



## Chris Johnston Special Adviser

Chris Johnston is the founder of Context Pty Ltd. She is a strategic planner who specialises in heritage and community planning projects. She has skills in strategic thinking, policy analysis and development, and is solutions oriented in her approach. She has more than 35 years' experience in heritage consulting. Chris is now a director of Calendia, an independent heritage consultancy. She continues as a GML Special Adviser as well as undertaking projects on her own behalf or with La Trobe University where she is an Honorary Research Associate. Chris has expertise in social and aesthetic values assessment, in working with communities and documenting their values, and in interpreting people's relationship to place. She brings her facilitation skills to all her work, seeking to engage people effectively. She often works with Aboriginal communities and organisations.

Chris has a national reputation for her work on developing and applying social significance methods. Her paper *What is Social Value?* published by the Australian Heritage Commission in 1992, has become a standard reference on the assessment of social value. Since then, she has delivered nearly 90 projects that include the assessment of social values. Chris has spoken and written extensively at professional conferences and in journals about approaches to understanding social values and working with associated communities. Chris has also contributed to the field of community-held aesthetic values for National Heritage assessments: examples include the National Heritage aesthetic values for the City of Broken Hill (NSW) and the Tarkine (TAS), and the Great Barrier Reef as part of a review of its Outstanding Universal Value.

**Places are powerful: they evoke memories and stories. Every place is loved by someone. Researching people's connections to their place is a real privilege.**

### Key experience

#### World heritage places

- Budj Bim World Heritage Nomination Dossier—Client: Aboriginal Victoria, Gunditj Mirring Traditional Owners Corporation, Department of Environment and Energy
- Kingston & Arthur's Vale Historic Area, Norfolk Island, Heritage Management Plan—Client: KAVHA
- Defining the aesthetic values of the Great Barrier Reef—Client: Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities

#### Management plans

- Lake Boort Management Plan—Client: Parks Victoria
- Anzac Parade Canberra Heritage Management Plan, Social and Community Aesthetic Values Component—Client: National Capital Authority
- Ngootyoong Gunditj Ngootyoong Mara/South West Management Plan, Cultural Heritage and Social Value Assessment—Client: Parks Victoria
- The Meeting Place Precinct, Kamay Botany Bay National Park, NSW, Conservation Management Plan—Client: NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service

#### Heritage values assessments

- Acknowledgement of places with shared heritage values—Client: Heritage Council of Victoria, Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Council
- Aboriginal Cultural and Spiritual Values of the Australian Alps—Client: Australian Alps Liaison Committee
- Wedge Island and Grey Shack Settlements Cultural Heritage Assessment: Social significance component—Client: National Trust WA and shack communities (for Godden Mackay Logan)
- Colonial Sydney: National Heritage Values Research—Client: Commonwealth Department of the Environment
- Victoria's Post 1940s Migration Heritage—Client: Heritage Victoria

#### Consultation and community engagement

- Commemorative Area Consultation: Australian War Memorial, Canberra—Client: Australian War Memorial
- Community and Stakeholder Engagement Plan for the Kamay Botany Bay National Park Master Plan—Client: NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service
- City of Melbourne Heritage Strategy—Client: City of Melbourne
- 'Victoria's Heritage: Strengthening our communities'—Client: Heritage Victoria

## Qualifications

Master of Environmental Science, Monash University  
 Graduate Diploma, Local & Applied History, Armidale College of Advanced Education  
 Bachelor of Arts (Political Sociology), Melbourne University  
 Diploma of Arts (Ceramics), Australian National University

## Professional background

Special Advisor, Context, 2019-present  
 Honorary Research Associate, La Trobe University, 2017–present  
 Principal / Heritage Specialist, Context, 1984–2019  
 Honorary Research Fellow, Deakin University, 2011–2017

## Recent articles and chapters

Johnston, C 2017, 'Recognising connection: social significance and heritage practice', *Córima, Revista de Investigación en Gestión Cultural*, 2 (2), Universidad de Guadalajara, Guadalajara, Mexico

Johnston, C 2016, 'Seeing through others' eyes: understanding the aesthetics and meanings of place', *Historic Environment: Outback and Beyond*, Vol. 28, No. 1, pp 26–39, Australia ICOMOS

Johnston, C 2016, 'Resolving conflict and building consensus in World Heritage Cities', *2nd OWHC Asia-Pacific Regional Meeting of World Heritage Cities Conference Program*, 5–7 October 2016, Gyeongju, Republic of Korea

Johnston, C 2015, 'Defining future heritage practice: Voices from the 2013 Australia ICOMOS Conference', *Historic Environment: The Future for Heritage Practice*, Vol. 27, No. 2, pp 96–108

Johnston, C 2014, 'Inhabiting Place: Social Significance in Practice in Australia', *APT Bulletin, Special edition, The Values-Based Approach to Cultural Heritage Preservation*, XLV (2-3), pp 39–48

Smith, A, and Johnston, C 2015, 'Experiencing the sublime: Assessing the aesthetic values of the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area', published in *Heritage and Landscape as Human Values, Conference Proceedings*, Di Stefano, M (Ed), Florence, 9–14 November 2014

Johnston, C and Bell, D 2014, 'Guests on Our Country: The Challenges of Creating an Indigenous Approach to Tourism', *18th ICOMOS General Assembly Symposium Heritage and Landscape as Human Values*, Di Stefano, M (Ed), Florence, 9–14 November 2014

Johnston, C and Smith, A 2014, 'Beautiful one day: Assessing the World Heritage aesthetic values of the Great Barrier Reef', *Historic Environment, World Heritage at 40 – The View from Australia*, Vol. 26 (2), pp 54–71

Johnston, C 2014, 'Inhabiting Place: Social Significance in Practice in Australia', *APT Bulletin, Special edition, The Values-Based Approach to Cultural Heritage Preservation*, XLV (2-3), pp 39–48

Bell, D & Johnston, C 2010, 'Budj Bim: Caring for the spirit and the people. Finding the Spirit of Place', *Spirit of Place: Between tangible and intangible heritage*, Turgeon, L (Ed), Les Presses de l'Université Laval, Quebec

Mackay, R and Johnston, C 2010, 'Heritage Management and Community Connections – on The Rocks', *Journal of Architectural Conservation*, 11, Vol. 16, March 2010

Johnston, C and Myers, D 2016, 'Resolving Conflict and Building Consensus in Heritage Place Management: Issues and Challenges', in *Consensus Building, Negotiation and Conflict Resolution for Heritage Place Management*, Myers, D, Smith, SN, Ostergren, G (eds), Getty Conservation Institute, Los Angeles, pp 1–23  
[http://www.getty.edu/conservation/publications\\_resources/pdf\\_publications/consensus\\_building.html](http://www.getty.edu/conservation/publications_resources/pdf_publications/consensus_building.html)

## Heritage strategies and guidance

*Protecting Local Heritage Places: A Guide for Local Government and Communities*, published by the Australian Heritage Commission in 1999, republished online in 2009 by Heritage Victoria for Heritage Chairs and Officials of Australia and New Zealand  
 <[https://www.heritage.vic.gov.au/\\_\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0018/55521/Protecting-Local-Heritage-Places.pdf](https://www.heritage.vic.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0018/55521/Protecting-Local-Heritage-Places.pdf)>

*Ruins: A guide to conservation and management*, commissioned by the Commonwealth Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities and published in 2012 by Heritage Chairs and Officials of Australia and New Zealand (HCOANZ)  
 <<http://www.environment.gov.au/heritage/publications/ruins-guide-conservation-and-management>>

*Conservation Management Plans: Managing Heritage Places*, prepared for the Heritage Council of Victoria  
 <[https://www.heritage.vic.gov.au/\\_\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0021/61545/CM\\_P\\_Guide\\_1278369664770.pdf](https://www.heritage.vic.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0021/61545/CM_P_Guide_1278369664770.pdf)>

## Awards

Energy Australia National Trust (NSW) Heritage Awards: Conservation Management Plan category for The Meeting Place Precinct, Kamay Botany Bay National Park, NSW, Conservation Management Plan, 2009

PIA NSW Planning Excellence Award – Heritage for The Meeting Place Precinct, Kamay Botany Bay National Park, NSW, Conservation Management Plan, 2008

Victorian Planning Award for *Protecting Local Heritage Places: A Guide for Local Government and Communities*, 1999

National Planning Excellence Award for *Protecting Local Heritage Places: A Guide for Local Government and Communities*, 2000

## Memberships

Australia ICOMOS (International Council on Monuments and Sites)  
 ICOMOS International Committee on Intangible Cultural Heritage  
 Planning Institute of Australia  
 Professional Historians Association (VIC)

## Professional affiliations

Honorary Research Associate, La Trobe University  
 Australia ICOMOS National Scientific Committee on Intangible Cultural Heritage