

MEDIA RELEASE

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JUDGING STARTS IN AUSTRALIA'S BIGGEST INTERNATIONAL DESIGN COMPETITION

Prestigious Jury Gathers in Hobart for Scrutiny of Entries

Judging has started for the Hobart Waterfront International Design Competition.

After two days of intensive briefings and orientation sessions from local organisers, international judges Carme Pinos (Spain) and Wiel Arets (The Netherlands) and their Australian colleagues Geoffrey London (chair) and Catherin Bull have launched into scrutiny of the entries.

The exhaustive, three-day process of choosing the competition winners from 280 entries from 51 countries is taking place at the Tasmanian Museum & Art Gallery's Bond Store space.

"The first thing to say is that the spread of entries, ranging from the conservative to the left-of-centre, is exceptional," Professor London said.

"It's a fantastic achievement to generate this number of entries and shows the level of interest in Tasmania and its waterfront among the international design community."

Professor London, a Life Fellow of the Royal Australian Institute of Architects and the Government Architect of Western Australia, said the Jury's first task is to prune the list of candidates to about 30-40 reflecting the key themes.

"Some entries propose walkways and others suggest removal of reclaimed parts of Sullivans Cove to restore the original shoreline, and yet others see a series of buildings running from the Theatre Royal to the waterfront.

"The one thing they have in common is a desire to bring new life and energy to a part of the city that feels lonely and isolated, based around a City Hall that is empty much of the year."

Sullivans Cove Waterfront Authority CEO Jeff Gilmore said the Hobart Waterfront International Design Competition had attracted more entries than competitions for the Sydney Opera House and Melbourne's Federation Square.

“When we first launched the competition, we were unsure as to the extent of the response we would receive, so to receive 280 entries means this is now the biggest ever competition in the Southern Hemisphere and the largest architecture competition in the world in 2006,” Mr Gilmore said.

“We asked the world’s best designers to give us their ideas – architects, landscape architects, town planners – and they have done so in enormous numbers.”

Professor London repeated that the response to the competition has been overwhelming.

“The competition has generated significant international publicity for Hobart while attracting hundreds of brilliant ideas for improving connections between the city centre and the waterfront,” Professor London said.

“What often happens is that we find five or six outstanding proposals, with dozens of good ideas sprinkled throughout the other entries. That’s exactly how this competition looks like unfolding.”

The Hobart Waterfront International Design Competition focuses on the area between Theatre Royal and Sullivans Cove, including landmark sites such as the Wapping Corner (the vacant land next to the Theatre Royal), City Hall, the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery, Dunn Place, Franklin Wharf and Kings Pier Marina.

The prize pool is \$150,000, plus an additional \$10,000 for the winning tertiary student entry.

The competition brief asked entrants to consider and acknowledge the structure and scale of Hobart and explain how their ideas will reinvent the area to:

- create a major focus for Hobart that enriches the cultural life of the city with new activities, buildings and spaces (both commercial and public);
- create effective and innovative connections between the city centre and Sullivans Cove;
- interpret and embrace the Cove’s rich cultural heritage; and
- attract and extend activity across Sullivans Cove.

The winners will be announced on 25 January and an exhibition of entries will open at the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery on 26 January until 18 February.

Hobart Waterfront International Design Competition milestones -

- **January 15: Judging starts**
- **January 18: Judging completed**
- **January 25: Winners announced**
- **January 26: Public exhibition begins**

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About the Sullivans Cove Waterfront Authority

The Sullivans Cove Waterfront Authority is the planning authority responsible for protecting, enhancing and developing Sullivans Cove and surrounding areas. The Authority aims to preserve the unique qualities of the Hobart Waterfront, which defines the identity, vitality and image of the Tasmanian people.