed information about the conditions of spaces will require advancing accessibility assessments in the pre-event schedule.

The full programme was designed together with Locus Acesso—an accessibility consultancy company that Open House Lisboa has collaborated with since 2017.

Distribution

Sound walk

Anthropologist Filomena Silvano was invited to create a sound walk for this edition. The route, covering Praça da Figueira, Martim Moniz and Praça do Chile, showcased the cultural diversity of people and objects from different parts of the world. The audio joined the collection of sound walks that Open House Lisboa started in 2020, which remains available for listening on SoundCloud.

Link:

<https://www.trienaldelisboa.com/ohl/en/people-and-items-from-all-over-the-world/>

Booklet

During the event, visitors were offered a guide that included images and brief descriptions of the buildings and the curatorial concept. This booklet is also available online as a PDF on the event's website.

Link:

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1H7Nx-0cAh5-nVN_661e1KbveCYBReHep1/view

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Open House Slovenia 2024

Introduction

General information about the event

Event No.:	E7.10
Legal Name:	Afront, zavod za prostorsko inovativnost
Date:	12–14 April, 2024
Name:	Open House Slovenia
Number of buildings/areas included in the programme:	80
City:	Whole country (Ljubljana, Maribor, Celje, Koper, Bled, Novo mesto and other cities in Slovenia)
Country:	Slovenia
Duration:	3 days

Festival participants

In total, Open House Slovenia 2024 attracted 2564 attendees: 989 men and 1575 women.

In terms of volunteers, the festival had 9 men

and 51 women; 60 volunteers in total.

Open House Slovenia 2024 was organised by 6 women.

Introduction



Volunteer excursions. Photo by Megi Pilko © Courtesy of AFRONT zavod za prostorsko inovativnost

The architecture festival Open House Slovenia (OHS) opened the doors to new and renovated architectural projects, as well as important cultural heritage buildings throughout Slovenia from April 12–14th, marking its fifteenth year.

The purpose of the festival has remained true to its basic mission throughout the years—to raise awareness among the general public about the values of well-designed spaces and present examples of the best practices in contemporary architecture that are part of

Slovenian culture and national identity. Through personal experiences in quality architecture, the festival enables a broader understanding of architecture and designed spaces, highlighting the importance of quality living.

This year's festival programme was selected from submitted projects by a professional jury composed of four experts in the field of architecture and design: Blaž Budja, Maša Cvetko, Dean Lah and Maja Stamenković.

In 2024, the Open House Slovenia team got significantly bigger and the event had 60 volunteers who helped to organise and execute it.

During the festival, visitors had the opportunity to explore 71 projects across the entire country. They were able to visit private apartments, single-family houses, renovated buildings, educational and cultural institutions, as well as business and tourist facilities.

The festival also joined the celebration of the 140th anniversary of the birth of the prominent Slovenian architect Ivan Vurnik. Therefore, some guided tours in the festival programme were dedicated to presenting his works (The Sokol Hall at Tabor, Cooperative Commercial Bank).

The title of this year's edition was 'Architecture of New Opportunities', highlighting the need for inclusivity of all people and interest groups in built and designed spaces. Open House Slovenia 2024 addressed questions of equal opportunities and new possibilities for the life, work, education and development of all living beings, seeking answers about coexistence that good architecture can enable, promote and protect. Although these crucial challenges cannot be resolved solely through architectural ideas without supportive socio-economic policies, architecture is the medium that, through its physical existence, can offer opportunities and even empower people. By highlighting the theme of inclusion and accessibility, festival spaces became beacons of inspiration that invited participants to become advocates for a more just and inclusive society. In the festival programme, various thematic projects were highlighted, promoting accessibility and enabling community development. The festival also featured thematic tours and workshops targeting different audience groups such as families and children. The media coverage of the festival was very good and the festival received over 200 mentions in newspapers, magazines, digital media, radio and television.

Additional activities



Awards and closing party © Courtesy of AFRONT zavod za prostorsko inovativnost



Awards and closing party © Courtesy of AFRONT zavod za prostorsko inovativnost

Open House Slovenia award ceremony and closing event

Approx. 5000 votes collected, with 120 participants at the closing event and award ceremony

The Open House Slovenia Award has been active since 2019. It is not a traditional architecture award given by a selected professional jury to experts in the field of architectural design. The Open House Slovenia Award is given to encourage maximum public participation in understanding and deciding on selected projects. All the buildings presented in the festival programme were approved by a professional jury, while the general public and visitors cast their votes for the project of their choice and the award was given

to the team that collectively created each project—architects, engineers, contractors, clients and investors. This emphasised that the role of every individual was of utmost importance in the project and demonstrated how all participants in the process had to understand what constitutes a quality space and jointly adhere to this idea until the project's completion. Voting for the architectural projects presented at the festival took place from April 12 to May 5, 2024. Visitors of the festival had the opportunity to view more than 70 architectural projects and vote for the best project in the categories of Public Projects, Social and Business Projects, Housing Projects and, for the first time, Wood Projects.

Activities for volunteers



Volunteer excursions. Photo by Megi Pilko © Courtesy of AFRONT zavod za prostorsko inovativnost

Training of volunteers

Approximate number of attendees:

60

The training for volunteers consists of several informal meetings at the headquarters of Open House Slovenia. The training began with an introductory presentation where the organising team presented the values and mission of the festival, as well as how the festival was organised and the current phase of the organisation. Tasks for volunteers were introduced and those who had been with the festival for a longer time shared their experiences and tips. Each volunteer also received detailed instructions with all the necessary information to read in their own time. Before the start of the festival in April 2024, three introductory meetings were organised for new volunteers, as new members could join the team until March 2024. In these meetings, new volunteers were able to ask questions and get to know each other. After the introductory meeting, volunteers were kept up-to-date via email and a Facebook group. There was also a volunteer excursion to Graz, Austria, for the whole team at the beginning of March.

Volunteer excursions

Approximate number of attendees:

52

In March 2024, a second, one-day volunteer excursion abroad took place for the whole festival team. The trip involved visits to architectural projects in Graz (Austria). The excursion was conceived not only as a motivator for people to participate as volunteers in the Open House Slovenia team, but also as a reward for them since the excursion was free of charge. The trip allowed volunteers to understand the Open House festival values and goals, and their tasks as volunteers.

The excursion started in the morning with a bus trip to Graz, followed by visits around the city and to some architectural gems. There were two guided tours with local experts as a way to show volunteers good practices and give them the opportunity to visit some great architecture. In the afternoon, there was an architectural walk around the city centre



Volunteer excursions. Photo by Megi Pilko © Courtesy of AFRONT zavod za prostorsko inovativnost

where some of the buildings were presented by experienced, local volunteers. It was a great way to experience good architecture as a team and talk about the festival, give volunteers tips, answer their questions, discuss their responsibilities and present this year's festival programme. Overall, it was a really successful event that helped to grow the Open House Slovenia community and strengthen the festival's core values.

Additional gatherings for volunteers

Christmas gathering for volunteers

Approximate number of attendees:

30

Every year, the festival organises a Christmas gathering at the Open House Slovenia office to celebrate the previous year. It is a nice way to get to know each other, chat about plans for the next festival and grow the community. At the beginning of the event, there was a Q&A session about the festival for new volunteers, followed by time to relax and socialise.

Post-festival summer gathering for volunteers

Approximate number of attendees:

25

This year, a summer gathering was organised for the whole team. It was a great way to talk about the previous festival, gather the team's thoughts and experiences, discuss areas for improvement in person and ask for suggestions for the next Open House festival. The event took place outdoors as a picnic, with prepared food and drinks. This event helped to strengthen the festival's community, allowing volunteers to meet again in person, talk with each other, maybe become friends and give some suggestions for the next festival programme. The number of attendees wasn't very high as it happened during summer and some volunteers were busy finishing their exams, while others went on holiday. Nevertheless, it was a successful event for those that came.

Integration of the Open House Europe programme

Buildings and/or guided tours

Open House Slovenia 2024 had 23 buildings and/or guided tours from the festival's programme dedicated to showcasing the Open House Europe (OHEu) annual theme: Accessibility and Inclusion.

List of buildings:

1. 'Invisible Ljubljana' tour
2. Community Centre Golovec
3. Glavni trg 2

137

Approximate number of attendees

'Invisible Ljubljana' tour



Invisible Ljubljana © Courtesy of AFRONT zavod za prostorsko inovativnost



Invisible Ljubljana © Courtesy of AFRONT zavod za prostorsko inovativnost

Open House Slovenia collaborated with the 'Kralji ulice' (Eng. The Kings of the Street) association to prepare urban tours titled 'Invisible Ljubljana'. Three individuals, who were formerly unhoused, guided the tours and took visitors on an emotional journey through the overlooked spaces of the city, intertwined with the poignant life stories of their past. It was an opportunity to explore the hidden corners of the city, especially those that have been important to people who are unhoused. The guides highlighted the disappearance of public spaces, which have become increasingly commercialised and gentrified.

Some buildings where they had temporarily lived no longer existed and were replaced by luxury apartments. The tours aimed to mitigate potential stereotypes about people who are unhoused and shed light on the challenges encountered by marginalised groups, which often go unnoticed, and visitors were prompted to question the universality of public spaces.



Community centre © Courtesy of AFRONT zavod za prostorsko inovativnost

Community Centre Golovec

Community Centre Golovec is situated on the outskirts of Ljubljana in the neighbourhood of Štepanjsko naselje, one of the most densely populated areas of the city. The centre is available to various users including an elderly care centre, a youth organisation offering individuals development opportunities and support on their path to independence and sports clubs, among others. Together, these different communities use this new centre and demonstrate how quality architecture can help with community development and promoting quality living in more marginalised parts of the city that were previously neglected and problematic.



Glavni trg 2. Photo by Špela Koščak © Courtesy of AFRONT zavod za prostorsko inovativnost

Glavni trg 2

The Glavni trg 2 house has an interesting history and represents good practice in how municipalities could work to enable young families to live in quality designed spaces.

The house was first mentioned in 18th-century historical sources. In 1738, it was bought by the Abbot of Kostanjevica, Alexander, and completely renovated. Some of the paintings hanging in the building also date from this period. In 1795, the Fichtenau family bought the house and owned it until World War 2. After the war, the house was expropriated by the state and converted into social housing with commercial premises on the ground floor. A descendant of the Fichtenau family regained the house through The Denationalisation Act and, in 2016, donated it to the Municipality of Novo mesto. The municipality decided to rent out the building as social housing for young families, who were able to create their first home in this historic and well-designed piece of architecture.

Additional events and/or activities

Activities for family and children

Approximate number of attendees:

90

This year, Open House Slovenia collaborated for the first time with two organisations that work in the field of architecture and produce programmes for children and families—the Museum of Architecture and Design (MAO) and the non-governmental organisation Playful Architecture. Together, 3 tours/workshops were prepared for children and families: the workshop 'Let's build a LEGO City', a walk through Ljubljana with Playful Architecture, and a tour of Vurnik's public baths and swimming pool in Radovljica for local primary school children. The tours were really successful and visitors asked for these activities to be repeated in the next edition.

Deep House

Approximate number of attendees:

30



Deep house tour © Courtesy of AFRONT zavod za prostorsko inovativnost

Together with Cankarjev Dom—the main cultural centre in Ljubljana—Open House Slovenia offered festival visitors a different kind of tour: a soundwalk named ‘Deep House’. In the audio, the creators, Irena Pivka and Brane Zorman, included numerous quotes and thoughts of architects, politicians and cultural figures connected with the construction of the Cankarjev Dom building. The sound walk also incorporated poetry and scripts by selected artists. This subtle and semantically multilayered sound walk, which outlined the construction and architecture of the building in the context of the present, enriched the interested audience who were able to explore the sources of recordings sources and thus access a more in-depth knowledge about the building and its history.



Deep house tour © Courtesy of AFRONT zavod za prostorsko inovativnost

Different audiences at the local Open House festival

Open House Slovenia 2024 had 3 guided tours for English speakers that attracted 70 people.

There were 36 buildings that had access for people with mobility impairments. Additionally, 5 different buildings had a sign language interpreter.

Experience in attracting non-native participants

Tours in English were conducted in the capital, Ljubljana, as it has the most foreign tourists and foreign-speaking residents who might have been interested in exploring quality architecture under guidance. The Open House Slovenia website and printed programme were also available in English. To widen the festival's reach, the organising team reached out to Erasmus exchange students and found some groups for expats on Facebook. The festival also received direct inquiries from potential non-native visitors asking for suggestions about what to visit. As attracting non-Slovenian visitors proved quite difficult, for the next edition, the festival plans to connect more with tourist organisations in Ljubljana which could help to reach new audiences.

Experience in attracting people with special needs

In 2024, the festival launched a new Open House Slovenia digital platform with all information available in English. Buildings and tours in the festival programme were marked to indicate whether they were accessible for people with mobility impairments. The festival continued collaborating with the Institute for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing and invited their network and representatives to visit the festival. There was a Slovenian Sign Language interpreter present at 5 buildings from the festival's programme. Through this ongoing collaboration, it became apparent how difficult it is to attract and make people who have hearing loss feel welcome, as they are so marginalised in society. This inspires the organising team to continue collaborating with institutions that specialise in helping people with disabilities and creating opportunities for them to engage with quality architecture. Lastly, the festival once again worked with the University of the Third Age to encourage elderly people to visit the festival or participate as Open House Slovenia volunteers.

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Open House Stockholm 2024

Introduction

General information about the event

Event No.:	E7.31
Legal Name:	Open House Stockholm
Date:	4–6 October, 2024
Name:	Open House Stockholm
Number of buildings/areas included in the programme:	74
City:	Stockholm
Country:	Sweden
Duration:	3 days

Festival participants

In total, Open House Stockholm 2024 attracted 17000 attendees: 5100 men, 11730 women and 170 non-binary people.

In terms of volunteers, the festival had 22 men and 49 women; 71 volunteers in total.

Open House Stockholm 2024 was organised by 2 men and 5 women; 7 people in total.

The numbers of visitors are not exact but it is known from a survey, on-site estimations and registrations that approximately 69% of Open House Stockholm's visitors were women and 30% were men. Based on the survey, the remaining 1% did not want to disclose their gender.

Introduction

Open House Stockholm 2024 was a successful event, showcasing architectural and cultural landmarks with a particular focus on inclusion and accessibility. Over three days, 73 buildings and sites opened their doors to the public, offering unique insights into the city's architectural heritage and contemporary spaces. The festival was supported by 71 volunteers and organised by a core team of 7 individuals.

This year's central theme aligned with the Open House Europe (OHEu) annual theme, 'Accessibility and Inclusion'. The choice of theme was rooted in the belief that accessibility and inclusivity remain critical areas for development within Stockholm's public and cultural spaces. The festival aimed to provide all visitors, regardless of their background or ability, with opportunities to explore, learn and connect with the city. To support this goal, a translation function was added to the festival website, enabling more people to access information in English. Additionally, some tours were offered in English to include a broader demographic of non-Swedish speakers.

One of the primary challenges this year was establishing collaborations with organisations specialising in accessibility. While the festival successfully partnered with DHR—a Swedish organisation dedicated to supporting people with reduced mobility—finding additional organisations to collaborate with proved challenging. As a result, the festival placed a stronger emphasis on promoting inclusivity in other areas.

Recognising the issues of segregation within Stockholm, the festival aimed to reach audiences across various parts of the city, including suburban areas. This approach proved successful, as many visitors moved between the city centre and suburban sites, fostering a sense of unity and shared experience across diverse communities.

Among the festival's highlights, Mötesplats Mariatorget (Meeting Point Mariatorget) was a favourite among visitors. This former church, now operated by Stockholms Stadsmission, provides essential community services and promotes inclusivity. Its popularity likely stemmed from both the building's architectural beauty and its meaningful role in supporting Stockholm's communities. Additionally, the festival's guided bike tours attracted significant interest, allowing attendees to explore multiple locations at various times.

The festival organisers were particularly proud of establishing new partnerships and even though not many organisations could collaborate this year, the doors have been opened for future collaborations around inclusivity. The successful implementation of the website's translation feature and the engagement of diverse audiences across Stockholm were also significant accomplishments. Encouraging movement between the city centre and suburban areas created a positive impact, fostering welcoming and enriching environments in neighbourhoods that often face social challenges.

Additional activities



Guided bike tour 'Death in the City'. Photo by Ellen Norman © Courtesy of Open House Stockholm

Reference group meetings

Approximate number of attendees:
60

The reference group consists of key individuals with extensive networks and expertise in architecture and urban development. Each year, Open House Stockholm works closely with the reference group to shape a broad and inclusive festival programme, holding various meetings throughout the year. Guided by the ideas and insights generated during the previously mentioned initial workshop, the reference group strives to design a festival programme that reflects and enhances inclusivity and accessibility.

Guided bike tours

Approximate number of attendees:

135



Guided bike tour 'Death in the City'. Photo by Ellen Norman © Courtesy of Open House Stockholm

The 'OH! POPUP' bike tours were two of this year's highlights, offering unique, guided experiences led by Open House Stockholm's ambassador and cultural historian, Hampus Busk. Two tours were hosted: the first in early summer around Hammarby Sjö, where participants explored urban development and accessibility in city planning; the second, held in September, took cyclists through a mix of historic sites and new urban projects, beginning in Hagastaden and ending at Stadshusparken. These tours have become increasingly popular, drawing more participants each year, though numbers had to be limited for safety reasons. The tours offered a hands-on experience through unique and engaging storytelling, allowing people to connect with the city in new ways beyond the main festival weekend.

Building on the success of these tours, a guided bike tour was introduced during the festival for the first time, which was very appreciated. This tour began in the city centre and took participants to Järva, a suburban area in Stockholm and one of the 'focus' areas in city planning. The title, 'Death in the City', provided a historical perspective on how burial sites have shaped Stockholm's urban landscape and mirrored societal changes over time. Participants visited Norra Begravningsplatsen, one of Sweden's largest and most historic cemeteries, and finished at Järva Cemetery, Stockholm's largest cemetery project in a century, for a detailed tour led by the city's Cemetery Administration. The title and the connection between urban planning and cultural heritage offered participants a new perspective on the role of cemeteries in city development.

Activities for volunteers

Training of volunteers

During the first information meeting, volunteers received background information about Open House Stockholm, learning about its foundation and affiliation with Open House Europe. They also received details about this year's festival setup, including the number of showcased objects, dates and so on. After this, volunteers received training on the 2024 programme—its themes, web navigation and the general structure, including its geographical distribution—so they could feel familiar with the programme and the festival as a whole. There was also instruction on how to specifically welcome visitors with special needs.

Practical aspects were also covered, such as promotional products and the guidelines surrounding them, along with the roles volunteers were going to undertake during the festival. Various roles and general guidelines were discussed, outlining expectations and responsibilities.

Approximate number of attendees:

45

General tips were also provided, and different scenarios were discussed to address potential challenges, ensuring everyone felt comfortable and safe before the festival. The session also covered whom to contact in different situations. Furthermore, the process for scheduling shifts during the weekend and the associated rules were explained and demonstrated.

All this information was also distributed to volunteers via email and at the end of the meeting, there was an opportunity for questions on topics that might not have been covered. The meeting was held online via Zoom.

Team-building events

Before and after the festival, team-building events were organised with the project team and area managers. Held prior to the festival, the events delved deeper into their responsibilities and roles during the event and some architecture-related games were played

Approximate number of attendees:

15

for team-building purposes. In the post-festival meeting, everyone gathered again to evaluate how things went and to thank each other for their efforts during the festival.



Premiere event for volunteers. Photo by Natalie Kokkalis
© Courtesy of Open House Stockholm



Premiere event for volunteers. Photo by Natalie Kokkalis
© Courtesy of Open House Stockholm

Premiere event

During the premiere event, volunteers had the opportunity to meet in person for the first time. At this event, promotional products were distributed and volunteers had the chance to listen to speakers and network with other key individuals from Open House Stockholm. Volunteers also got to meet the exhibitor of the site that they were going to be volunteering at.

Approximate number of attendees:

40

SFX study visit

Approximate number of attendees:

35

Open House Stockholm continued its collaboration with SFX (Swedish for newly arrived professionals) in 2024. These SFX students, with backgrounds in architecture and engineering, had the opportunity to explore Open House Stockholm and participate in study visits to Stena Fastigheters headquarters and Stena Cowork. The addition of study visits and physical information meetings for SFX students continued from last year since they had been very much appreciated. SFX aims to provide these newly arrived, professionally trained individuals with insights into how the Swedish field and their respective professions function, ultimately reducing their time until employment. By engaging in the festival, these individuals expanded their professional networks within the Swedish industry. The event began with information about Open House Stockholm and details about volunteering, finishing with a guided tour.



SFX visit and information for volunteers © Courtesy of Open House Stockholm

Information was provided in both Swedish and English. The event itself was highly successful and well-received, with many of the SFX students becoming a part of Open House Stockholm 2024 as volunteers.



SFX visit and information for volunteers © Courtesy of Open House Stockholm



SFX visit and information for volunteers © Courtesy of Open House Stockholm

Thank-you event

The annual thank-you event for the festival's volunteers served as a heartfelt expression of gratitude and a means to grow unity within the group. The idea of the event stemmed from the recognition that volunteers are vital to the festival's success. This dedicated space allowed their contributions to be acknowledged and a sense of community to be built. As in previous years, the event featured a guided tour in the spirit of Open House, followed by a gathering with food and drinks.

Additional benefits

Many of the festival's volunteers are students building their resumes, so Open House Stockholm offers a certificate of participation that acknowledges their valuable contributions to the festival. This recognition is available to all volunteers, not just students. Upon request, a personalised certificate is provided that they can add to their resumes or portfolios to highlight their involvement in the festival.



PopUp event. Photo by Jens Aronsson © Courtesy of Open House Stockholm

Integration of the Open House Europe programme

Buildings and/or guided tours

Open House Stockholm 2024 had 19 buildings and/or guided tours from the festival's programme dedicated to showcasing the Open House Europe (OHEu) annual theme: Accessibility and Inclusion.

List of buildings:

1. Meetingpoint Mariatorget
2. 'Stockholm Möts'
3. Kista Cluster

5232

Approximate number
of attendees

Meetingpoint Mariatorget



Meetingpoint Mariatorget has been designed with accessibility and inclusion at its core. By transforming a historic church into a modern, welcoming community hub, people from all backgrounds are welcomed within its opened doors. The space hosts events and discussions on social issues, fostering an inclusive environment where diverse voices are heard. Its accessible layout and variety of programmes make it a place where everyone, regardless of ability or background, can participate, connect and feel a sense of belonging. A café further supports inclusion by providing affordable food options that benefit both the community and the environment.

Mötesplats Mariatorget. Photo by Joanna Messmer © Courtesy of Open House Stockholm



Mötesplats Mariatorget. Photo by Joanna Messmer © Courtesy of Open House Stockholm



Mötesplats Mariatorget. Photo by Joanna Messmer © Courtesy of Open House Stockholm

'Stockholm Möts'



'Stockholm Möts'. Photo by Alexander Donka © Courtesy of Open House Stockholm

'Stockholm Möts' by Alexander Donka was a self-guided audio tour that took participants through the queer history of Stockholm's Gamla Stan and Södermalm. By downloading an app, Open House Stockholm visitors could experience Stockholm's LGBTQ+ history through audio narratives linked to specific locations, including historic clubs, public squares and notable streets. Through this guided journey, one could discover queer stories from the early 1900s to the present day at their own pace.

This audio tour embodied the festival's theme of inclusion and accessibility by placing queer history in the context of the built environment and making it available to a broad audience.

Kista Cluster



Kista Square Garden. Photo by Jens Aronsson © Courtesy of Open House Stockholm

In 2024, Open House Stockholm focused on highlighting a cluster of sites to visit in the suburban areas of Kista and Järva as part of this year's programme. These areas, located on the outskirts of Stockholm, are central to Stockholm's urban planning strategy as they face significant social challenges. Open House Stockholm wanted to break down barriers between the inner city and the suburbs, fostering a positive approach that encouraged city residents to explore suburban areas while also hosting events to enhance the understanding of the built environment within these communities, inviting local residents to contribute to the dialogue.

In Kista, six diverse sites were showcased, including a cemetery, office spaces, residential areas with different ownership forms and student housing. This cluster contributed to the festival's theme of inclusion by promoting engagement with often overlooked areas, making architecture and urban spaces in Kista and Järva accessible to a wider audience.

Additional events and/or activities

Workshop on inclusion and accessibility in preparation for Open House Stockholm 2024

In preparation for Open House Stockholm 2024, a workshop was organised to gather several volunteers and key contributors from the board, reference group, ambassadors and project team to discuss strategies for implementing this year's Open House Europe theme.

The workshop focused on expanding the festival's reach and enhancing accessibility to engage a more diverse audience, both in the short and long term. Discussions centred on ways to make the festival more welcoming, inclusive and accessible.

Approximate number of attendees:
25



Workshop on 'Accessibility and Inclusion'. Photo by Joanna Messmer
© Courtesy of Open House Stockholm

A silent *dérive* in Vasastaden

The silent '*dérive*' (an aimless walk through city streets, that follows the whim of the moment) in Vasastaden was a unique, unstructured exploration that encouraged participants to engage with the city in a spontaneous way. Starting from Vasaparken's Yoga Pavilion, participants were guided through Vasastaden

Approximate number of attendees:
10

without predetermined stops, allowing the urban environment to direct the route. The *dérive* allowed participants to connect with the city on their terms, embracing diverse perspectives, fostering a sense of shared exploration and encouraging diverse discussions.

'How Do We Ensure the City is Accessible to Everyone?' event

Approximate number of attendees:
20



'How Do We Ensure the City is Accessible to Everyone_' event. Photo by Natalie Kokkalis © Courtesy of Open House Stockholm

Landskapslaget, an architectural firm with a focus on landscape architecture, opened the doors to their office in Stockholmsverken to host a presentation about how accessibility, safety and inclusion are central to their work in shaping the physical environment. The event invited visitors to explore their inspiring office space in the historic Stockholmsverken area while learning about designing in an accessible way for people with disabilities. This event aligned with the theme of accessibility and inclusion by actively promoting the principles of universal design and encouraging broader understanding and dialogue on how to create spaces that welcome everyone.

Fisksätra cluster

Approximate number of attendees:

60



Fisksätra cluster. Photo by NatalieKokkalis © Photo by Open House Stockholm



Fisksätra cluster. Photo by NatalieKokkalis © Photo by Open House Stockholm

Fisksätra, like the previously mentioned Kista district, was presented as a festival cluster in the suburbs of Stockholm, as it is also facing social challenges. During the festival, three sites were opened to the public in Fisksätra by Stena Fastigheter (one of the largest privately owned real estate companies in Sweden focusing on residential buildings and commercial office buildings), highlighting their commitment to revitalising this neighbourhood.

Visitors had the opportunity to explore 'Saltsjöblick', a newly completed condominium project, as well as to tour the soon-to-be-finished rental apartments in 'Sjölyckan'. Additionally, the 'Saltsjösten' project was presented, providing a preview of the living spaces designed for both elderly and young residents, promoting intergenerational community living.

Since the 1990s, Stena Fastigheter has managed over 2600 apartments in Fisksätra, modernising the iconic 1970s 'miljonprogram' buildings to meet contemporary sustainability goals. Their approach also extended beyond housing, as they own and manage essential community facilities, including the local school and community centre, which are central to Fisksätra's development.

Recently, the upgrade of Fisksätra Centrum brought new lighting, updated storefronts and improved public spaces, transforming it into a lively hub with shops, restaurants, a gym, healthcare facilities and a library. This effort helped create a safer, more inclusive environment, supporting both existing and new residents.

5 collective housing projects

Approximate number of attendees:

188

This year, five collective housing projects were opened up to the public, offering a unique glimpse into this community-focused way of living. Open House Stockholm has featured collective housing projects for several years, with the number of presented projects increasing at this year's festival. Collective housing aligns closely with the theme of accessibility and inclusion, as these projects foster community, reduce isolation, and create more accessible and affordable living options. Through shared spaces and collaborative living, they promote a supportive environment that meets the diverse needs of different people.

Unicorn and Täby Parks

Approximate number of attendees:

40

Täby Park, once home to the historic Täby Galopp racetrack, is now transforming into a vibrant neighbourhood with housing, parks and plazas. Located within is one of the key highlights from this year's festival—Enhörningsparken (Unicorn Park), a playful and inclusive park designed to engage children and families. Enhörningsparken and the surrounding green spaces reflect Täby Park's focus on inclusivity by creating accessible, inviting areas that foster community connection, aligning with Open House Stockholm's goal to showcase sites in the festival programme for all ages.



Unicorn and Täby Parks. Photo by Gustav Wändell © Courtesy of Open House Stockholm

Online activities

Participation in three episodes of the 'Urbanistica' podcast

Episode 1

Attracted approx. 400 listeners

Joanna Messmer, project manager for Open House Stockholm, and Niklas Svensson, chair of the Open House Stockholm board, recorded an episode on inclusion and the importance of dialogue between decision-makers and the public.

Link:

<https://open.spotify.com/episode/0hEiHJO-3zwBw8rrxvgikVx?si=f8db551d15df409a>

Episode 3

Attracted approx. 1500 listeners

Joanna Messmer recorded an episode with Mustafa Sherif discussing this year's theme and highlighting some of the sites from the 2024 programme in the lead-up to the festival.

Link:

<https://open.spotify.com/episode/296x1Zfs-GrOZ4Uc3nN7eeH?si=cdad2a84b0e14157>

Episode 2

Attracted approx. 500 listeners and 1143 views on Instagram

Joanna Messmer and Martynas Germanavičius, head of Open House Europe, discussed the international collaboration project.

Link:

<https://open.spotify.com/episode/48nHgZBz-RAor9GnLGE7Qey?si=44ab0efbf5734317>

Different audiences at the local Open House festival

Open House Stockholm 2024 had 13 guided tours for English speakers. The festival had 40 wheelchair-accessible spaces

Experience in attracting non-native participants

This year, efforts were made to include non-native speakers. The festival organisers encouraged all tour guides to offer at least one of their tours in English, however, most of the guides were not comfortable speaking English. From the tours that were available in English, visitors provided feedback that they were largely appreciated, so guides will be encouraged again next year to conduct more tours in English. Interestingly, when visitors spontaneously requested that the tour be given in English, guides were generally flexible, often adapting the tour on the spot or dividing groups into English- and Swedish-speaking tours.

A key achievement of Open House Stockholm 2024 was the addition of an English translation feature on the festival's website. This had been an aspiration for several years and through working with the Open House Europe consortium, it was finally made a reality. With the website available in English, non-Swedish-speaking visitors were able to easily access information and feel more included in the festival.

Experience in attracting people with special needs

As part of the effort to make this year's festival more accessible to people with disabilities, the organising team reached out to several key organisations such as the Swedish National Association of the Visually Impaired (SRF), the Swedish Association of Hard of Hearing People (HRF) and universities with interpreter programmes, among others. While these organisations didn't respond immediately confirming their participation in the 2024 festival, discussions were successfully opened and positive responses were received about future collaborations. Although the festival didn't see as many collaborations as hoped for, foundational relationships have begun to be established to continue this important work beyond 2024. As a result, the festival needed to focus more on inclusion rather than accessibility.

A core aspect of Open House Stockholm's approach was to discuss the theme of accessibility with all exhibitors/building owners, encouraging them to think of ways to make their sites more accessible—not only for the festival but as a general commitment. By initiating these conversations, the festival hopes this year's theme will inspire continued improvements in accessibility.

In addition, the festival began a partnership with Centrum för AMP (a Centre for Public Spaces), with whom a workshop on inclusion and accessibility has been planned. Centrum för AMP is an organisation dedicated to developing a Swedish model for public spaces to increase safety and reduce crime. Their model, known as the AMP model (Business and Citizen Place Model), is designed to foster inclusive and safe public spaces. This workshop will invite young people and decision-makers to engage in dialogue regarding what makes a safe space from different perspectives.

The efforts to make Open House Stockholm more inclusive this year taught several valuable lessons, mainly that building strong partnerships and raising awareness among organisations takes time. The festival organisers had initially expected quicker engagement but this experience highlighted the importance of steady relationship-building for effective collaboration.

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2024

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Open House Tallinn 2024

Introduction

General information about the event

Event No.:	E7.28
Legal Name:	MTÜ Eesti Arhitektuurikeskus
Date:	12–13 October, 2024
Name:	Open House Tallinn
Number of buildings/areas included in the programme:	41
City:	Tallinn
Country:	Estonia
Duration:	2 days

Festival participants

In total, Open House Tallinn 2024 attracted 9209 attendees: 3149 men, 5903 women, 89 non-binary people and 68 people who preferred not to answer.

In terms of volunteers, the festival had 20 men and 158 women; 178 volunteers in total.

Open House Tallinn 2024 was organised by 2 men and 7 women; 9 people in total.

The attendee statistic is based on the number of attendees (9209) and the survey answers' percentages are based on 1821 responses.

Introduction

Open House Tallinn 2024 took place on 12–13 October and marked the sixth edition of the festival, drawing over 9200 participants to tours, workshops and lectures over the two-day event. A total of 178 volunteers contributed to organising Open House Tallinn. The programme featured 41 buildings and 18 special events, with tours conducted in Estonian, English, Russian and, for the first time, Estonian Sign Language. A special tactile tour for visitors with visual impairments was also introduced.

The theme of this year's festival aligned with the Open House Europe (OHEu) annual theme: Accessibility and Inclusion. Open House Tallinn expanded its offerings to include more events for people with disabilities as a pilot initiative to create a more inclusive community and ensure architecture is accessible to everyone. Many activities were tied to the theme of inclusivity, exploring how to design an urban landscape that caters to all. Mini-lectures and speciality tours addressed various urban elements and topics to encourage public engagement with the concept of inclusive spaces.

The main festival programme introduced several new buildings while revisiting popular locations from previous years. This year, Open House Tallinn expanded beyond the central district to include more neighbourhoods. Highlights included the Nõmme Elevator, Kadriorg Orangery and Okasroosikese Castle. Special tours and activities were highly popular,

including evening lighting design tours, garage tours, workshops and mini-lectures on urban space and indoor orienteering.

The festival took pride in making itself more inclusive for participants and raising awareness about creating urban environments that benefit everyone. Open House Tallinn also expanded its collaboration with various organisations and institutions. The volunteer programme continued to be part of a course at the Estonian Academy of Arts and involved museums, engineers, scientists and smaller associations that contributed their expertise to the festival's themes.

This year's edition was the largest yet in terms of the scale of the programme, diversity, public participation, collaborations with partners and engagement from volunteers. The festival organisers gained valuable insights into improving accessibility and managing partnerships with a wide range of stakeholders, all the while striving to foster inclusivity, both in public participation and organisational efforts.

Additional activities



Lighting Design workshop. Photo by Kevin Loigu © Courtesy of Open House Tallinn



Lighting Design workshop. Photo by Kevin Loigu © Courtesy of Open House Tallinn

Lighting design workshops for young people and adults

This workshop encouraged participants to reflect on the role of lighting in their everyday surroundings. Even a small change in home lighting can significantly impact how people perceive space, influence their mood and shape the overall ambience. Through hands-on activities, participants experienced the transformative power and possibilities of lighting design—learning when and why to use different layers of lighting and what parameters to consider, such as light distribution, colour temperature and intensity. There was also a discussion on effective lighting control methods.

Approximate number of attendees:
20

This event served as an engaging way to introduce elements of architecture to the public. The workshops were organized by the Estonian Lighting Designers Association, and the topic of influencing space with light proved to be both captivating and relevant.

Indoor orienteering

Approximate number of attendees:

200



Krulli district. Photo by Evert Palmets © Courtesy of Eesti Arhitektuurikeskus MTÜ

In collaboration with a local orienteering club, this event featured indoor orienteering in the Krulli Quarter. Participants were provided with a map marked with points to navigate through in sequence, offering a unique way to explore this historic district. Using the map, they could move through the former steel casting workshop, the model warehouse and the blacksmith's workshop. This event was successful as it provided a hands-on, engaging experience for participants to discover the Krulli Quarter in a memorable way.

Speciality tours of buildings

Approximate number of attendees:
113



St. Nicholas Church. Photo by Karolin Linamäe © Courtesy of Eesti Arhitektuurikeskus MTÜ

Speciality tours were led by experts with extensive knowledge of specific buildings and areas, enriching the festival programme by promoting dialogue between the public and specialists for more meaningful connections. This type of interaction was unique, as most of the festival's guides were volunteers who might not have possessed specialised expertise.

The tours featured a visit to St. Nicholas Church, where attendees could experience its newly installed, elegant glass elevator and learn about sacral art. Another tour highlighted the newly renovated Architecture Institute of Tallinn University of Applied Sciences, showcasing modern study spaces designed to support contemporary teaching methods in architecture. Additionally, a tour of the Kopli area delved into the rich and diverse history of the Kopli peninsula, offering insights into unique buildings, local stories and the changing landscape of the neighbourhood.

Speciality tours on architectural topics

Approximate number of attendees:
210



Vana-Kalamaja street. Photo by Pille Väljataga © Courtesy of Eesti Arhitektuurikeskus MTÜ



Kalamaja garage stories. Photo by Karolin Linamäe © Courtesy of Eesti Arhitektuurikeskus MTÜ

This selection of speciality tours was conducted by experts with extensive knowledge of various architectural topics. These tours enriched the festival programme by fostering dialogue between the public and specialists, enabling deeper and more meaningful connections. Many of these tours were designed around the principles of creating a more inclusive urban environment.

One notable tour focused on Vana-Kalamaja Street, discussing street space innovation and the creation of spaces that suit everyone, following the '8 to 80' principle (referring to streets and places that can be used independently by people from 8 to 80 years old). Another tour explored the historical and cultural significance of garages and their evolution into an integral part of urban life. The evening tour on lighting design drew attention to the impact of lighting on the perception of nighttime urban spaces. Additionally, the tour of the Krulli Quarter delved into the construction details of historic buildings, examining when and how these structures were built, key elements to observe, building safety assessments and methods for revitalising industrial heritage.

Activities for volunteers

Training of volunteers

Approximate number of attendees:

105

The event was structured as an informational day, featuring a training session and a gathering for all volunteers. It began with a presentation outlining updates and general information about the festival to familiarise volunteers with the specifics for 2024. This was followed by a session detailing volunteer-specific information, tasks, processes, tools, and tips from previous years. The agenda also included an inspiring session on effective guiding and managing of responsibilities. The event concluded with lunch and team meetups based on assigned locations.

The training successfully prepared volunteers for the festival, minimised information gaps and fostered stronger connections between organisers and volunteers, as well as among the volunteers themselves. The main challenge was to create a concise event that provided maximum value. In retrospect, while all information was presented uniformly, future training sessions could benefit from being segmented to better focus on the specific roles of each volunteering position.



Volunteer Training. Photo by KevinLoigu © Courtesy of Eesti Arhitektuurikeskus MTÜ

Site-specific trainings

Approximate number of attendees:

2-6 per location



Volunteer Training. Photo by KevinLoigu © Courtesy of Eesti Arhitektuurikeskus MTÜ

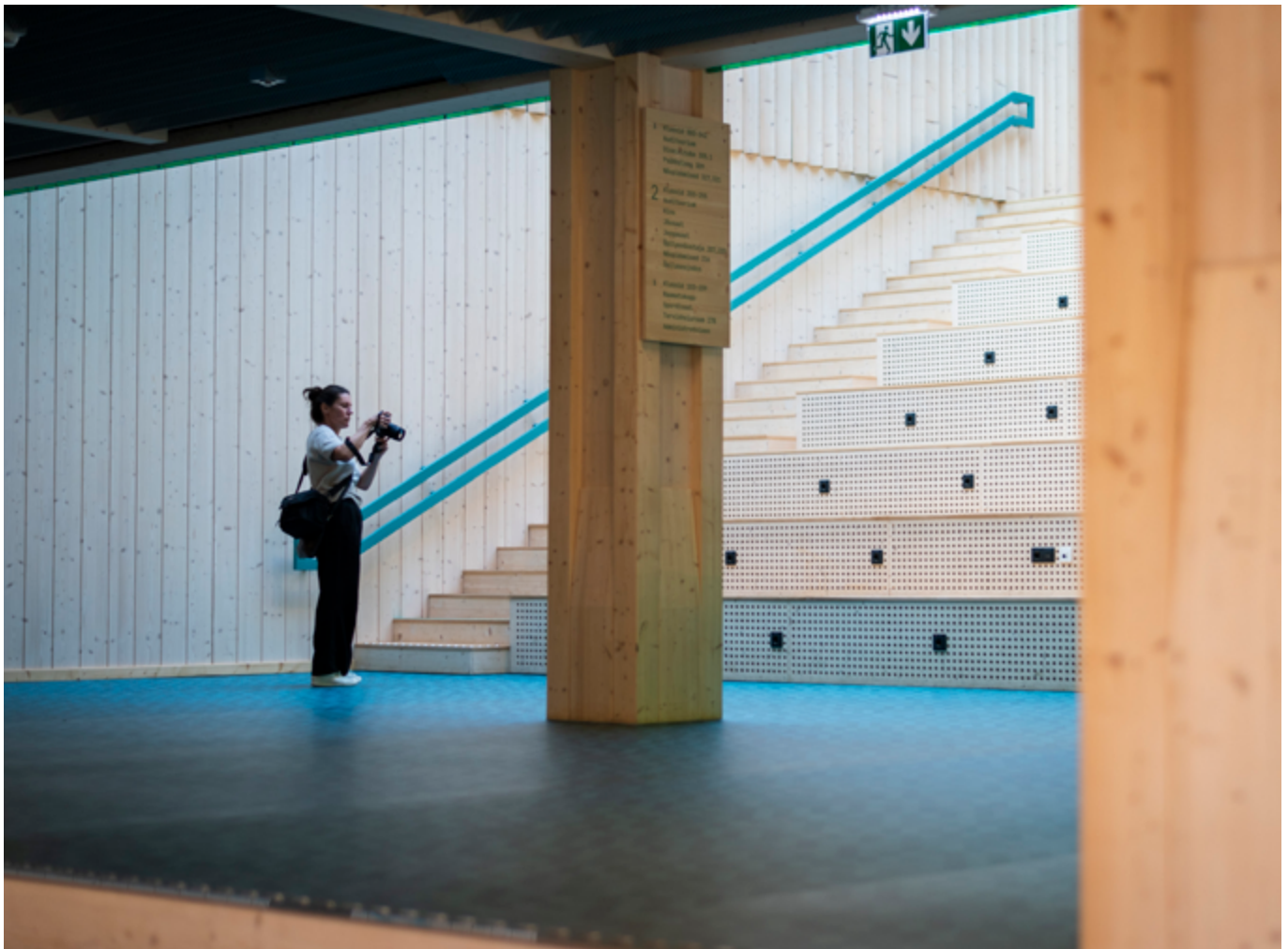
One to two training sessions were conducted at each location where volunteers were going to guide public tours. These sessions featured specialists, managers and workers from the sites who shared the stories, history and key functionalities of the locations. The training was often recorded for later review. Volunteer guides used these sessions as the foundation for creating their tour materials. Such training

was essential for guides to familiarise themselves with the venues and plan their tour routes effectively. The main challenge remained in ensuring architects were able to participate in these sessions. Although they were sometimes involved in other ways, having architects present at the training would make the sessions more engaging.

Photography workshop

Approximate number of attendees:

8



Photography workshop. Photo by Anneliis Tomingas © Courtesy of Eesti Arhitektuurikeskus MTÜ

Open House Tallinn aims to capture high-quality content of the festival and capture photos at every location. However, covering all locations with professional photographers is challenging, so help from volunteers is necessary. Since their abilities vary, training sessions were organised with the festival's professional photographer for those with less experience. The purpose was to provide tips and build the volunteers' confidence in photographing the tours.

The training sessions were conducted in spaces filled with people to simulate the setting of the tours. The training began with an introduction and photography tips, followed by a practical photo-taking session. At the end, participants uploaded 5-10 of their photos for review, and the professional photographer provided feedback. This was the first time such training was conducted, which turned out to be vital not only for the festival organisers to assess the skill level of the volunteers but also to improve the quality of volunteers' photos, as they might have been new to event photography.

Thank-you event

Approximate number of attendees:

90



Thank you event. Photo by Kevin Loigu © Courtesy of Eesti Arhitektuurikeskus MTÜ

The festival's final thank-you event for volunteers served to wrap up the festival, express gratitude to all participants, share interesting stories and discuss future volunteering opportunities. This event has become a tradition, with new elements added each year to keep it fresh. This time, it featured a stand-up comedian, though the format remained flexible and non-standardised. The event was successful, as it was concise and included essential components that fostered connections among attendees.

One area for future improvement is ensuring volunteers have more time to talk with the organising team. Currently, the team is often busy with event management tasks, limiting their ability to interact. There is a debate about holding this event separately or at the end of the last day, as each approach has its benefits. Additionally, with the festival's growing community of volunteers, hosting the event in Open House Tallinn's own spaces is becoming increasingly difficult due to limited space.

Additional benefits



Thank you event. Photo by Kevin Loigu © Courtesy of Eesti Arhitektuurikeskus MTÜ

Festival volunteers and team members often have limited time to visit buildings outside of their assigned locations. As a result, exclusive tours were planned for volunteers during non-festival times.

In previous years, small businesses have provided treats or vouchers for volunteers, but these have seen limited use. Based on this feedback, the festival opted not to include them this year. Instead, the focus was on enhancing the quality of the events and merchandise offered to volunteers.

This year, volunteers were once again provided with shirts featuring the most popular design to date, winter gloves, tote bags and honey. These items were carefully selected to accommodate colder weather and promote health, and the volunteers responded positively to these well-targeted gifts.

Integration of the Open House Europe programme

Buildings and/or guided tours

Open House Tallinn 2024 had 37 buildings and/or guided tours, and 12 additional activities from the festival's programme dedicated to showcasing the Open House Europe (OHEu) annual theme: Accessibility and Inclusion.

539

Approximate number of attendees

List of buildings:

1. Experimental tour for visitors with visual impairments by the Estonian Academy of Arts
2. Pelgulinna State Gymnasium
3. 'Street Space' tour

Experimental tour for visitors with visual impairments by the Estonian Academy of Arts



EKA. Photo by Kevin Loigu © Courtesy of Eesti Arhitektuurikeskus MTÜ



EKA. Photo by Kevin Loigu © Courtesy of Eesti Arhitektuurikeskus MTÜ

The Estonian Academy of Arts (EKA) proudly offered a guided architecture tour designed specifically for visitors with visual impairments. This immersive experience combined detailed descriptive narration with tactile exploration, allowing participants to engage deeply with the academy's building and creative works. Visitors were able to touch and feel various materials, artworks and architectural models, gaining a meaningful understanding of the space and its design. Fully wheelchair accessible and available in English and Russian, this tour exemplified EKA's commitment to inclusivity, creating a space where everyone was allowed to connect with the world of architecture.

EKA's experimental tour challenged the conventional ways of experiencing architecture by inviting sighted participants to explore the building with their vision obscured. Modelled after the tour for visitors with visual impairments, this sensory experiment relied on touch and descriptive narration to uncover the nuances of the building's design and artistic elements. Participants were guided through materials, prints and student creations, offering them a unique, non-visual perspective on architecture. While innovative, this tour proved less appealing to the sighted community, underscoring the distinct experiences and needs of diverse audiences.

Pelgulinna State Gymnasium



Pelgulinna State Gymnasium. Photo by Kaisa_Kaer © Courtesy of Eesti Arhitektuurikeskus MTÜ

This building was chosen because of its innovative approach to blending architecture, community and learning. As one of the largest wooden buildings in Estonia, its distinctive three-dimensional laminated timber facade invited tactile and visual exploration, making it accessible and engaging for all visitors. The integration of living trees inside the building bridged indoor and outdoor spaces, fostering a unique, natural connection. The surrounding park and activity area encouraged outdoor lessons and community interaction, reinforcing inclusivity and open access. The centrepiece, a freeform wooden staircase, symbolised a space where everyone was able to find their own path and way of participating. With its bold architectural vision and focus on creating a unifying, flexible environment, the gymnasium exemplified an educational and cultural space designed for diverse, inclusive engagement, aligning perfectly with the programme's goals. Tours were conducted in 4 languages at this location: Estonian, English, Russian and Estonian Sign Language.

'Street Space' tour



Vana-Kalamaja street. Photo by Pille Väljataga © Courtesy of Eesti Arhitektuurikeskus MTÜ

This tour focused on street space innovation, featuring an engaging discussion and walk along the renewed Vana-Kalamaja Street. Participants walked through the area while exploring the principles and practical aspects of creating contemporary street spaces that cater to diverse needs. The discussion emphasised the types of streets required by inhabitants, and how to design spaces that not only facilitate movement but also provide areas for relaxation and social interaction, adhering to the '8-80 principle'—a design approach ensuring that public spaces are accessible and enjoyable for both 8-year-olds and 80-year-olds. The tour delved into the process behind the renovation of Vana-Kalamaja Street, offering insights into its development and the transformative impact on the local urban environment.

The Vana-Kalamaja Street tour was selected as an example of accessibility and inclusion in the urban environment, showcasing how modern, well-planned street spaces can be designed to serve people of all ages and abilities. This event underscored the importance of community-oriented and climate-conscious planning in creating public spaces that promote safety, accessibility and social connection.

Additional events and/or activities

Workshop for young people

Approximate number of attendees:

6

The 'Lighting Design Workshop for Young People—My Own Room' was an interactive event that encouraged young participants to reflect on lighting in their everyday surroundings. The workshop highlighted how even small adjustments to home lighting can significantly impact spatial perception, mood and the overall ambience of a room. Participants were invited to create a vision of the most important space to them—their bedroom.

The objective of the workshop was to inspire each participant to think critically about how they could create an atmosphere that suited their personal needs and preferences within the home environment. By teaching young people about the impact of lighting on well-being and safety, the event fostered greater awareness of how thoughtful design can enhance living spaces.

This workshop included and actively engaged young people, empowering them with practical skills and knowledge. By involving young participants, the event underscored the importance of designing accessible, customisable spaces that cater to all age groups, promoting a sense of safety and belonging through informed, intentional design.



Lighting Design workshop. Photo by Kevin Loigu © Courtesy of Eesti Arhitektuurikeskus MTÜ

Mini-lectures

Approximate number of attendees:

35 each



Mini lectures. Photo by Kevin Loigu © Courtesy of Eesti Arhitektuurikeskus MTÜ

These lectures were conducted by experts and practitioners in fields related to architecture and urban space, who shared their knowledge and experiences. These lectures introduced a variety of issues, ideas and aspects related to building a more inclusive and accessible urban environment for all. Through different concepts and topics, the goal was to highlight the festival's annual theme. Additionally, these lectures will be made available online and subtitled in both English and Estonian for broader accessibility.

1. Elo Kiivet: 'Inclusive City'

This mini-lecture explored thought-provoking questions such as 'Who owns the city?' and 'What does universal design mean?'. The discussion delved into the essence of creating spaces that cater to everyone, emphasising inclusivity and accessibility in urban environments. The concept of universal design was unpacked as an approach to space-making that ensures usability for people of all ages, abilities and backgrounds, moving beyond mere compliance to fostering genuine inclusivity.

2. Martin Haamer: 'The 15-Minute City—What It Is and How to Achieve It'

The topic of Carlos Moreno's '15-minute city' concept, which has been included in some form in almost every modern city's development plan, was discussed in this mini-lecture. Examining how different cities have implemented the concept, the lecture highlighted the success stories and main challenges of bringing the concept to life. It also questioned whether the future of urban planning should rely solely on the idea of the 15-minute city or if the concept should be approached more broadly.

3. Toomas Paaver: 'Existing Space as the Basis for Spatial Design'

This mini-lecture covered the topic of how understanding existing elements enriches the creation of new spaces. It included a focus on both interior and exterior spaces and, in particular, their combined impact on the user.

4. Endrik Mänd: 'Parkvald—A Community Slowing Down'

Exploring what occurs when suburban sprawl can no longer expand but re-urbanisation is not viable for the community, this mini-lecture posed the question of whether choosing to forgo urban expansion and sidestep the challenges of declining settlements is a privilege accessible only to a few or an unattainable goal.

5. Kristi Grišakov: 'The Green City'

Addressing the issue of urban environments often being described as concrete jungles and barren landscapes, where nature is only present in maintained parks or street trees, this mini-lecture discussed why it was essential to rapidly transform urban spaces into significantly greener areas. Various strategies and opportunities for both urban planners and individual residents to help bring nature back into the city were reviewed.

Activities at the Krulli Quarter

Approximate number of attendees:

225



Krulli district. Photo by Evert Palmets © Courtesy of Eesti Arhitektuurikeskus MTÜ

During the festival, an indoor orienteering activity took place in the historic Krulli Quarter in collaboration with the TON orienteering club. Participants were given a map with marked points to visit in sequence, providing a unique opportunity to explore the historic quarter from a different perspective. Using the map, attendees navigated through the former steel casting hall, model warehouse and blacksmith's workshop.

Additionally, there was an opportunity to join a tour focused on the constructions within the Krulli Quarter. This tour was led by civil engineers, who introduced the historical buildings and shared insights about their structures—when and how they were built, key aspects to notice, safety assessments and methods to help revive industrial heritage.

This activity was selected to showcase accessibility and inclusion in the urban environment by encouraging diverse participation and offering an interactive way to learn about and engage with the city's architectural history. Orienteering also served as an engaging way to include more activities in urban spaces, making them more inviting for different communities.

Tour for children

Approximate number of attendees:

10



Kopli Tour. Photo by Pille Väljataga © Courtesy of Eesti Arhitektuurikeskus MTÜ

A tour was organised for children to discover the shapes and forms of Kopli, designed to spark curiosity and engagement. Participants were treated to a mix of mythical and real stories about Kopli's vibrant and colourful past. The tour included visits to local spots such as Kase Park, where children explored dedicated play areas, and a house known for having a resident fox. This experience was enriched with historical tidbits, playful interactions and captivating stories from history, creating a balance between learning and fun.

The tour was tailored for children and their adult companions, encouraging families to connect with their urban environment in an enjoyable and educational way. It highlighted the importance of involving children and young people in exploring the urban landscape, fostering a sense of community and appreciation for the city's heritage.

Speciality tour about inclusive urban environments

Approximate number of attendees:

87



Kalamaja garage stories. Photo by Karolin Linamäe
© Courtesy of Eesti Arhitektuurikeskus MTÜ



Kalamaja garage stories. Photo by Karolin Linamäe
© Courtesy of Eesti Arhitektuurikeskus MTÜ

This tour provided an in-depth exploration of the diverse range of garages found in modern Tallinn, highlighting their historical and cultural significance. Participants were guided through examples spanning from distinguished 20th-century structures to typical Soviet-era garage complexes. The tour showcased the multifaceted roles these garages play today, ranging from parking and storage to creative workshops, hobby spaces and thriving small businesses.

The event began at the Tallinn City Museum with the exhibition 'Garaaž. Гараж. Garage.' and concluded at the Kalamaja Museum's garage kitchen, offering visitors an engaging journey through the evolution of these structures and their integration into urban life.

By examining the transformation of garages from purely functional spaces to diverse, community-oriented hubs, the tour showcased how adaptable urban spaces can cater to a variety of needs and interests. This demonstrated how inclusive design and adaptive reuse can create more accessible and engaging spaces within the city, enriching community life and supporting different activities and social interactions.

Different audiences at the local Open House festival



EKA. Photo by Mildeberg © Courtesy of Eesti Arhitektuurikeskus MTÜ

Open House Tallinn 2024 had 59 guided tours for English speakers that attracted 1244 people. Additionally, 43 guided tours in Russian attracted 1231 participants and 6 tours in Estonian Sign Language attracted 65 people. There were 8 additional activities and events organised for people with special needs. Open House Tallinn had 15 locations with wheelchair-accessible tours.

Experience in attracting non-native participants

To ensure inclusivity, non-native language tours have been offered since the start of Open House Tallinn. These tours are typically organised at confirmed locations selected based on a combination of availability, potential popularity and the presence of local guides fluent in the required languages. All festival communication—including posts, website articles, newsletters and press releases—was provided in both Estonian and English to accommodate an international audience. Additionally, the festival reached out to local Russian-language media outlets, organising interviews for Russian-speaking volunteers to share their experiences. This approach helped attract audiences from minority groups, and the media response was favourable to volunteers.

Feedback indicated tours in both English and Russian were popular; however, the primary challenge was a shortage of Russian-speaking guides to meet the demand for Russian-language tours.

For tours in Estonian Sign Language, the festival partnered with organisations that support individuals with disabilities and shared information through their networks. Feedback from attendees was positive, although, it became clear that outreach efforts should start earlier to accommodate planning needs. Another issue encountered was non-sign-language speakers reserving spots on these tours but not attending, thereby limiting availability for those the tours were designed to support. In the future, these tours will be separated from the rest of the programme to achieve better attendance.

Experience in attracting people with special needs



EKA. Photo by Pille Väljataga © Courtesy of Eesti Arhitektuurikeskus MTÜ

Open House Tallinn introduced three accessibility initiatives this year: wheelchair-accessible tours with priority access, tours in Estonian Sign Language and a specially designed tour for visitors with vision loss. The festival collaborated with organisations that support people with disabilities to refine its communication approach and share event information through their channels. The Open House Tallinn 2024 online programme included filters to highlight wheelchair-accessible and sign-language-interpreted tours, and printed materials also prominently displayed this information. Another collaboration allowed for the creation of a filmed invitation to tours in Estonian Sign Language, which was shared by the national media for the deaf community. The tour for visitors with vision loss was a descriptive, specialised tour led by experts in the field, serving as an experimental offering.

Key takeaways from 2024 included the need to begin communication and scheduling for these tours several months in advance, as people with disabilities tend to plan activities early. Although the communication channels of organisations supporting individuals with disabilities were used, it was also necessary to further enhance the clarity of Open House Tallinn's communication and improve the accessibility features of the festival's website.

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2024

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Open House Thessaloniki 2024

Introduction

General information about the event

Event No.:	E7.7
Legal Name:	OPEN CHAOUS GKRIS
Date:	23-24 November, 2024
Name:	Open House Thessaloniki
Number of buildings/areas included in the programme:	70 Buildings, 1 walking tour, 28 creative spaces
City:	Thessaloniki
Country:	Greece
Duration:	11 days (2 days for the main event, the rest for parallel events)

In total, Open House Thessaloniki 2024 attracted 9681 attendees: 3712 men, 5874 women and 95 non-binary people.

In terms of volunteers, the festival had 82 men and 413 women; 495 volunteers in total.

Open House Thessaloniki 2024 was organised by 7 women.

Introduction

The main programme of Open House Thessaloniki took place on Saturday, November 23, and Sunday, November 24, with parallel activities beginning on November 16. Thousands of visitors had the opportunity to explore 70 buildings through free guided tours led by 500 volunteers and to discover the city's contemporary architectural and historical heritage. The event focused on the themes of accessibility and inclusion, highlighting the need for designs that respect diversity and ensure equal opportunities for all.

The programme featured various activities emphasising accessibility, inclusion and sustainability. Visitors could explore architectural highlights through guided tours of both modern and historic buildings, online events such as live-streamed tours, and exhibitions showcasing innovative ideas. Some of the accessibility initiatives included tactile maps for individuals with visual impairments and digital resources that allowed people to participate remotely. These efforts ensured that everyone could enjoy and learn from the event, fostering a deeper appreciation for inclusive design.

In addition to the tours, Open House Thessaloniki encouraged engagement through creative competitions and interactive activities. 'Open Photo' and 'Open Map' contests invited participants to share their experiences and memories, while the 'Building Futures Together' and 'Prohibitive Tape' exhibitions highlighted themes such as sustainability and social inclusion. The 'Open Office' video series continued to grow and provided insights into the architecture profession through interviews with established and emerging architects. The event wrapped up with a celebratory party, bringing together volunteers, participants and visitors to mark its conclusion.

Additional activities



'Made in Thessaloniki' at Artwo. Photo by Nektarios Nanos
© Courtesy of Open House Greece



Open Walk_ Limani. Photo by Christos Bintanakis
© Courtesy of Open House Greece

Made In Thessaloniki (16–17 November)

This parallel event, a well-loved tradition of Open House Thessaloniki, brought the public closer to production processes and techniques—modern and traditional—used in creating various products. Visitors toured production spaces, observed different stages of processes and interacted with creators and producers. These free tours required no reservation and offered a unique glimpse into Thessaloniki's creative industries.

Open Tours (23–24 November)

The main event of Open House Thessaloniki 2024 offered free tours of 70 buildings and spaces, both public and private. Participants explored historical and contemporary sites, including residences, offices, cultural landmarks and monuments, with the guidance of 500 volunteers. These tours highlighted the architectural and cultural value of Thessaloniki's diverse structures.

Live-streamed tours (22-23 November)

This online initiative featured live Instagram tours of 2 selected buildings, allowing the public to experience the event virtually. The videos remain available as reels on the official Open House Thessaloniki Instagram account.



'Open Office'_ K-Architects. Photo by Pheno © Courtesy of Open House Greece

Open Office (Premiered on 25th November)

This online tradition showcased the profession of architecture through interviews with prominent and emerging architects in Thessaloniki. Participating offices, such as Ark4Lab of Architecture and K-Architects, shared insights about their work and workspaces. These videos premiered on the Open House Thessaloniki YouTube channel and remain accessible online.

Exhibitions:



Prohibitive Tape Exhibition at Sfageia. Photo by Anastasia Dossa
© Courtesy of Open House Greece



Prohibitive Tape Exhibition. Photo by Sfageia Georgia Kasapi
© Courtesy of Open House Greece

‘Building Futures Together’ (15-24 November)

This exhibition, hosted at the PINAKOTHEKE Gallery, featured visual stories from 12 Open House events across Europe, focusing on sustainability in architecture. Visitors explored creative submissions including sketches, photos and videos, which highlighted how architecture builds sustainable futures. The exhibition’s opening event also marked the launch of Open House Thessaloniki 2024.

‘Prohibitive Tape’ (23-24 November)

At the Sfageia building (the Old Thessaloniki Slaughterhouse), artist Alexandros Kapetanou presented an installation using red-and-white warning tape to reinterpret symbols of exclusion. Through intricate, hand-tied knots, the exhibition explored themes of prohibition, boundaries and human experience.

Competitions:

Open Photo (23/11-01/12):

This photography competition, held on Instagram, invited visitors to share their event experiences. Winners received prizes such as

Instagram stories contest for volunteers (23/10-24/11):

A competition where volunteers were invited to post stories on Instagram from the event's preparation.

Open Your Map (23/11-01/12):

Visitors created personal maps, filled with stamps of locations they visited, and were invited to upload creative images of their maps to Instagram for a chance to win a prize, sponsored by Kleemann.

Open call for visual stories (16/11-16/12):

Participants were invited to submit creative works based on this year's Open House Europe (OHEu) annual theme, 'Accessibility and Inclusion', for a chance to win a trip in Europe.

Open Vote (23/11-01/12):

Attendees voted for their favourite tours and their respective volunteer guides were awarded certificates and commemorative gifts.

The 2024 programme concluded with a celebratory party on 24th November, hosted at Epavli Marokkou, bringing volunteers and attendees together for a memorable night.

Activities for volunteers



Training meeting with Group Coordinators. Photo by Katerina Doudoumi © Courtesy of Open House Greece



Training meeting with Group Coordinators. Photo by Katerina Doudoumi © Courtesy of Open House Greece

Training of volunteers

Every year, the festival receives many applications from prospective volunteers. The volunteers of Open House Thessaloniki become a large group during rehearsals with their team, at the info point and meetings, with their experience culminating in the closing party.

On the 6th and 7th March, the first volunteer meetings occurred.

The participation of volunteers in the initial meeting was important as they received information and were divided into groups for rehearsals with a dedicated group coordinator. Additionally, they were given the opportunity to assist in parallel activities that took place before the main event and in other tasks such as literary research, writing texts, translations

Approximate number of attendees:

495

and putting up posters. A prerequisite for participation in the volunteer team is being above the age of 18 and being available during the event days. Volunteers were expected to be kind, cooperative, patient, communicative, dynamic and consistent, and to prepare adequately to fulfil the role they were going to undertake.

The distinctive t-shirt the volunteers wore signified their role during the event and made them stand out. Their main responsibilities included welcoming, guiding and accompanying visitors to buildings, informing the public and promoting products at various points in the city. After the conclusion of the event, they received an electronic participation certificate.

Promotional material

Approximate number of attendees:

495

Three days before the main event, a gathering was organised at the festival's info point to distribute all necessary materials to the volunteers. This meeting was essential as it provided volunteers with everything they needed for the weekend: t-shirts, posters, signs, flyers, energy bars and gifts from

the festival's sponsors. It served as the final preparation before the event, allowing volunteers to socialise and strengthen connections within the whole group.

Instagram stories contest

Approximate number of attendees:

200+

This online contest invited volunteers to upload stories on Instagram about their preparations for Open House Thessaloniki 2024. One participant was awarded the prize of a full scholarship at the Galileo Galilei Institute of European Languages, which was the volunteer sponsor. The goal was to motivate volunteers during their training and increase engagement.

The contest was successful, especially since the festival's volunteers were mostly students between the ages of 18-24 and for whom sharing Instagram stories is a daily habit. Their stories not only promoted the event to their followers but also attracted more young people and potential volunteers, expanding the festival's audience.

Integration of the Open House Europe programme

Buildings and/or guided tours

Open House Thessaloniki 2024 had 3 buildings and/or guided tours from the festival's programme dedicated to showcasing the Open House Europe (OHEu) annual theme: Accessibility and Inclusion.

1244

Approximate number of attendees

List of buildings:

1. Sfageia—Old Slaughterhouse
2. Villa Hafiz Bey
3. Centre for Byzantine Research (the Former 'Melissa' Orphanage)

Sfageia — Old Slaughterhouse



Sfageia. Photo by Georgia Kasapi © Courtesy of Open House Greece

As part of this year's OHEu annual theme, artist Alexandros Kapetanou presented his reflection on the concept of prohibition, inspired by the red-and-white warning tape used in urban spaces. He collected this tape from the urban environment and reused it. Through 118188 handmade knots, this familiar material was transformed into artistic forms that mocked and subverted the symbolism of prohibition. The work highlighted how symbols of exclusion could be reinterpreted, inviting the viewer to reflect on boundaries and the human experience. The exhibition 'Prohibitive Tape' was hosted at the Sfageia building (an industrial building from 1896, restored in 2014 by the City of Thessaloniki, which now functions as an event venue.)

Villa Hafiz Bey



Villa Hafiz Bey. Photo by John Simitopoulos © Courtesy of Open House Greece

Villa Hafiz Bey, the current building of the School for the Blind in Thessaloniki, is located at 32 Vasilissis Olgas Street, in the area once known as Exoches in the early 20th century.

The architect of this building was Xenophon Paionidis, whose works, characterised by neoclassicism and eclecticism, greatly influenced the architectural style of Thessaloniki.

In 1924, the Albanian-Kosovar politician Hasan Pristina arrived in Thessaloniki as a self-exile. He subsequently purchased the property. Architecturally, the villa combines elements of neoclassicism, rococo, baroque and eclecticism. It is a two-story building with a semi-basement and impressive decorations. A distinct and characteristic feature is the pediment on its façade.



Villa Hafiz Bey. Photo by John Simitopoulos © Courtesy of Open House Greece

Over the years, the building housed the Konstantinidis Commercial School and the Agios Stylianos Nursery, among others. During World War II, it was requisitioned and used by the Germans.

In 1948, the property was transferred to the ownership of the School for the Blind and since 1961, it has operated as such. It is the second school for the blind to operate in Greece.

Centre for Byzantine Research (the Former 'Melissa' Orphanage)



Center for Byzantine Research. Photo by Syrmo Papadaki
© Courtesy of Open House Greece



Center for Byzantine Research. Photo by Syrmo Papadaki
© Courtesy of Open House Greece

A guided tour was organised for students with special educational needs from the Special Vocational Education Workshop of Kilkis (E.E.E.EK Kilkis). They came from the city of Kilkis to attend Open House Thessaloniki 2024, considering the visit very important for their students.

The building is an impressive villa in the Exoches District, built in 1897 as the villa of Osman Ali Bey, a Turkish merchant, featuring neoclassical and Renaissance elements, in line with the eclectic style of the era. It is closely associated with the name and history of the city's orphanage, 'Melissa', which was established there after the destruction of Smyrna in 1922 and remained (with a brief interruption from 1942 to 1944) until 1977, until it moved to Panorama, Thessaloniki. The ownership of the building remains with the orphanage to this day, even though it has housed the Centre for Byzantine Research, part of the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, since 1998.

Additional events and/or activities



Open Walk in Port (Disability Tour). Photo by John Simitopoulos © Courtesy of Open House Greece

'Open Walk' at the Port of Thessaloniki for people with disabilities

Approximate number of attendees:
50

As established in recent years, the thematic background of each edition of Open House Thessaloniki guides visitors through lesser-known yet particularly interesting architectural and historical aspects of the city. This year's 'Open Walk' event featured a unique route through the historic port of Thessaloniki, with tours of the first and second piers. The public had the opportunity to explore the distinctive character and architecture of the port—one of the city's most significant areas with a multi-layered history. Visitors observed buildings and facilities linked to the development and transformation of the area over the centuries. This route highlighted Thessaloniki's connection to the sea and its historical role as a commercial and cultural hub, fostering a modern dialogue about the port's potential as an essential city landmark. The route was ensured to be accessible for people with disabilities. In collaboration with the 'Mind The Map' project by the company Dalkafouki Oikos, tactile maps and a 3D model were created for people with partial or total vision loss. The tour began with participants touching the tactile map to familiarise themselves with the area. Tours were also given in Greek Sign Language.

Open School

Approximate number of attendees:

635

The 'Open School' parallel event included scheduled visits to creative and production spaces, as well as certain buildings within the programme, specifically tailored for school classes, educational institutions and other organised groups with an educational focus. This year, the event also welcomed students from distant municipalities, including a school specializing in special educational needs.

Enhancing accessibility

Information about buildings accessible to people with disabilities was included in this year's programme, an accessibility filter was added to the Open House Thessaloniki website and special signage was placed on accessible buildings.

Online activities



Live-streaming Tour at Evangelistria Cemetery. Photo by Konstantinos Aleiferis © Courtesy of Open House Greece

Live-streamed tours

Approximate number of views
(by 13th December)

20352

This online event allowed the public to virtually attend guided tours via live streaming in some of the programme's buildings (the two-storey residence on Spetson St and Evangelistria Cemetery). The tours were broadcast live on Instagram and were later made available as reels on the Open House Thessaloniki Instagram profile ([@openhousethessaloniki](https://www.instagram.com/openhousethessaloniki)).

Open Office

Approximate number of views
(by 13th December)

2340



'Open Office': K-Architects. Photo by Pheno © Courtesy of Open House Greece

The 'Open Office' video series highlights the profession of an architect by introducing the public to both renowned and emerging architects who stand out in their field. In these videos, architects from Thessaloniki are interviewed to discuss their work and introduce viewers to their workspace and working methods.

The videos for the 2024 edition of the festival premiered on the Open House Thessaloniki YouTube channel on the 25th November and remain available there, as well as on the festival's website. The offices that participated this year were Ark4lab of Architecture and K-Architects. The interviews also addressed the topic of accessibility in the design process and the videos have automated subtitles.

Link:

[https://www.youtube.com/
OpenHouseThessaloniki-2012](https://www.youtube.com/OpenHouseThessaloniki-2012)

Different audiences at the local Open House festival

Open House Thessaloniki 2024 had 50 guided tours for English speakers that attracted 358 people.

There were 4 additional activities and events organised for people with special needs.

Experience in attracting non-native participants

Open House Thessaloniki has always included English tours in the festival programme, driven by the belief that engaging non-native speakers ensures inclusivity and enriches the festival's cultural dialogue. This initiative allows the festival to connect with the city's international visitors and showcase Thessaloniki's rich architectural heritage to a global audience.

Each year, buildings are carefully selected to have a broad appeal, focusing on their architectural and historical significance. Open House Thessaloniki's programme ensures that international tourists, along with local residents, can appreciate the unique character of the city.

Tourists visiting Thessaloniki have increasingly participated in the event, particularly in English and other language tours. Their involvement has highlighted the festival as a key cultural attraction for visitors exploring the city. To support this, the festival designed promotional materials and tour schedules accessible online in English, helping non-Greek-speaking tourists plan their participation.

To enhance outreach to non-native speakers, the festival implemented targeted communication strategies, including promotion in English on social media (Instagram) and the Open House Thessaloniki website. Information was presented in English and other languages to make the event more accessible.

A key partnership contributing to the festival's success in attracting non-native participants was with Open House Thessaloniki's volunteer sponsor, the Galileo Galilei Institute of European Languages. This collaboration allowed the festival to expand its programme to include tours in languages such as French, German, Spanish and Italian, broadening reach and engaging more participants.

Through these efforts, Open House Thessaloniki has become an inclusive platform, connecting locals and tourists alike. The growing interest from international participants underscores the value of fostering multilingual accessibility in creating a vibrant cultural exchange.

Experience in attracting people with special needs

Open House Thessaloniki 2024 emphasised accessibility as a core value, ensuring that individuals with disabilities could fully participate in and enjoy the festival. This commitment was reflected in a series of thoughtful actions, programmes and collaborations designed to break down barriers and create an inclusive cultural experience.

This year, the festival incorporated accessibility filters on its website, allowing users to identify buildings with features accommodating various needs. Additionally, special signage was installed at participating sites, helping attendees with mobility challenges navigate the tours more easily. For those unable to attend in person, online tours were offered via livestream, extending the festival's reach to participants with physical limitations or those who benefit from remote access.

A notable highlight was the collaboration with the 'Mind The Map' project by the company Dalkafouki Oikos, which resulted in the creation of tactile maps and a 3D model of Thessaloniki's port area for individuals with partial or total vision loss. These resources were showcased during the 'Open Walk' event at the port, enabling a multisensory exploration of the city's rich architectural heritage.

Moreover, an exhibition hosted by Alexandros Kapetanou addressed contemporary themes of inclusion and accessibility, offering an artistic lens on the challenges and opportunities in fostering a more inclusive society. The exhibition served as a platform to engage attendees in meaningful discussions about accessibility in both urban and cultural contexts.

In addition to these measures, guided tours were also available in English, expanding the festival's inclusivity to diverse linguistic communities.

From this experience, Open House Thessaloniki 2024 learned the importance of integrating accessible design into every aspect of the festival, from digital platforms to physical spaces. By prioritising accessibility and inclusion, the festival not only welcomed more diverse participants but also set a precedent for future cultural events in Thessaloniki and beyond.

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Open House Vilnius 2024

Introduction

General information about the event

Event No.:	E7.2
Legal Name:	VšĮ Architektūros fondas
Date:	18-19 May, 2024
Name:	Open House Vilnius
Number of buildings/areas included in the programme:	60 buildings (guided tours), 10 meetings with city developers (open offices) and 4 artistic performances/installations
City:	Vilnius
Country:	Lithuania
Duration:	2 days

Festival participants

In total, Open House Vilnius 2024 attracted 42,000 attendees.

The festival had 500 volunteers.

Open House Vilnius 2024 was organised by 6 men and 22 women; 28 people in total.

Introduction

Open House Vilnius (OHV) is Lithuania's largest architecture festival. OHV disseminates knowledge about architecture and creates opportunities for visitors to experience it firsthand. The festival was first organised in 2015 and has been consistently growing since then.

In 2024, 60 buildings were opened to the public. For the first time, 10 city architects and developers opened their offices to invite discussions about architecture. The selected buildings and offices were of exceptional architectural quality and important to the city and its communities. Volunteer guides ran free excursions for two full days during the event. Around 500 volunteers participated in the 2024 event and there were approximately 42000 visits.

The title of the 2024 event was 'People Creating the City'. The aim of this edition was to facilitate dialogue between architects who shape the city's vision and the people who bring it to life through their stories. Open House Vilnius served as a platform for discussions on quality architecture, allowing for the exchange of ideas and collaborative efforts to shape the city.

During the event, certain buildings with limited accessibility (such as the President's Palace, Institute of Lithuanian Literature and Folklore/Vileišio Palace) or those that were new to the OHV programme (e.g. Radio House), tended to be the most popular. Some buildings may not have received the most visitors because they had longer waiting lines due to limited capacity, such as Vilnius St. Joseph Seminary or Vilnius Heat Plant No. 2. This year, visitors were particularly impressed by a new aspect of the event programme: meetings with city architects and developers. This new concept involved discussions with architects in their workspaces (such as the Vilnius City Municipality and Andrius Ambrasas Architects' office).

Additional activities



Contemporary dance performance 'Young City' © Courtesy of Architektūros fondas



Contemporary dance performance 'Young City' © Courtesy of Architektūros fondas

Eye Gymnastics' performance 'Face to face'

Approximate number of attendees:
250

Eye Gymnastics is the stage name of Viktorija Damerell and Gailė Griciūtė. The artists collaborate on creating performances of experimental music, vocal instructions and incantations. In their investigations, sensual timbres merge with mental voyages, hypnosis and echoes of pop.

In the performance 'Face to face', the artists collaborated with performers Elmyra Ragimova, Jonė Miškinytė, Kamilė Krasauskaitė and Laura Marija Balčiūnaitė, and composer Arturas Bumšteinas.

The artists provided the following description of the performance: 'Each face is seen by the eyes in another face, which can only see as much. Maybe I could borrow your eyes, the core of a tree, to feel what my body cannot, limiting itself to its beginnings and endings. Could you put on some other eyes to see me from aside, so that I feel myself anew? Or let's look into the face of a tree for a long time, until our eyes get tired and the woodcore will recognise your branchy hands and the green of my leaves that just burst out by the dusty street.'

Aurelija Slapšytė's interactive installation 'Infinity of Result'

The main theme of this installation was the power of joining together. The creator explored the topic of collective design. Part of her master's thesis project, the installation invited visitors to experience the possibility of creating and changing design tactilely, regardless of their age, power or professional experience. The installation became a social phenomenon, where an encounter between the work and the viewer took place, thus creating the collective meaning of the artwork.

The outcome of the work is constantly changing and has no conceptual end. During the festival, it had a temporary outcome, which will develop further once working on the form of the installation is possible again.

Young City

Approximate number of attendees:

100

The performance explored the relationship between human beings and the urban environment they create. The movements of the body tell the story of the influence of different cultures and relationships in the transformation of the city. The performance grew and changed dynamically to show the shifting and pulsating surroundings. The work evolved from the movements of individuals into an organic, complex whole, thus emphasising the importance of the community in ensuring a sustainable urban development process. The work emphasised how all human beings were part of creating the city, with young people being no exception. The artistic narrative therefore highlighted the importance of the participation of different social groups in the creation of free, open, welcoming and friendly spaces.

Open House Vilnius poster exhibition 'Decade'

Approximate number of attendees:

250

In 2024, Open House Vilnius presented a retrospective exhibition of the festival's visual identity as depicted in the event's posters. Each year, the posters interpreted a different architectural theme that was presented during the festival. The images showed the flux of design trends and creative movements, reflecting the reactions of artists, illustrators and designers to the city's development and everyday life.

Initially, the posters for the event were created by individual designers invited by the organisers. It was only later that the idea of involving a larger community of creators was conceived, and for the past 6 years, an open poster competition has been organised to create Open House Vilnius' visual identity. This has given rise to a multitude of different creative expressions and interpretations of the event theme. Currently, the collection of all entries to the poster competition consists of more than 300 posters and the exhibition showcased the best work from recent years.

Activities for volunteers

Training of volunteers



Mentors training © Courtesy of Architektūros fondas

Training of mentors:

Mentors (content creators and team leaders):

60 volunteers

Curators:

19 volunteers

The training consisted of three parts: the first part covered key updates about Open House Vilnius; the second part consisted of 'Living Library' workshops where mentors shared their experiences and exchanged ideas; the third part featured a discussion on this year's Open House Vilnius theme with architects Audrius Ambrasas, Gilma Teodora Gilytė and Norbertas Černiauskas.

Training of volunteers

Mentors (content creators and team leaders):

60 volunteers

Curators:

440 volunteers



Volunteers training © Courtesy of Architektūros fondas

The training started with a presentation about upcoming events. This was followed by a session to help the volunteers get to know their mentors and the team, where they discussed work principles, important dates and other details. After a coffee break, the training continued with a session titled 'Turning Stress into Energy, Rather Than Fighting It', led by lecturer Vytautas Kontrimas.

Gatherings during the festival



Opening Event © Courtesy of Architektūros fondas

Opening event

Approximate number of attendees:

88

Mentors were invited to the opening event of the programme and during this event, the programme was introduced and mentors had the chance to interact with representatives of the participating buildings and event partners. This is a valuable opportunity to network and gain insights into the highlights of the event.

Closing event

Approximate number of attendees:

500



Closing event © Courtesy of Architektūros fondas

The closing evening of Open House Vilnius 2024 was a festive event that included an award ceremony for volunteers, acknowledgements and musical performances to create a celebratory atmosphere. The event was a successful way to foster a sense of community and appreciation among volunteers, as well as to express gratitude, celebrate collective efforts and strengthen the bonds within the volunteer community.

For the award ceremony, there were ten different categories for individuals and teams. Approximately 100 volunteers were recognised for their creativity, extra effort and exceptional skills.

Integration of the Open House Europe programme

Buildings and/or guided tours

Approximate number of attendees:

1808

List of buildings:

1. Lithuanian Audiosensory Library
2. Cyber City (formerly the site of Sparta Factory)
3. Lojoteka

Lithuanian Audiosensory Library



LAB Fasadas DELFI. Photo by Kiril Čachovskij © Courtesy of Architektūros fondas

The Lithuanian Audiosensory Library is probably the most accessible building in Lithuania for different kinds of visitors. The building's universal design makes it accessible to people with visual, physical or intellectual disabilities. Visitors who find the environment more difficult to navigate are greeted at the entrance by surfaces that guide them to a member of staff working at the information desk. To help people going to other floors in the building, the staircases on all floors are marked with contrasting strips that are very visible.



LAB 1 aukstas skaitykla DELFI. Photo by Kiril Čachovskij © Courtesy of Architektūros fondas

All the interior elements are distinguished by contrast—the floors, walls, railings and even the key chains of the lockers are coloured differently so that visitors can observe and move around without disturbance.

Cyber City (formerly the site of Sparta Factory)



Cyber City. Photo by Kajus Len © Courtesy of Architektūros fondas

The building complex comprises office, co-working and commercial spaces, as well as innovative recreational spaces designed for the technology community. There is a sense of care for the well-being of employees in all spaces of the complex, paying attention to the variety of their needs.

Lojoteka



Lojoteka. Photo by Mark Segalis © Courtesy of Architektūros fondas

Lojoteka is the newest addition to the Vilnius Jesuit Gymnasium ensemble. The building's architectural design not only echoes the silhouette of the historic Vilnius Jesuit Gymnasium and the Jesuit Monastery in a modern way but also continues long-lasting history and traditions, creating a cultural and educational centre for generations to come.

The uniqueness of this centre is that it is open not only to gymnasium students and clergy of the monastery but also to all Vilnius citizens. It creates a space for dialogue between different communities and offers access to a variety of creative spaces.

Different audiences at the local Open House festival

Open House Vilnius 2024 had 106 guided tours for English speakers that attracted 1600 people. Additionally, there were 21 guided tours in Ukrainian that attracted 290 participants.

The festival had 7 fully adapted and 16 partly adapted guided tours for people with mobility impairments.

Experience in attracting non-native participants

The festival successfully integrated multiple languages into its activities by selecting specific buildings for guided tours that showcased different periods of Vilnius' architecture, from the late 19th century to contemporary styles. To engage non-native speakers, the festival organisers held additional training sessions, ensuring that all essential information was translated into English. Mentors proficient in English supported non-native teams, facilitating effective communication. Despite initial challenges in inviting non-native speakers, volunteers contributed to outreach by inviting visitors in their own languages. The festival also partnered with Go Vilnius for translation assistance. Overall, early planning and collaboration with multilingual teams proved vital in making the festival more inclusive and engaging for a diverse audience.

Experience in attracting people with special needs

The festival made significant efforts to enhance accessibility for people with disabilities by incorporating specific icons on the website and brochures to indicate if guided tours were fully or partially adapted for people with mobility impairments. The organisers prioritised including as many accessible buildings as possible and conducted thorough checks on excursion routes to ensure smooth movement for all visitors. Collaboration with the Lithuanian Association of People with Disabilities provided valuable insights into improving accessibility, and the festival created volunteering opportunities for individuals with disabilities, fostering active participation. Overall, the experience highlighted the importance of ensuring that accessibility extends beyond just buildings, emphasising the need for a fully inclusive environment that allows everyone to participate comfortably.

Partner festivals



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