FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**NEW PLACEMAKING STRATEGIES REMOVE BARRIERS TO CREATING RESILIENT CITIES, FAST-TRACKING CHANGE THROUGH MICRO-GRANTS**

**Creating resilient and inclusive public space tops the *New Urban Agenda* at Habitat III side event hosted by Melbourne-based placemaking innovators**

**Melbourne, 17 October 2016** – Australian social enterprise CoDesign Studio will demonstrate how local governments and citizens can effectively collaborate to tackle inequality and improve urban resilience at Habitat III, the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development, in Quito, Ecuador.

In partnership with the Rockefeller 100 Resilient Cities Program (Resilient Melbourne), the award-winning design group will represent Australia as just one of approximately 10 civil society organisations selected out of a pool of thousands to deliver an official side event at the international urbanisation summit from 17-20 October 2016.

CoDesign Studio (CoDesign) will explore opportunities to achieve change in the way we plan, connect and live in cities, examining participatory planning and collaborative design strategies to address the challenges of social isolation endemic in cities today.

In the face of rapid urbanisation, rethinking the systems that shape our cities to create more inclusive places demands governments, planners, service providers and citizens take a more active role in delivering and managing public space.

“Changing the way local governments and communities work together can remove roadblocks and improve the delivery of high-quality and equitable public space,” said Lucinda Hartley, co-founder at CoDesign Studio and facilitator of the Habitat III side event.

“We can look beyond traditional urban planning mechanisms to unlock the creative potential of everyday citizens to strengthen their own communities quickly, sustainably and cost-effectively,” Hartley said.

The design social enterprise is renowned for its collaborative city-making methodology and the practice of placemaking, turning redundant or vacant land into thriving, authentic community places that promote wellbeing and social cohesion.

CoDesign will draw on ‘The Neighbourhood Project’ as a case study for organisational change within government planning spheres, advancing a “People-Process-Place” framework to produce resilient public places that uphold the socio-economic functions of a city and support strategies for improved health, well-being and environmental quality.

Launched in April 2016, the Neighbourhood Project enables communities to transform underutilised streets and blocks into new public spaces using tactical urbanism, a lighter, quicker and cheaper approach to neighbourhood-building when permanent infrastructure is not possible or planned. More information about the Neighbourhood Project is available at **theneighbourhoodproject.org.**

The Habitat III Conference was convened by the United Nations General Assembly to reinvigorate the global commitment to sustainable urbanisation and to focus on the implementation of a [New Urban Agenda](https://www2.habitat3.org/bitcache/97ced11dcecef85d41f74043195e5472836f6291?vid=588897&disposition=inline&op=view), an action-oriented document for governments, the private sector and other urban actors which will set global standards of achievement in sustainable urban development.[[1]](#footnote-1)

More information about Habitat III, including the complete conference program and international participants, is available at **habitat3.org**.

**About CoDesign Studio**

[CoDesign Studio](http://www.codesignstudio.com.au/) is a design and placemaking social enterprise that empowers local citizens to shape their neighbourhoods. We help revitalise cities and towns from the bottom up. Tackling issues of urban safety and social connection, CoDesign equips communities with tools and opportunities to transform underused public spaces into thriving community assets. Our award-winning collaborative city-making methodology is used by local governments, developers and citizens to revitalise neighbourhoods and improve social inclusion. Over the past three three years, CoDesign has pioneered a faster, cheaper approach to community building, tested on more than 50 projects and resulting in opportunities for 10,000 people to contribute to projects that improve their lives.

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For further information, please contact:

Dani De Rose

Senior Project Manager

t: 9417 0020

dani@codesignstudio.com.au

1. UN 2016. Habitat III – New Urban Agenda: Draft outcome document for adoption in Quito, October 2016, 10 September 2016, <https://www2.habitat3.org/bitcache/97ced11dcecef85d41f74043195e5472836f6291?vid=588897&disposition=inline&op=view> [↑](#footnote-ref-1)