

MEDIA RELEASE

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## **Bates Smart announced as design consultant for new Australian Embassy in Washington**



**New Australian Embassy by Bates Smart**

Australian Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Honourable Julie Bishop MP today announced Australian architecture practice Bates Smart as the design consultant for the new Australian Embassy in Washington.

The competition winning design by Bates Smart, in partnership with local firm KCCT, is to be located at the diplomatic heart of Washington with views of the White House.

The environmentally sensitive design embodies the spirit of Australia through direct references to the distinctive Australian landscape: its bright and clear natural light and open skies, its warm materiality and its vast scale. The use of these associations will create a civic building and symbol of Australia that is both enduring and welcoming.

An expansive glass atrium floods the centre of the building with natural light. At ground floor level a large open public space announces itself as the grand entry into the building looking

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back towards the White House. This space leads guests into a sequence of finely crafted open, exhibition gallery and bespoke function spaces used for ceremonial and public functions.

Surrounding the atrium space on the upper levels is a series of flexible working areas, creating a highly contemporary, healthy and open workspace setting.

Innovative environmental design solutions permeate the building achieving the highest global environmental design standards available. Features include a thermally efficient façade, a green roof with an extensive photovoltaic array, expansive use of natural light and the latest building services technologies.

The new Australian Embassy will replace the existing embassy building which was also designed by Bates Smart in 1964. The original design by Sir Osbourne McCutcheon was the first purpose-built Australian embassy building since Australia House was constructed in London in 1918.

Kristen Whittle, Director, Bates Smart comments:

“It is with great pride that we have the opportunity to replace this building with the next generation of Bates Smart design. The design of the new Embassy has been inspired by the unique and beguiling beauty of the Australian landscape. The project has a refined and rich materiality which will make it stand out in Washington.”

**Ends.**

**Images can be downloaded here** <https://batesmart.sharefile.com/d-s19b9a2636d142dcb>  
**Credit Bates Smart**

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## **Notes to Editors**

**Bates Smart** has a 163 year legacy dating back to architect Joseph Reed in the 1850s. The practice has been responsible for some of the largest commissions in Australia and is one of the pioneers of Modernism across Australia. **Bates Smart** is a multidisciplinary design firm delivering architecture, interior design and urban design across Australia, with a staff of over 200 in studios in Melbourne and Sydney. Our award-winning projects transform the city fabric and the way people use and inhabit urban spaces and built environments. We understand the social and economic forces currently shaping communities and their impact on built environments of the future. Bates Smart's founders were the innovators of their time, and the practice now leads the debate on how and where we work, meet, live, learn and heal.

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**Kristen Whittle, director** was educated at Manchester University in England and SCI-Arc in Los Angeles. He then went on to work with Herzog & De Meuron in Basel Switzerland, playing a lead design role roll on the Laban Dance Centre and Tate Modern Museum of Modern Art project in London. At Bates Smart, Kristen has taken a central design role in the Melbourne office. Kristen was the design director for the new Royal Children's Hospital in Melbourne which won the 2012 Victorian Architecture Medal, the 2012 World Architecture Award (health), the 2012 National Infrastructure project in Australia, and the 2012 LEAF International Interior Design award.