

**ITEM-14      LMM 29/06/21 - CITY OF NEWCASTLE AWARDS**

**MOTION**

**That City of Newcastle:**

1. Notes that our staff have been awarded with several significant awards of national and state accolades in recognition of the outstanding achievements of our individuals and teams from across Council;
2. Advises that our Digital Library, Council Chambers and Customer Service Centre has taken out the award for best Community and Civic Hub at the Local Government Awards 2021 and congratulates the cross-Directorate team who delivered this amazing project for the City and our community;
3. Congratulates the cross-Directorate team who delivered our COVID-19 Community & Economic Resilience Package for winning the Local Government Award 2021 in the Special Project Initiative category;
4. Congratulates the Newcastle Museum team, after the 1x4 exhibition has received two accolades, one at the National Museums and Galleries National Award (MAGNA) 2021 for their innovative and cutting-edge approach to exhibiting our stories through mobile and tablet devices while the 1x4 exhibition won the Program Website – Level A award at the Museums Australasia Multimedia and Publication Design Awards 2021;
5. Congratulates Newcastle Art Gallery for the 'On Stillness' exhibition which was also highly commended by judges in the Temporary or Travelling Exhibition Level 1 at the National MAGNAs, particularly for creating content for audiences during gallery COVID-19 lockdowns, and for forging partnerships between geographically distant organisations and celebrated public collections;
6. Commends our Manager Regulatory, Planning and Assessment, Michelle Bisson, who has won the inaugural Dr Helen Proudfoot Women in Planning Award 2021, which recognises the important contribution that women make to planning and to the outcomes of planning work in NSW.

**BACKGROUND:**



**MAGNA**  
MUSEUMS AND GALLERIES  
NATIONAL AWARDS **2021**  
**WINNERS**

**WINNER - 1x4 | National MAGNA 2021 & Temporary or Travelling Exhibition - Level 1 - Museums and Galleries National Awards 2021 & Program Website - Level A - Museums Australasia Multimedia and Publication Design Awards 2021**

Each object in the 1x4 exhibition told four distinct stories. Visitors were able to listen to or read each of the four stories ... or some ... or none and just enjoy the beauty of the objects. Every story is the truth about the object and is a valid way to view the object, but they are all different.

Developed by our own Newcastle Museum, rather than labels on a wall, the secrets of 1X4 were revealed via mobile phone or tablet by visiting 1x4.com.au. To delve deeper, audio tours were also available.

Newcastle Museum completed a clean sweep in Canberra after the 1X4 website also won the Program Website – Level A award at the Museums Australasia Multimedia and Publication Design Awards 2021, which celebrate excellence and quality in design of publications and multimedia produced for the museums sector.

Congratulations to the team at the Museum!



**HIGHLY COMMENDED - On Stillness | Temporary or Travelling Exhibition - Level 1 - Museums and Galleries National Awards 2021**

Newcastle Art Gallery's On Stillness exhibition was also highly commended by judges in the Temporary or Travelling Exhibition Level 1 at the National MAGNA.

On Stillness was an online exhibition presented across the social media accounts of NSW public art galleries. Initiated by the National Art School and Newcastle Art Gallery, it highlighted works of art from the collections of participating institutions that embody the idea of stillness.

For most people, the COVID-19 lockdown brought on a period of rare quiet. A dramatic narrowing of our social and working lives redirected our attention towards modest stimulations: the warmth of the sun or the sound of a treasured voice. As the pace of regular life tentatively resumed, art could remind us to slow down and remain observant. Drawing on a range of genres and mediums, On Stillness celebrated the potential of art to pause time and illuminate the passing moment.

The project provided content to audiences during gallery lockdowns, forged partnerships between geographically distant organisations and celebrated public collections. The parameters of the exhibition were kept informal so it could evolve slowly over time: galleries were encouraged to make one post on the same day each week. Instagram users followed the hashtag #onstillnessexhibition to see the growing number of works and gallery collaborators.

Congratulations to the team at the Newcastle Art Gallery!



**WINNER - Customer Service, Digital Library and Council Chamber | Civic and Community Hub, projects over \$1.5M - Local Government Awards 2021**

City of Newcastle won the Community and Civic Hub at the Local Government Awards, which includes the Digital Library, Council Chambers and Customer Service Centre.

The \$3.27 million project has transformed the way that these elements operate in a co-located environment. With state-of-the-art technology, the space has been designed to optimise the customer experience. Visitors flow seamlessly between Customer Service and the Digital Library and on most Tuesday nights, half of the space transforms into the Council Chamber.

A special thanks to our talented Project Managers, Rob Dudgeon and David Grejsen in Assets and Projects who designed and planned the shared space for over 12 months to create a versatile, multi-use space focused on delivering an enhanced customer experience.

This truly was a cross-functional team success!





**WINNER - COVID-19 Community & Economic Resilience Package | Special Project Initiative Award - Local Government Awards 2021**

City of Newcastle won the Community & Economic Resilience Package award at the Local Government Awards.

Our COVID-19 Community and Economic Resilience Package (CERP) helped locals through the unprecedented impacts of the pandemic, especially our most vulnerable and at-risk community members, the recently unemployed and small-medium enterprises (SMEs).

City of Newcastle (CN) was one of the first NSW local governments to develop and activate a comprehensive plan for social and economic support. Our CERP has been acknowledged for its targeted and swift response to the needs of the Newcastle community.

Working with government partners and local stakeholders, the \$5.5 million package delivered support across targeted programs at a time when it was needed the most. The package included financial relief, business and community support, free online training packages, and community grants programs.

SGS Economics & Planning highlighted the City's support for SMEs as national best practice and a model for all local governments. More broadly, an independent evaluation commissioned by the City and conducted by the University of Newcastle's Hunter Research Foundation Centre found that the resilience package delivered timely and appropriate support to those in need due to the speed of its development and activation; the comprehensive and targeted nature of the support; and innovation in the package design and delivery.

Congratulations and well done to the Community, Strategy and Innovation Team!



**WINNER - Michelle Bisson, Manager Regulatory, Planning and Assessment | 2021 Dr Helen Proudfoot, Women in Planning Award**

A strong woman looks a challenge in the eye and gives it a wink.” Gina Carey

Michelle is a highly committed, experienced and professional planner who has led our Regulatory, Planning and Assessment team since 2018.

Winning this accolade was particularly special to Michelle as the inaugural award celebrates the important contribution that women planners make to planning as a profession and to the outcomes of planning work in NSW.

Michelle demonstrates outstanding support for women in our organisation. In fact, 75 per cent of our planning teams are now led by women. She facilitates opportunities for career growth for female staff, encourages leadership course attendance and has employed student female planners and undergraduate engineers.

Michelle has overseen significant planning initiatives over the last 2 years, including the development of the LSPS, Local Housing Strategy, Heritage Strategy, review of development contributions policy, numerous planning proposals, and the use of planning tools to facilitate response and recovery to the pandemic.

The planning team process about 1,000 Development Applications per year, and under Michelle’s leadership, processing times have reduced by almost 40 per cent. Michelle was instrumental in introducing the electronic assessment system, e-planning portal, and a digital mapping tool to the City.

Highly respected by the elected Council for her reporting on planning initiatives, Michelle also engages with the Urban Design Consultative Group, Liveable Cities Advisory Committee, Public Art Working Group, and the Greater Newcastle Metropolitan Plan Steering Committee with State government agencies.

Congratulations and well-deserved Michelle!