

Media Release

The Hon Danny Pearson MP
Assistant Treasurer
Minister for Regulatory Reform
Minister for Government Services
Minister for Creative Industries



Sunday, 3 October 2021

NEW HOME FOR GROUNDBREAKING CREATIVE SPACE

One of Melbourne's most unique arts spaces is relocating and expanding as part of the recovery and revitalisation of the city, providing a boost for local creatives.

Experimental arts space, Testing Grounds, will move from Southbank to the Queen Victoria Market precinct where it will become a key feature of the new Market Square pop-up park.

At its new home, Testing Grounds will run a creative hub with local artists, and work with the City of Melbourne and the Queen Victoria Market on installations and events to drive creative opportunities and visitation.

The expanded experimental arts space will be funded for the next two years through the \$100 million Melbourne City Recovery Fund – a collaboration between the Victorian Government and the City of Melbourne.

The Market Square pop-up park is part of the first stage of works to transform the Market's asphalt car park into 1.75 hectares of public space.

An initiative of Creative Victoria and conceived as a temporary activation in 2013, the original Testing Grounds turned a long-vacant, over-grown parcel of land in Southbank into a vibrant creative space.

Since those early days, Testing Grounds has been expanded and upgraded with improved infrastructure that was designed to be adapted for different sites. Creative Victoria is now providing this infrastructure to the City of Melbourne for Testing Grounds' next incarnation in the Queen Victoria Market Precinct.

Testing Grounds is expected to reopen as part of the Market Square pop-up park at QVM by the end of the year.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Creative Industries Minister Danny Pearson

"Testing Grounds has provided creatives with vital space, support and opportunities to develop their ideas and connect with audiences for the past 8 years."

"The space is vital for artists to come together to test, develop and present new ideas and I look forward to seeing our creative community – and our city – reactivate and rebound."

Quote attributable to Lord Mayor Sally Capp

"We know ambitious arts projects like Testing Grounds will entice people back to the city and play an important role in Melbourne's economic recovery."

Quote attributable to Testing Grounds Practice Program Director Arie Glorie

"Testing Grounds is one of Victoria's most important and innovative arts incubators, providing creatives with the space to test, develop and share their work with the community."