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## Qualifications

Master of Environmental Science (Monash University)  
Graduate Diploma - Local and Applied History (Armidale CAE)  
Bachelor of Arts - Political Sociology (Melbourne University)

## Memberships

Member - Planning Institute of Australia – Certified Practising Planner  
Member - Professional Historians Association  
Member - Australia ICOMOS  
Member - ICOMOS International Committee on Intangible Cultural Heritage  
Member - Australia ICOMOS Burra Charter Guidelines Working Group

## Expertise

Chris is a strategic planner who specialises in heritage and community planning projects. She has skills in strategic thinking and policy analysis, and is solutions oriented in her approach. Chris brings her facilitation skills to all her work, seeking to engage people effectively. She is an experienced trainer.

Working with communities, especially in relation to their connection to place and landscape is a key part of her work, and she has a national reputation for her contributions to the development of social significance methods.

The assessment of social value is an area of special expertise. Over the last 15 years, Chris has been at the forefront of developing Australian approaches and methods for the systematic and careful identification of social value of heritage places and the involvement of communities. She has carried out a number of commissioned projects in this area, and contributed to the development of methods through publications, training and conference presentations. Her paper, *What is Social Value?*, published by the Australian Heritage Commission in 1992, has become a standard reference on the assessment of social value. She was a member of the Burra Charter Working Group that developed the current *Burra Charter* (1999).

## Experience

Chris Johnston is the founder and a Director of Context. Chris is an experienced facilitator who specialises in community consultation and involvement, and in understanding the value of heritage and attachment to place. Chris is also a strategic planner who works with government, private organisations and communities in the development of strategic directions, policies and actions.

Prior to establishing Context, Chris worked on strategic regional planning at Upper Yarra Valley & Dandenong Ranges

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Authority, landscape and heritage assessment with the National Trust, environment and heritage planning and policy for the Victorian government, and taught in socio-environmental research, policy and public participation at RMIT.

Since starting the business in 1984, consulting has been her full-time occupation, creating Context and establishing its credentials in the fields of environment, heritage and community. Over these years, Chris has contributed to many successful projects

Chris loves challenging projects that really engage people. Developing a new national approach to assessing inspirational landscapes enabled her to engage a wide range of people from Australia and overseas who had ideas and expertise to offer. Working with local communities on their heritage places enables their experiences and values to be articulated. In developing policy and a strategic vision such as for the Victorian Heritage Strategy 2005-10, Chris aims to build shared understandings about the importance of our heritage and a strong commitment to its conservation.

## Project examples

**Lake Condah Restoration Conservation Management Plan**  
Winda Mara Aboriginal Corporation (VIC) – 2008

**The Meeting Place Conservation Management Plan**  
Department of Environment and Climate Change (NSW) – 2008

**Inspirational Landscapes**  
Australian Heritage Commission – 2003; DEWHA – 2008

**Community Engagement Training Workshop: Queensland Statewide Heritage Survey**  
EPA (QLD) – 2008

**Elms Management Strategy: Community Consultation & Education**  
Hobsons Bay City Council - 2007

**Isle of the Dead (Port Arthur) Conservation Management Plan**  
Port Arthur Historic Site Management Authority (TAS) – 2007

**South Bank Board Walk & Expo 88 buildings: Social Significance Assessment**  
EPA (QLD) - 2006

**Victorian Heritage Strategy 2005-2010**  
Heritage Victoria (VIC) – 2005

**Kosciuszko Huts Conservation Strategy**  
National Parks & Wildlife Service (NSW) – 2005

**Mt Egerton Environment Review Committee: Facilitation**  
Department of Primary Industries (VIC) - 2005-ongoing

## Selected publications & articles

### Publications

Johnston, C. *Protecting Local Heritage Places: A guide for communities*. Australian Heritage Commission, 1999.

Johnston, C. *Cultural Diversity and Living Traditions – Social Value, in Monuments and Sites in Australia*, ICOMOS Central Fund, Sri Lanka, 1996.

Johnston, C. 'Heritage studies', Chapter 32 in *Cultural conservation: towards a national approach* Heritage Publication

Series, AGPS, Canberra, 1995.

Johnston, C., 'What is social value' in Heritage: the people's choice, *Trust News*, April 1993, pp. 14-15.

Johnston, C. 'Gaps in the record: finding women's places', *Women and Archaeology Conference*, 8-11 February 1991, Charles Sturt University, Albury (NSW). Published in *Women in Archaeology: A Feminist Critique*, Hilary du Cros & Laura Jane Smith (eds), ANU, 1993.

*What is social value? A discussion paper*. Technical Publications Series, Australian Heritage Commission, AGPS, Canberra, 1992.

## Journals

Dernelly, K. & Johnston, C. 'Empty spaces full of meaning.' *Insite*, Museums Australia (Victoria) Newsletter May-June 2004.

Johnston, C. Tapping into communities, *Landscape Australia*, 4, 2001.

Johnston, C. & K. Buckley 'Communities: parochial, passionate, committed and ignored'. *Australia ICOMOS 1999 National Conference – Rural Heritage: Burra in the Bush*. *Historic Environment* 15(1/2):88-96.

Johnston, C., 'Speaking of People's Places'. Case studies- Empowering Indigenous communities, *27th National RAPI Congress Planning in the Hothouse*, 19-23 September, 1999, Darwin.

Johnston, C., 'At the corner shop' *Folklife News Victoria*, July 1995.

## Conferences

Bell, D. & Johnston, C. Budj Bim: caring for the spirit and the people. ICOMOS 16<sup>th</sup> General Assembly 2008, *Finding the Spirit of the Place*, Quebec, Canada, September 2008.

Johnston, C. Through the fog, the hut – retaining the essence of memory in conserving historic places. *Dancing with memory: oral history and its audiences, XIVth International Oral History Conference*, Sydney, Australia, 12-16 July 2006.

Ashley, G. & Johnston, C. Responding to loss: Managing Kosciuszko National Park's Mountain Huts as Part of a Living Landscape. ICOMOS 15<sup>th</sup> General Assembly 2005 & Scientific Symposium Section III: *Evolving townscapes and landscapes within their settings: managing dynamic change*. Xi'an China, 2005.

Johnston, C. Heritage practice & communities. Presentation at Seminar on *The Universal Application of Heritage Principles* Friday 14 October 2005, Tongji University, Shanghai.

Johnston, C. Heritage & communities. Presentation at *Seminar on Planning and Stakeholders: Scale and effectiveness; community involvement in tourism development; working with stakeholders on heritage issues*, Friday 18 November Macau Institute of Tourism Studies, Macau.

Clarke, A. & Johnston, C. 'Time, Memory, Place and Land: Social Meaning and Heritage Conservation in Australia', *Intangible Heritage, Scientific Symposium, ICOMOS General Assembly*, Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe, 2003.

Johnston, C. & Ramsay, J. 'Dramatic, mysterious, contemplative and scary: seeking an understanding of the inspirational value of our mountains'. *Celebrating Mountains: An International Year of the Mountains Conference*, Jindabyne, Australia, 24-28 November 2002.

Russell, J. & Johnston, C. 'Community and cultural values: the Upper Mersey valley and the Tasmanian Wilderness World Heritage Area', *Celebrating Mountains: An International Year of the Mountains Conference*, Jindabyne, Australia, 24-28 November 2002.

'Is Port Arthur a painful place? Questions arising from the evaluation of social significance of a national heritage icon', Chris Johnston & Kristal Buckley (Context Pty Ltd), *Islands of Vanishment Conference*, 8-10 June 2002, Tasmania. (Also chair of session: Community and Trauma)

Du Cros, H. & Johnston, C. Tourism tracks and scared places: Pashupatinah and Uluru. Case studies from Nepal and Australia. *Making Tracks: From point to pathway: the heritage of routes & journeys*, National Conference of Australia ICOMOS, Alice Springs, May 2001

Johnston, C. & Buckley, K. Telling tales: place attachment and government action. Traditions and transitions: Folk narrative in the contemporary world. *13<sup>th</sup> Congress of the International Society for Folk Narrative Research*, 16-20 July 2001, University of Melbourne, Australia.

Opening Debate - Development, Environment, Lifestyle, *Planning for Sustainable Development: Solutions for the 1990s*. Biennial Congress of the RAPI, LGPA, AAPC, Canberra, 1992.

Johnston, C., 'Whose views count: achieving community support for landscape conservation'. *Australia ICOMOS Cultural Landscapes Conference*, November 1989, Lanyon Homestead, Canberra. Published in *Historic Environment*, 7 (2), 1989.

Johnston, C., 'Cultural identity & place', *Australia ICOMOS Central Goldfields Conference*, August 1988.