Press release, Prague, September 7, 2020

**2020 Open House Prague festival has ended. Number of visitors exceeded organizers’ expectations**

**The sixth Open House Prague festival** took place on an **alternative date** **from September 1 to September 6.** The festival started out with a series of small events that livened up architecturally interesting buildings with music or dance. The Cubist [Kovařovic Vila](https://www.openhousepraha.cz/en/building/?key=93), [Braasi Factory](https://www.openhousepraha.cz/en/festival-2/en/building/?key=7), or the Functionalist [Radost House](https://www.openhousepraha.cz/en/building/?key=81) witnessed a performance of classical music done by the Czech ensemble [*Vážný zájem*](https://vaznyzajem.cz/). The premises of [Prague Crossroads](https://www.openhousepraha.cz/en/festival-2/en/building/?key=39) experienced a contemporary dance performance. This year’s theme route titled [Buildings coming alive](https://www.openhousepraha.cz/en/festival-2/theme-route-buildings-coming-alive/) was stirred by a debate with representatives of the [Karlín Barracks](https://www.openhousepraha.cz/en/festival-2/en/building/?key=36), [Radost House](https://www.openhousepraha.cz/en/building/?key=81), or [Prague Marketplace](https://www.openhousepraha.cz/en/festival-2/en/building/?key=68). As part of the accompanying program, the marketplace is where the organizers of the festival also offered a special guided tour focused on the place’s history as well as revitalization plans.

The weekend of **September 5 and 6** was when **66 usually inaccessible buildings** were opened, from industrial monuments to historic palaces, modernly designed offices, eco-friendly buildings, or residential buildings. *“Originally, 73 of our partners had enrolled their buildings, but some of them had to withdraw from the program at the last minute, mostly due to reasons related to the coronavirus epidemic. Despite increased safety measures, we were pleasantly surprised by the amount of public interest in the open buildings. Given that the festival took place on an alternative date and during a situation like this, we recorded roughly half the attendance compared to previous years. We considered that to be a success,”* says festival director Andrea Šenkyříková, and adds: *“We believe the festival has shown the possibilities that organizers of cultural events have, and that even during these difficult times it is possible to prepare an event in such a way that the safety of visitors is not in danger.”*

The highest attendance was recorded in the **newly participating buildings** such as the Cubist [Kovařovic Villa](https://www.openhousepraha.cz/en/building/?key=93), [Straka Academy](https://www.openhousepraha.cz/en/festival-2/en/building/?key=73), [Congress Center Prague](https://www.openhousepraha.cz/en/festival-2/en/building/?key=38), [Sněmovní 7](https://www.openhousepraha.cz/en/festival-2/en/building/?key=18) and [HubHub](https://www.openhousepraha.cz/en/festival-2/en/building/?key=61) coworking centers, [Nusle Brewery](https://www.openhousepraha.cz/en/festival-2/en/building/?key=57), or the recently finished [New Town Hall of the Municipal District of Prague 7](https://www.openhousepraha.cz/en/building/?key=54). Visitors were also attracted to non-traditional premises such as **underground shelters**, **water towers**, **industrial** **and technical buildings**. In collaboration with owners or managers of the buildings, **300 volunteers** took care of the organization of tours as well as the commentary. They appealed to the visitors for mutual consideration and made sure that group sizes and frequency of tours were not exceeded. *“We adjusted the festival program to the current situation, and we tried to offer tours of not only buildings but also of larger areas such as the Exhibition Grounds, Pragovka, Podkovářská, Libosad, or Orionka Tram Depot,”* adds Andrea Šenkyříková. Tours guided directly by the **architects** of certain buildings were also included in the program.

The motto of the Open House Prague festival this year was **Architecture for everyone**. **Children** could build their own building in a lego workroom or come accompanied by their parents on a special tour with worksheets. In three buildings, **hearing impaired people** could attend a tour with translation to Czech sign language, along with a simultaneous transcription of the commentary. For the first time ever, tours were also prepared for **visually impaired people**, who visited seven festival buildings where they not only listened to the commentary but were also able to read more information about the buildings and their surroundings thanks to haptic maps.

The next Open House Prague festival will take place on **May 10–16, 2021**. The non-profit organization *Open House Praha* is also preparing a project for the fall titled **Cubism in Prague’s architecture**, dedicated to **celebrating the anniversary of the birth of Czech architects of the Cubist period**. During this event, the Kovařovic Villa will be opened once again, and there will be walks around Prague prepared with focus on the unique Czech Cubist architecture. More information will be available during September at [www.openhousepraha.cz](http://www.openhousepraha.cz).

This fall, on **November 14–15**, the **very first Open House Worldwide festival** will take place. The collaborative event of more than 35 cities from the international network will offer a livestreamed program including various events, discussions, tours, and more. Open House Worldwide will tackle various topics, from climate change and housing to transport and post-pandemic design. Open House Worldwide festival will be streamed online for free on the website of Open House Worldwide. More information at [www.openhouseworldwide.org](http://www.openhouseworldwide.org).

**About Open House Prague**

*Open House Praha, z. ú.* is a non-profit, non-state organization which organizes a festival of the same name on one weekend in May with a week-long accompanying program. In 2019, during the fifth Open House Prague festival, 80 buildings were visited by more than 76 thousand people, including not only locals but also visitors from the entire Czech Republic as well as from abroad. The concept of the festival was born in **London** in 1992 under the leadership of **Victoria Thornton**, who holds the **Order of the British Empire**. The festival took place in the Czech Republic for the first time in 2015 and has since become one of the most important cultural events in Prague. The patroness of the festival is **Eva Jiřičná**, a Czech architect who lives in London. She was at the start of Open House London and was a part of it for 20 years as a member of the administrative board, as well as a volunteer, and represents an imaginary bridge between Prague and the founding city. Open House Prague is a proud member of the [Open House Worldwide](https://www.openhouseworldwide.org/) international network which joins together **46 cities** on 5 different continents. Aside from holding the festival, the organization is also dedicated to various **activities throughout the year** (for volunteers, partners, the club, the public), including educational programs for children, young adults, or people with disabilities.

**Open House Prague on social media**

#openhousepraha, #ohp2020, #openhouseworldwide

[Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/openhousepraha) | [Instagram](https://www.instagram.com/openhousepraha/) | [Linked In](https://www.linkedin.com/company/open-house-praha-cz/about/?viewAsMember=true) | [Youtube](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCFdVNb874ALQCc2cUTkyHaA/videos)

**Contact for media**

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**Partners**

For financial support:

[Hlavní město Praha](http://www.praha.eu/jnp/cz/index.html), [Ministerstvo kultury ČR](https://www.mkcr.cz/), [Ministerstvo vnitra ČR](https://www.mvcr.cz/), [Architekti Headhand](http://www.headhand.cz/), [Městská část Praha 4](https://www.praha4.cz/), [Městská část Praha 6](https://www.praha6.cz/), [Městská část Praha 7](https://www.praha7.cz/), [Městská část Praha 1](https://www.praha1.cz/), [Městská část Praha 8](https://www.praha8.cz/), [Státní fond kultury](https://www.mkcr.cz/statni-fond-kultury-cr-42.html), [Nadace české architektury](https://nca.info/)

Partners:

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Media partners:

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Open House Prague is part of the [Open House Worldwide](http://www.openhouseworldwide.org/) international network.

The festival is held under the auspices of the following people: **Lubomír Zaorálek** – culture minister; **Zdeněk Hřib** – mayor of Prague; **Petr Hlaváček** – deputy mayor of Prague; **Hana** **Třeštíková** – councilor for culture, protected buildings care, exhibitions, and tourist industry; **Jan Chabr** – councilor for property management; **Nick Archer** – United Kingdom ambassador; **Ondřej Boháč** – director of the Prague Institute of Planning and Development; **Naděžda** **Goryczková** – CEO of the National Heritage Institute; **Petr Hejma** – mayor of the Prague 1 Municipal District; **Jana Černochová** – mayor of the Prague 2 Municipal District; **Jiří Ptáček** – mayor of the Prague 3 Municipal District; **Irena Michalcová** – mayor of the Prague 4 Municipal District; **Michal Hroza** – deputy mayor of the Prague 4 Municipal District; **Renáta** **Zajíčková** – mayor of the Prague 5 Municipal District; **Ondřej Kolář** – mayor of the Prague 6 Municipal District; **Jan Čižinský** – mayor of the Prague 7 Municipal District; **Ondřej Gros** – mayor of the Prague 8 Municipal District; **Jan Jarolím** – mayor of the Prague 9 Municipal District; **Renáta Chmelová** – mayor of the Prague 10 Municipal District; **Miloš Růžička** – mayor of the Prague-Ďáblice Municipal District.