

Collections Projects Program 2023

University of Melbourne

International House Collection

Project Description

Research and Interpretation project - Samuel Wadham Wing

The Project

This project involves using archival sources to research into the architectural and historical significance of the Samuel Wadham Wing at International House. The building was designed by the architectural firm Mockridge Stahle & Mitchell who designed other University and college buildings including the Medical Building (at the corner Royal Parade and Grattan Street) and the Cowan Wing at Trinity College. This year marks sixty years since the official opening of International House's second purpose-built accommodation building, and findings from this project will improve our knowledge and appreciation of the architectural significance of 'Wadham'.

Background

[International House](#) is a hall of residence owned by the University of Melbourne. Housing students from both Australia and overseas, IH was established in response to housing problems faced by international students in Melbourne in the late 1940s and early 1950s. IH's first residents (all male) arrived in 1957, with the official opening taking place the following year. The first female residents arrived in 1972, making International House the University of Melbourne's first residential college to admit women. In 2017 International House celebrated its sixtieth anniversary.

The [International House Collection](#) includes archives, photographs, artworks, furniture, objects and building fragments. Collection materials relate to themes and events such as the Colombo Plan, Asia-Australia relations, the experiences of international students and the history of the University of Melbourne. Materials in the IH Collection also relate to broader social themes including women's education, student housing and the 'internationalisation' of higher education. For more information about the history of International House, see <https://ihouse.unimelb.edu.au/about/history>.

Details

Working under the supervision of the Librarian and Archivist, you will draw on archival resources to complete in depth research into the historical and architectural significance of the Samuel Wadham Wing at IH. There will be the opportunity to contribute blog posts on the research findings, and if interested create content for other public channels. To be successful in this project you will ideally be enrolled in the Master of Urban and Cultural Heritage or have a comprehensive knowledge of architectural history. While a familiarity with International House would be beneficial, one of the main attributes we seek is curiosity about the subject area with a specific interest in architecture. A willingness to learn and follow the correct procedures for handling archival materials is required, as the project will involve handling and close inspection of collection items. Familiarity with resources for historical research would also be highly regarded, but training and support will be provided.

Benefits

Opportunity to work closely with one of the University of Melbourne's cultural collections and professional development through experience gained in research and writing for a general audience. This project will improve our knowledge and understanding of the Samuel Wadham Wing at International House and assist in making the history of International House more accessible to a wider audience and facilitate further interpretation. If applicable, the completion of this project may be able to be used to earn a digital credential for Community Engagement through the 'Melbourne Plus' Program.

Supervisor

Dr Caitlin Stone, Librarian and Archivist, International House

