



## CREATIVE VICTORIA APPOINTS LOCAL BUILDER FOR BENDIGO'S NEW CREATIVE INDUSTRIES HUB

Highly-esteemed Bendigo builders Gerard K House Pty Ltd have been appointed by Creative Victoria to build Bendigo's new creative industries hub - The Studio.

Formerly known as Bendigo Creative Industries Hub, The Studio will transform the ground floor of the former Morley's Emporium site on Mitchell Street in Bendigo's CBD into a place for the region's creative practitioners, entrepreneurs and businesses to work, connect, build their skills and expand their networks.

Gerard K House Pty Ltd, led by managing director, Gerard House, is one of Bendigo's best-known builders with over 40 years' experience delivering major commercial and residential projects in the region.

Major projects completed by the company in recent years include the Environment Protection Authority's (EPA) multi-purpose regional office fit out in Bendigo, which was completed in 2017; the Carisbrook Primary School's new multi-million dollar learning centre; the Castlemaine North Primary School New Learning Centre (and refurbishment works); and the new Total Tools Warehouse and offices in Kangaroo Flat - all completed last year.

Member for Bendigo East, Jacinta Allan, said the appointment of this respected local team reflects the project's commitment to supporting local businesses.

"This project provides a space for the local creative community to come together, share their knowledge and build their business capability. Gerard K House Pty Ltd is part of a highly skilled local team working with ACMI to make sure The Studio is by, for and about the local community - and I look forward to seeing the results."

Gerard K House Pty Ltd will work alongside local architect firm, e+ architecture to transform the ground floor of the 110-year old Mitchell Street building into a bespoke coworking and event space.

An initiative of the Victorian Government's Creative State strategy and led by the team behind ACMI and a Local Advisory Group – The Studio will offer workspaces, meeting rooms, project spaces, a communal kitchen and a presentation space for local creatives and creative businesses to work on site.

The building, originally built in 1910 by prolific Bendigo architects, Keogh and Austen, for the Morley and Johnson and Co furniture warehouse, has stood empty for more than three years after Morley's Emporium, a retail and hospitality enterprise, closed in October 2016. Before that it housed a large Toyworld outlet.

The Studio manager, David Hughes, says Gerard K House Pty Ltd will work with e+ architecture and ACMI to honour the heritage of the historic building while offering the latest in agile workplace design.

“We received a very high quality of tenders to work on this exciting project but Gerard K House Pty Ltd really impressed us with their comprehensive and well thought out tender,” Mr Hughes said.

“They also come with an esteemed reputation within the Greater Bendigo region, having completed dozens of high-quality projects of a similar scale and type. We are incredibly excited to be working with Gerard and his team,” he said.

Mr Hughes said elements of the Romanesque revival style of the building, including the original pressed metal ceilings will be maintained as part of The Studio’s new design.

In December, a Local Advisory Group, made up of some of the region’s most respected creative professionals, was appointed to work with ACMI ahead of the opening of The Studio in the months ahead.

The 10-member Local Advisory Group brings a deep understanding of the creative landscape within the Greater Bendigo region and rich, grass roots connections that will ensure The Studio is relevant to those who use it.

Supported by a dedicated manager and a part-time administrator, coworkers at The Studio will have access up to 24 workstations, high speed wi-fi, bookable meeting rooms, printers, a workshop and presentation space, a kitchen, and access to The Studio’s business and social program. Coworkers will also have access to a bookable desk at ACMI X, ACMI’s coworking space located in the Melbourne Arts Precinct in Southbank.

Gerard K House Pty Ltd joins e+ Architecture, The Local Advisory Group, The Studio’s manager David Hughes, local design and digital marketing agency Creative Revolution and Bendigo-based PR strategist Greta Donaldson as the local team leading The Studio’s development.

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