

TEMPORARILY INACCESSIBLE ...



By Saumya Kaushik

MPavillion and Grassy Surrounds

Here in Melbourne we are now past the winter blues! It is the end of November and we are well into an already warm spring-summer.

We Melbournians love being outdoors as much as possible to enjoy the warmer weather while it lasts. Be it strolling along the Yarra, enjoying various markets in and around the city and inner-city suburbs, there are endless outdoor events and activities to choose from during summer months. As many of these activities are season-related, they are temporary but recurring annual events. However, I do question whether these places have been properly thought out; can everyone partake?

undoubtedly running successfully and has been announced to continue for another two years. MPavillion with the brief of making 'a new civic space, cultural laboratory, and an event hub' brings various diverse groups to, for example: perform, conduct workshops, talk, and exhibit, for approximately four months starting October each year. The space is open at all times, multiple daily events are held, and attendance is free. Walking past Queen Victoria Gardens this year's temporary pavilion is discerned as a floating object merging well with its surroundings, and will, no doubt, generate curiosity. But, if one wishes to approach the pavilion one is greeted by a, noticeably temporary, incongruously metal, attached kerb ramp leading from the pedestrian path onto a grassy surface on one side and lush green uneven garden surfaces on all other sides.



Attached Kerb Ramp a trip hazard

These recurring events, hiding behind the cape of 'temporary installation only', last anywhere from one day to months; to the point that they are 'permanent' for that period of time. MPavillion appears to be a missed opportunity; the potential to merge architecture, accessibility, and landscape, must be better explored!



MPavillion and the Temporary Kerb

Accessing buildings has always been a need. Nonetheless, in the past accessibility for people with disability was rarely considered and the built environment designed predominantly for use by people without disability. The Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 1992 obligates the provision of built environment accessibility for people with disability, in Australia. The Disability (Access to Premises – Buildings) Standards 2010 are also now applicable. However, where do temporary structures or pop-up events stand? People with disability are equally entitled to attend and enjoy these temporary installations and participate in the activities on offer, along with everyone. Meeting & Events Australia publish 'Accessible Events A Guide for Meeting and Event Organisers' and various other organisations publish similar documents. These are, however, guides only and hence optional for event organisers to follow.

One such annual event, founded in 2014 and now a recurring event on Melbourne's events calendar, is the MPavillion. Taking inspiration from the Serpentine Galleries in London, the Naomi Milgrom Foundation commissions internationally well-known architects to design a temporary pavilion. MPavillion, now in its fourth year, is



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THE SEVEN PRINCIPLES OF UNIVERSAL DESIGN

The Process of Universal Design

By Sheryl Burgstahler, Ph.D

The process of UD requires a macro view of the application being considered as well as a micro view of subparts of the application. Following is a process that can be used to apply UD:

1. Identify the application. Specify the product or environment to which you wish to apply universal design.
2. Define the universe. Describe the overall population (e.g., users of service), and then describe the diverse characteristics of potential members of the population for which the application is designed (e.g., students, faculty, and staff with diverse characteristics with respect to gender; age; size; ethnicity and race; native language; learning style; and abilities to see, hear, manipulate objects, read, and communicate).
3. Involve consumers. Consider and involve people with diverse characteristics (as identified in Step 2) in all phases of the development, implementation, and evaluation of the application. Also gain perspectives through diversity programs, such as the campus disability services office. Make these processes known with appropriate signage, publications, and websites.
4. Adopt guidelines or standards. Create or select existing universal design guidelines/standards. Integrate them with other best practices within the field of the specific application.
5. Apply guidelines or standards. Apply universal design in concert with best practices within the field, as identified in Step 4, to the overall design of the application, all subcomponents of the application, and all ongoing operations (e.g., procurement processes, staff training) to maximize the benefit of the application to individuals with the wide variety of characteristics identified in Step 2.
6. Plan for accommodations. Develop processes to address accommodation requests (e.g., purchase of assistive technology, arrangement for sign language interpreters) from individuals for whom the design of the application does not automatically provide access.
7. Train and support. Tailor and deliver ongoing training and support to stakeholders (e.g., instructors, computer support staff, procurement officers, volunteers). Share institutional goals with respect to diversity and inclusion and practices for ensuring welcoming, accessible, and inclusive experiences for everyone.
8. Evaluate. Include universal design measures in periodic evaluations of the application, evaluate the application with a diverse group of users, and make modifications based on feedback. Provide ways to collect input from users (e.g., through online and printed instruments and communications with staff).

More information: DO-IT, University of Washington, Seattle.

Principle 4: Perceptible Information

The design communicates necessary information effectively to the user, regardless of ambient conditions or the user's sensory abilities.

GUIDELINES

4a. Use different modes (pictorial, verbal, tactile) for redundant presentation of essential information.

4b. Provide adequate contrast between essential information and its surroundings.

4c. Maximize "legibility" of essential information.

4d. Differentiate elements in ways that can be described (i.e., make it easy to give instructions or directions).

4e. Provide compatibility with a variety of techniques or devices used by people with sensory limitations.



Emergency warning systems are a prime example of systems that must be perceptible by as many people as possible

There is no such thing as an average user.



Provide multisensory options for communications between a person and the process or product.

CALENDAR

January 2018

- 21-25 EXTREME: Rethinking the Limits to Community, Architecture, and Urbanism. Longyearbyen, Norway
- 25-26 Health: The Design, Planning and Politics of How and Where We Live. Bristol, UK
- 27 Urban Design & Cities Planning (UDCP 2018). Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

February 2018

- 10-11 Migrating World: Interdisciplinary Approaches to Migration and Integration. London, UK
- 15-17 World Sustainable Development Summit 2018
- 22-23 Critical Practice in an Age of Complexity - an Interdisciplinary Critique of the Built Environment. Tucson, Arizona

March 2018

- 5 Design Principles and Practices, Barcelona, Spain
- 9-10 HOUSE & HOME '18 / II. International Interdisciplinary Architecture and Urban Studies Conference. Istanbul, Turkey
- 21-23 Education And Poverty. Villarrica, La Araucania, Chile

If you would like to discuss collaboration possibilities across the areas of accessibility, research or architecture for any of your projects, please contact our office.