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Annual Open
House Europe
Activity
Report

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Year
2

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Open House Barcelona 2024

Introduction

General information about the event

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| Legal Name: | 48H OPEN HOUSE BCN |
| Date: | 26–27 October, 2024 |
| Name: | Open House Barcelona |
| Number of buildings/areas included in the programme: | 205 buildings, 7 itineraries, 6 cities |
| City: | Barcelona |
| Country: | Spain |
| Duration: | 2 days |

Festival participants

In total, Open House Barcelona 2024 attracted 69003 attendees.

The festival organisers decided not to ask the gender of the people visiting the buildings.

The festival had 896 volunteers.

Open House Barcelona 2024 was organised by 3 men and 3 women working permanently, and 2 men and 9 women working temporarily.

Introduction



Recerca Vallhebron. Photo by Antonio Navarro Wijkmark © Courtesy of 48h Open House Barcelona

Open House Barcelona 2024 was held between October 26–27 and, despite the heavy rain, 69003 people, curious about architecture, took part in the 15th edition. The public's interest in architecture and the desire to access it through the festival, enjoying a cultural weekend party, has been growing stronger yearly.

In 2024, the festival offered 212 activities in six cities, 148 buildings in Barcelona alone, 7 itineraries, 45 visits guided directly by architects and 80 spaces never seen before in the festival programme. 950 volunteers were at the centre of all activities and led the visitors through some amazing spaces.

Under the title, 'How do you want to live?', the 15th edition delved into what is important to the city dweller, focusing on exploring the seven fundamental characteristics of designing and enjoying a space: luminosity, solidity, location, orientation, functionality, beauty and comfort.

Each year, the festival highlights the title with a specially designed poster. For 2024, imaginary houses were designed according to each fundamental characteristic and shown inside a vending machine—a device connected to the idea of easy, quick and equal access to various or urgent goods and objects, including quality architecture.



Casa Ramoneda. Photo by Antonio Navarro Wijkmark © Courtesy of 48h Open House Barcelona

Additional activities

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

OPEN GREEN
OPEN SOCIAL
OPEN INFRASTRUCTURES
OPEN FOTO
OPEN SKETCH
OPEN PETITS
OPENGRAM

Open House Barcelona 2024 joined the celebration of the 19th edition of Barcelona Design Week and its global initiative to make the case for the 18th Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) that addresses design as a key element for the present and the future of people. For this reason, the festival named the new headquarters of the global network LCI Education in Barcelona 'BUILDING 18' to emphasise the values and importance of design in this project.

Over the years, the festival has split its programme into various titled sections to highlight different themes for different target audiences. The idea is to accentuate how architecture responds to urban and territorial needs and its adaptation to achieve a socially sustainable future. 'OPEN GREEN' highlights buildings which are designed with criteria of environmental sustainability in mind and demonstrate a commitment to future generations by optimising natural resources. 'OPEN SOCIAL' is a series of integration and participation actions that, over the years, have improved the responsiveness of the city to the challenges of social inclusion. 'OPEN INFRASTRUCTURES' proposes visits to the facilities that support the city's development and its economic and social growth.



Open Petits. by Antonio Navarro Wijkmark © Courtesy of 48h Open House Barcelona



Open Sketch. Photo by Urban Sketchers Barcelona © Courtesy of 48h Open House Barcelona

In addition to these sections, 'OPEN PETITS' and 'OPEN KITCHEN' were back in 2024. 'OPEN PETITS' brought together activities for children under 12 in different areas of the cities, including visits that were considered interesting for children because of the type of content and a game, created especially for them, which consisted of finding tiny houses hidden in 10 different buildings in the six cities. 'OPEN KITCHEN' explored the relationship between architecture, cooking and the sensory perception of food.

In addition to visiting the opened spaces and events, the public also participated by assessing the architecture of the city: first, through polls shared via the festival's social media profiles before the festival and later, during the festival weekend, in surveys with the help of volunteers, choosing from among the most outstanding characteristics of each building that participated in this year's programme.

The festival promotes architectural culture and the creativity of visitors through photography and drawing, through two competitions and an itinerary. 'OPENGRAM' was a competition on Instagram that linked architecture, an artistic discipline that imagines and builds spaces for human use, and photography, a fundamental tool for disseminating, sharing and understanding it. 'OPEN FOTO' was the second competition which invited the public to capture images of buildings participating in Open House Barcelona 2024. This year, 'OPEN SKETCH' proposed a drawing itinerary in the Horta neighbourhood of Cilindre de Horta and Pavello de la República, two spaces that reflected the design features highlighted in this year's festival. This activity was organised in collaboration with Urban Sketchers Barcelona.

Activities for volunteers



Volunteer Training © Courtesy of 48h Open House Barcelona

Training of volunteers

A meeting took place at the Architecture School in Barcelona that lasted two hours, with time after for networking and drinks. In the first hour, volunteers were divided into two groups, depending on their roles during the festival. They were provided with instructions on how the festival would operate and what their

Approximate number of attendees:

250

specific tasks would be. Afterwards, everyone gathered in the auditorium, where the 2024 theme was presented. This was followed by two conferences: one on architectural outreach and another on language issues. Finally, the meeting ended with a casual atmosphere and drinks.

Initial gathering

Approximate number of attendees:

150



Volunteers Warm Up. Photo by Natalia Vaquero © Courtesy of 48h Open House Barcelona

For the initial gathering, a meet and greet was organised at the beginning of October (3 weeks before the festival) with the first volunteers to sign up. The meeting aimed to create an environment to strengthen the connections between volunteers and give them an opportunity to meet the organisers with a drink in hand while listening to some music from local DJs.

Closing party

Approximate number of attendees:
350



Volunteers Closing Party. Photo by Antonio Navarro Wijkmark © Courtesy of 48h Open House Barcelona

It's a tradition to organise a party on the last day of the festival, gathering together to thank the volunteers for their support, discuss how the festival weekend went and say goodbye until next year. In 2024, the closing party was held at a venue in the centre of the city and, as a special activity, volunteers who have been helping the festival for 10 years were honoured.

Along with some refreshments, several photo booths related to this year's theme were set up.

Guided tours by international students



International Volunteers. Photo by Anuska Ortega © Courtesy of 48h Open House Barcelona

As part of the first volunteer exchange with other Open House festivals in Europe, guided tours led by international students from architecture schools in Barcelona were organised. The aim was to approach and explain specific themes related to Barcelona and the festival from the perspective of other immigrants in the city.

The intention of these tours was to insist on the importance of knowing the place one inhabits, even if temporarily, and to strengthen the inclusion of expats in the festival.

Additional benefits



Volunteers Warm Up © Courtesy of 48h Open House Barcelona

One of the highlights of this year's edition for volunteers was receiving a reprinted architectural catalogue from years ago, in addition to the map that is normally provided. Volunteers were also motivated through the addition of stickers to their credentials that indicated how many editions they had volunteered. Those who had been volunteering for 10 years received a prize. Additionally, the first 400 volunteers to register got an exclusive visit to an architectural landmark of the city

(Recinte Modernista de Sant Pau). The best 40 volunteers also got a double ticket to visit another architectural landmark of the city (La Pedrera). After the festival, all volunteers received a diploma that certified their participation in the event. For several years, architecture, design, history and tourism students have received university credits for volunteering and Open House Barcelona has agreements with ETSAV, ETSAB, EPSEB, UIC, UB, Elisava and UAB.

Integration of the Open House Europe programme

Buildings and/or guided tours

Open House Barcelona 2024 had 4 buildings and/or guided tours from the festival's programme dedicated to showcasing the Open House Europe (OHEu) annual theme: Accessibility and Inclusion.

4

Approximate number of guided tours in these buildings

40

Approximate number of attendees

List of buildings:

1. Torre de la Creu
2. Architects' Association of Catalonia
3. 'The Heritage of Escola Industrial' itinerary

Torre de la Creu



COAC. Guided tour. Photo by Elena Queralt © Courtesy of 48h Open House Barcelona

This special visit to Torre de la Creu included tactile aids and an audio description service. Support materials were created for visitors with visual impairments, such as models and tactile resources. The visit took advantage of the building's tactile potential, allowing participants to touch and discover the plaster mouldings, the ironwork and the textures of the Catalan trencadís.

Architects' Association of Catalonia



COAC. Guided tour. Photo by Elena Queralt © Courtesy of 48h Open House Barcelona

This guided tour took advantage of the tactile potential of the building, allowing participants to touch and feel it. As an exciting addition, people were able to touch the relief of an original Picasso. The visit also included an audio-description service and other support materials for visitors with visual impairments such as models and tactile resources.

'The Heritage of Escola Industrial'

itinerary

In this guided tour, a Catalan Sign Language interpreter accompanied the guide. This meant that people with hearing loss were able to interact with the guide through comments and questions, in addition to following the tour and



Escola Industrial. Guided Tour. Photo by Jacqueline Glarner © Courtesy of 48h Open House Barcelona

Additional events and/or activities



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

Ambassadors

Through the use of ambassadors, Open House Barcelona found a different way of including people not reached by the festival through its familiar means. To make itself accessible to the whole city, the support and collaboration of other professionals, whether architects, historians or photographers, was essential. In

2024, the festival began this initiative with five ambassadors. Days before the festival weekend, these ambassadors shared their thoughts and some of the spaces from the festival programme with their families, friends and followers on social media.



La Capell

La Capell was, for the first time, the festival's official bookshop and as such, it selected books aligned with this year's theme. The selection was made visible in the physical space of the bookshop and, in addition, the festival ambassadors shared their favourite book from those available. The compilation was intended to be accessible to all audiences, to give all users of the bookshop access to the festival's theme and the festival itself. The bookshop, for its part, sought to promote this collaboration on its social media accounts and was

La Capell. Photo by Cooperativa La Capell
© Courtesy of 48h Open House Barcelona

Open Global



Open Global. Photo by Antonio Navarro Wijkmark © Courtesy of 48h Open House Barcelona

'Open Global' was developed with Barcelona Global, a private, independent, non-profit association, which unites 256 of Barcelona's leading companies, research centres, entrepreneurs, business schools, universities, cultural institutions and over 960 professionals. This association is committed to positioning Barcelona as one of the world's most dynamic cities for impactful talent and economic activity.

'Open Global' is an innovative initiative aimed at promoting the connection of the international community with the city's rich architectural heritage. It consisted of a guided tour in English designed to introduce international residents and professionals to Barcelona's architectural culture. It not only offered a new way to experience the city's architecture but it also strengthened the ties between the international community and local cultural heritage. The tour offered an authentic local perspective, providing an enriching experience for those who have not grown up in Barcelona.

Online activities

Approximate number of total views:

360

'Arquitectura Accessible: Ciutat Inclusiva' (Eng. Accessible Architecture = Inclusive City)

This recorded round table discussion, shared on the Open House Barcelona YouTube channel, brought together different and innovative perspectives on creating an inclusive city. Points of view were exchanged on accessible architecture suitable for the achievement of a truly inclusive city. Different perspectives converged to enrich the conversation and innovative ideas were shared that promoted accessible and adaptable architecture, not just in the design of physical spaces and architectural forms, but also in social and economic processes and procedures that transcend the boundaries of time and favour an inclusive city.

Link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8WJp5UcioOg>

Different audiences at the local Open House festival



Arc de Triomf. Photo by Rodrigo Saraceni © Courtesy of 48h Open House Barcelona

Experience in attracting non-native participants

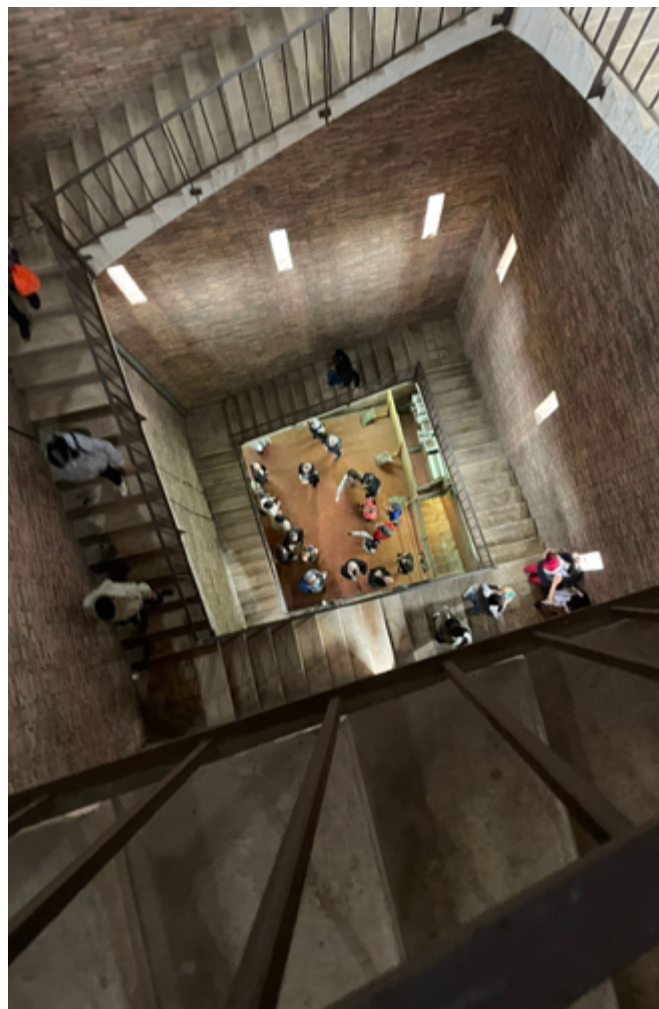
In Catalonia, there are two official languages: Catalan and Spanish. For this reason, local governments and organisations work to promote both languages for immigrants to know and understand. Likewise, the association that organises Open House Barcelona is committed to the protection and dissemination of Barcelona's cultural heritage. In this sense, language is a fundamental part of this legacy so all the information and documentation about the

festival was available in both official languages. The organisers left the option open for the volunteer guides to prepare their tours in the official language they felt allowed them to express themselves best. Even so, there were sometimes problems with the public preferring one or the other. Incorporating a third language, distant from the city, is not easy when there are already difficulties with integrating local languages.

Experience in attracting people with special needs

The festival strived to facilitate visits to buildings and architectural experiences for all audiences, and the Open House Barcelona website included information on the degree of accessibility of all the programme's activities, indicating the support elements available. Also, all activities were labelled with the building's level of accessibility: fully, partially (alternative itinerary) or not accessible.

Since 2018, the festival organisers have been working with associations that bring together people with disabilities, and each tour or itinerary is organised in collaboration with them. The president of one of these associations became a festival ambassador in 2024, accompanying the process and sharing feedback. In addition, information about the festival was shared through the communication channels of these associations.



Torres Venecianas. Photo by Ignacio Atkins © Courtesy of 48h Open House Barcelona

Distribution

Festival promotion video

The festival theme, participating cities, programme sections and competitions were presented in a video released to the public on World Habitat Day, the first Monday of October. This year, the participating cities were represented by the train that links them, the vending machines found in the train stations and the houses from the poster that symbolised the fundamental characteristics of good architectural design.

Link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tgeHLAWZUoo>

Radiomedia Arquitectura

This website was the result of continuous research to find languages and ways of explaining architecture. Through this process, Radiomedia Arquitectura was created as a timeless repository of media, featuring audio, video and textual material created by architects, authors or expert entities and associations that transmit their knowledge with emotion and commitment to Barcelona and its architecture. The compiled media include podcasts about buildings and itineraries recorded by architects or expert entities and associations, 360° videos recorded by students of Campus La Salle - Ramon Llull University, a collection of historical photographs, videos of Enmarcamos la arquitectura in which the architect explained his work and the camera gave a tour of the building, and a map with geolocated media that functions as a search engine for works of architecture.

Link:

<https://radiomediaraq.openhousebarcelona.org>

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Prague
2024

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Open House Praha 2024

Introduction

General information about the event

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|--|-------------------------|
| Legal Name: | Open House Praha, z. Ú. |
| Date: | 13–19 May, 2024 |
| Name: | Open House Praha 2024 |
| Number of buildings/areas included in the programme: | 115 |
| City: | Prague |
| Country: | Czech Republic |
| Duration: | 7 days |

Festival participants

In total, Open House Praha 2024 attracted 17266 attendees: 5870 men, 11223 women and 69 non-binary people.

In terms of volunteers, the festival had 166 men, 462 women and 1 non-binary person; 629 volunteers in total.

Open House Praha 2024 was organised by 1 man and 11 women; 12 people in total.

Introduction



Open House Praha 2024. Photo by Hanka Krejbichova © Courtesy of Open House Praha

The 10th edition of the Open House Praha festival, which took place from May 13–19, 2024 saw more than 103600 visits to various buildings and accompanying programmes. The event culminated with 115 opened buildings open in thirteen Prague districts, including the Presidential Residence, the Lobkowitz

Palace, the New Orangery at Prague Castle designed by Eva Jiřičná, Goethe-Institut by the river, Karel Čapek's Villa in Vinohrady, the Clam-Gallas Palace in the old town and the newly renovated Fanta Building at Prague's main train station. Festival visitors had a wide range of options, including historical palaces,

landmarks, new buildings, and technical and sacral structures. As an ongoing tradition, the festival also commemorated several important architects who had milestone birthdays or anniversaries this year. Among them were Josef Fuchs (130th birthday), Oldřich Tyl (140th birthday) and Josef Fanta (70th death anniversary).

The main theme of this year's festival was the idea of a city open and accessible to everyone, and this concept permeated the entire programme. In addition to special tours for children, there were also other inclusive events held at some buildings such as tours for visitors who were blind or deaf, and tours in English for expats. As part of the accompanying programme, the interactive city game 'Open Senses' was prepared by students of arts management from the University of Economics in Prague, which embraced the idea of a maximally accessible city. Players at five locations in the city centre experienced what it is like to navigate Prague with limited vision or as a wheelchair user. The accompanying programme during the week (Mon–Fri) included nearly thirty events, featuring a workshop focused on the physical accessibility of buildings and a big debate with experts titled 'Openly About Prague: A City Accessible to All', with a Czech Sign Language interpreter.

Great interest was shown in the lecture commemorating the 50th anniversary of the Prague metro. Transportation urbanist Tomáš Cach led interested participants on a bike tour titled 'Look Around You', focusing on Prague's urban transformations and safe urban cycling. The festival could not have taken place without the involvement of more than 650 volunteers who guided tours, took photographs and assisted visitors at the festival centre in Hybernská Campus. This year's novelty was the Open House Praha app, which provided not only all practical information regarding opening hours and tours but also continuously updated data on waiting times at buildings, tour lengths and included a chat feature.

Additional activities



Open House Essen 2023. Photo by Ravi Sejk © Courtesy of Forum Kunst & Architektur

Visitors of the accompanying programme from Monday–Friday (lectures, debates, walks):

1100

During the festival weekend:

Children visitors:

2130

Expat visitors:

1720

Visitors who had visual impairments:

51

Visitors who had hearing loss:

44

Participants in the interactive game 'Open Senses':

200

Apart from events that highlighted the topic of accessibility, Open House Praha organised many other events including guided walks, debates, lectures, tours for kids and special tours with architects, among others. This year, the festival invited partners who opened their buildings to create some activities on their

own that became part of the accompanying programme. Overall, there were around 140 extra events held throughout the festival.



Kampus Hybernska. Photo by Eva Moricka © Courtesy of Open House Praha



Trmalova vila. Photo by Pavel_Neuman © Courtesy of Open House Praha

On the first day of the festival, a lecture took place at the Trade Fair Palace, focusing on the building's transformations over the years, including the devastating fire fifty years ago. Another talk about the work of famous architects Josef Fuchs and Oldřich Tyl was given to a full audience in the authentic setting of the former restaurant of the Štvanice Winter Stadium, now the Fuchs2 club. A private viewing of an exhibition in the Garden of Arts in Nusle, which celebrated its 100th anniversary, and an exhibition by artists from the Hurá collective on the representative floor of the former Koulka vineyard estate in Smíchov also attracted visitors. There were walking tours and visits to the Nusle, Vyšehrad and Malá Strana districts, and tours of the Výstaviště premises, Kunsthalle Prague and Quadrio underground cellars. In the city centre, a lecture on funerary architecture and brutalist architecture took place. Other events included a bike tour, several tours with architects, LEGO and DUPLO workshops for children, the 'Open Senses' outdoor game, a photo contest and 9 special interactive tours in buildings. More than 2000 children visited the festival.

To address the topic of accessibility and inclusivity, the Open House Praha co-organised a workshop on the physical accessibility of buildings and prepared 7 tours of buildings interpreted into Czech Sign Language and with 3D models of buildings, information in Braille and haptic plans for visitors who were visually impaired. Overall, there were around 100 visitors who joined these tours. There were also 11 buildings which had tours in English and received visits from over 1720 expats living in Prague.

Activities for volunteers



Volunteers Aterparty. Photo by Tomas Sysel © Courtesy of Open House Praha

Training of volunteers

In the first half of May, a training was held for the entire volunteer team at the New Town Hall of the Prague City Council. Here, participants were introduced to the general functioning of the organisation, all operational aspects of the festival and were provided with all the necessary information, including instructions

Approximate number of attendees:

300

on how to use the new festival app. This part was led by the main volunteer coordinator Renat Hajnová.

The second part of the training continued with last year's innovation of the training guides from the ranks of volunteers. Participants gained a

basic overview of guiding skills, architectural interpretation and festival tours. This part of the training was led by experienced guide Bára Bulvová.

Another innovation in this year's edition was the collaboration with experienced trainers, who prepared crisis communication training for the volunteers. This training was conducted over four sessions for more than sixty volunteers who took on important roles during the festival, such as managing buildings with higher visitor interest and longer waiting times, as well as the information centre.

The biggest challenge this year was finding a suitable venue for the general training of approximately 300 volunteers that was equipped adequately and had a reasonable price. When designing the content of the trainings, feedback from last year's training was implemented to address specific situations that volunteers could have encountered during the festival.

Closing event

After the end of the festival, dozens of volunteers gathered for a small get-together over drinks, where they shared their experiences and emotions. It was a unique opportunity to capture fresh impressions of the festival. About a month after the festival, the traditional garden afterparty was held where volunteers were thanked for their work and were able to talk more about their experiences

Approximate number of total attendees:
350

and gain inspiration for future editions. This event also strengthened new friendships that formed among the volunteers during the festival. The afterparty is an annual event that everyone looks forward to, always held in a relaxed and friendly atmosphere.



Volunteer Exchange. Photo by Katerina Karbanova © Courtesy of Open House Praha

Additional motivation

In the weeks leading up to the festival, teams of volunteers had the opportunity to visit several buildings/venues in advance that were going to be opened to the public during the weekend. They also received vouchers for food and t-shirts. Additionally, throughout the year, tours were organised of some of the festival buildings/venues and various guided walks were offered to volunteers. Some volunteers continued to collaborate with the Open House Praha team even after the festival.

For example, they helped with writing texts about the buildings, fundraising and organising year-round events for the public, among other things. As another example, one of the volunteers, a high school student, developed the Open House Praha festival app. This became one of the first steps in building his career and founding a start-up.

Integration of the Open House Europe programme

Buildings and/or guided tours

Open House Praha 2024 had 32 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. Great Strahov StadiumBeta
II—As Fabrik
2. Sokol Vinohrady
3. Villa Lanna

3

Approximate number
of guided tours in these
buildings

77

Approximate number
of attendees

Great Strahov Stadium



Great Strahov Stadium. Photo by Tomáš Sysel, Radomír Kočí © Courtesy of Open House Praha

A tour of one of the world's largest stadiums not only uncovered the captivating story of its creation but also offered children an interactive way to learn more about the architecture of this colossal venue. In the past, it has hosted Sokol gatherings, Spartakiads, concerts and military parades. Children had the opportunity to visit the presidential lounge, explore the stands and reflect on the current use of the building's extensive spaces. The tour was designed for children aged from 6–12 and allowed them to imagine the function and accessibility of the place in the future.

Sokol Vinohrady



Sokol Vinohrady. Photo by Andrea Šenkyříková, Tomáš Sysel © Courtesy of Open House Praha

This monumental functionalist building from 1938 with ceramic cladding and a grand columned facade is the largest Sokol sports building of its kind. In addition to gym halls and extensive facilities, it also houses a 25-metre swimming pool. This tour was designed for visitors who are visually impaired and allowed them to explore the building's unique sports halls and technical basement. There was a 3D model of the building available together with a haptic map and information about the building in Braille. Visitors found the meeting point via special route descriptions which were available to download on the Open House Praha website.

Villa Lanna



Vila Lanna. Photo by Valerie Semenová © Courtesy of Open House Praha

Villa Lanna was built between 1868 and 1872 as a summer residence by the prominent industrialist and collector Vojtěch Lanna Jr. The Neo-Renaissance monument is attributed to A. V. Barvitijs and V. I. Ullmann. The villa draws heavily from ancient architectural motifs and the Italian Renaissance, and the building is richly decorated inside and outside with scenes from ancient mythology. After several renovations and restorations, it now serves as a prestigious conference and accommodation facility for professional and ceremonial gatherings. The tour for visitors who have hearing loss included simultaneous transcription and translation into Czech Sign Language.

Additional events and/or activities



Open Senses. Photo by Hana Valentova © Courtesy of Open House Praha

Open Prague

As with prior editions of the festival, Open House Praha 2024 co-organised a photo contest for amateur photographers. Winners were rewarded with valuable prizes from the School of Creative Photography, the main sponsor of the contest. There were 3 categories people could enter: Architecture—

Approximate number of attendees:

120

Spaces and Environment; Detail—Art and Craftsmanship; People—City and Accessibility.

Physical Accessibility of Events

Registered participants attended a seminar that was part of the 'How to Create Accessible Culture' series, organised in collaboration with the One World Festival. The workshop questioned how to ensure that events are physically accessible to everyone, including people with disabilities. Hosted at the Eliška Pešková Creative House, there were discussions about what needs to be

Approximate number of attendees:

25

considered before the event, how to mark and describe the event spaces and how to operate on-site. Advice was given on how to remove barriers without requiring significant financial investment. The seminar mapped and tested the physical accessibility of a selected venue, presenting solutions that could eliminate identified barriers. The lecturer was Ema Rónová, an activist and a wheelchair user.

Open Senses

'Open Senses' was an interactive city game that focused on the accessibility of the city for all as part of the accompanying programme, taking place on the festival weekend of May 18–19, 2024. During the game, people visited five checkpoints placed near buildings that were open during the festival. At each checkpoint, they completed a task that led them closer to solving a crossword puzzle. The tasks were designed so that players could

Approximate number of attendees:

200

discover the city space through all their senses and experience some of the challenges that people with visual impairments or physical disabilities face on a daily basis. At the end of the game, those who successfully solved the puzzle were rewarded. There was a guide (in Czech and English) with instructions, a map with checkpoints, the solution and information about each building.



Openly About Prague_ A City Accessible to All © Courtesy of Open House Praha

A city is a living and dynamic ecosystem, whose complexity increases with the number of its inhabitants. However, the spontaneous growth of cities often fails to consider the needs of all residents, which is most evident when navigating the city, orienting oneself in space, or considering leisure activities. Those most affected include people who are visually impaired, have hearing loss, use wheelchairs, have children or who are seniors. Yet, anyone can experience some form of limitation at some point in their life, so this debate asked how inhabitants can strive to make the capital city open and accessible to everyone. The debate highlighted the various barriers in Prague and presented proposed solutions and examples of good practice. There were 5 experts debating, one of whom had hearing loss. The debate was translated live into Czech Sign Language and the audience was provided with simultaneous transcription. The video recording was later shared online.

Online activities

Openly About Prague: A City Accessible to All

Approximate number of attendees:

20

Speakers:

- Blanka Klimešová from the organisation Pěšky městem, where she primarily focuses on the projects 'Safe Routes to School' and 'Walk to School';
- Karolína Klímová from the Department of Transport of the City of Prague, where she is responsible for the development of pedestrian transport and removing barriers in public spaces;
- Kateřina Pešková from the agency Deaf Friendly, which provides services and consultations to make things more accessible for people who have hearing loss;
- Michaela Pixová, a social geographer at BOKU University in Vienna and the Department of Sociology at Charles University;
- Petr Vysuček, a lecturer of Czech Sign Language, translator, interpreter, and community leader from Deaf Friendly.

Different audiences at the local Open House festival



Accessibility debate. Photo by Andrea Senkyrikova © Courtesy of Open House Praha

Open House Praha 2024 had 80 guided tours for English speakers that attracted 1720 people.

There were 16 additional activities and events organised for people with special needs.

Approximate number of attendees in other languages:
40



Volunteer Exchange. Photo by Katerina_Karbanova © Courtesy of Open House Praha

Experience in attracting non-native participants

The Open House Praha 2024 programme was made up of carefully selected buildings that represented Prague's architectural diversity as well as this year's must-see places. People were able to visit several gems of functionalist architecture, important buildings tied to sports and education, and unique examples of various architecture styles. The buildings took people to the heart of Prague as well as other city districts, such as Holešovice, Břevnov and Ruzyně.

There were 11 buildings with specially designed guided tours in English, but many other buildings also offered the possibility of having a tour in English (depending on the proficiency of the respective volunteers/guides). This year, the festival scheduled tours starting at specific times in response to complaints from previous years of locals 'jumping' the waiting line and taking spots meant for expats. Fact

sheets were also printed in English and placed in various locations so people were able to at least read the basic information about the building. The promotion of the programme for expats was done via the Open House Praha newsletter tailored for the English-speaking community of the festival's fans (approx. 650+ subscribers). The printed guide also contained an English section and the festival's website is fully available in English. Open House Praha also has a media partnership with Prague Morning, one of the top news portals in Czechia aimed at the expat community. They published several articles about the festival and put an ad in their newsletter. There was also other media coverage such as from Radio International Prague and Expat.cz. There was also a Facebook event created and shared in several private Facebook groups for expats.

There is a strong Ukrainian community in Prague and Ukrainians also came to the festival. However, the festival did not manage to find a way to organise special tours in Ukrainian. This is a goal for the 2025 edition of the festival and will require finding a volunteer coordinator who has insight into the local Ukrainian community. Throughout the year, Open House Praha prepares special tours in English, German, Russian and Ukrainian. There are many expats living in Prague who are interested in its history and architecture and there are limited opportunities for them if they do not want to use standard and mostly overpriced tourist guide services. Additionally, these tours do not primarily target tourists.



Strahovský klášter tour for people who are visually impaired. Photo by Valerie Semenova © Courtesy of Open House Praha

Experience in attracting people with special needs

In collaboration with a range of partners, Open House Praha 2024 focused on creating special tours for people with disabilities. In the programme, spaces where people were able to enter without barriers were highlighted. Over the festival weekend, for the seventh year, people who have hearing loss were able to visit selected buildings. In collaboration with the Institute of Deaf Studies at Charles University and the Czech Union of the Deaf, the festival offered six tours with interpretation in Czech Sign Language. Simultaneous transcription was also available for visitors who did not use sign language. There was also a special landing page on the Open House Praha website for people who have hearing loss, accessible through an icon on the homepage with basic information in sign language about the festival's activities. For the fifth year, the festival offered visitors who have visual impairments guided tours with specially trained volunteers in six

buildings. For the tours, haptic floor plans and urban maps of the buildings and their surroundings were prepared, provided by the Teiresiás Center at Masaryk University (Centre for Assistance to Students with Special Needs) and ELSA CTU (Centre for Support of Students with Special Needs), together with necessary expert consultations. The organization SONS ČR (Czech Blind United) provided descriptions of routes and transportation between buildings. The festival also utilised 3D models of buildings prepared in previous years by students from the Faculty of Art and Architecture at the Technical University of Liberec and created one new model. Guides/volunteers for these special tours were trained by experts from the Teiresiás Center MU and ELSA CTU.

As well as this, the festival partnered with the RYTMUS organization, which allowed us to include individuals who have intellectual disabilities as volunteers. With the assistance of support workers, several people were able to participate in helping coordinate visitor traffic and experience direct communication with visitors, social interaction and the joy of sharing communal experiences.

These events, tailored for people who have disabilities, were communicated via collaborating institutions and some specialised websites and media. School students created a video invitation in Czech Sign Language and the festival was spotlighted on Czech national television. Lastly, the festival also worked with two influencers who have visual impairments to help spread the message to the wider community.

Partner festivals



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