

City Recital Hall Leaps into Inclusive Sound: Loops Refreshed, Auracast Switched On



HEARING MATTERS AUSTRALIA
Support from real life experience

By **Brendan Lonergan** - President of Hearing Matters Australia

City Recital Hall in Angel Place, Sydney, has taken a bold step toward inclusive sound. The venue has completed a landmark upgrade to its assistive listening systems—pairing refreshed counter hearing loops with a venue-wide rollout of Bluetooth® Auracast™ broadcast audio. The result is a richer, more flexible listening experience that makes world-class acoustics accessible to everyone, whether they use hearing aids, cochlear implants, headphones, or everyday earbuds.



City Recital Hall. Image supplied by CRH.

A New Era of Listening

For decades, most public venues have relied on induction hearing loops or traditional radio-frequency and infrared systems. These technologies have served millions well, providing speech clarity and connection for people with hearing loss. But they also have limitations: loops typically cover fixed seating zones, and audio fidelity can vary depending on position, interference, and performance type.

City Recital Hall's new configuration takes the best of both worlds. Traditional loops remain active at the Box Office and Cloak Room—ideal for short conversations and service interactions.

Meanwhile, Auracast technology now extends crystal-clear broadcast audio throughout the foyers, auditorium, and public spaces. Patrons can enjoy consistent sound quality from almost anywhere in the building, free from the physical boundaries of traditional loop zones.



“City Recital Hall is known for its world-class acoustics,” said CEO Kate Wickett. “Upgrading to Auracast moves us closer to our broader mission of fostering a more inclusive live music ecosystem—one where quality sound is available to everyone. Traditional systems like

induction loops can distort music and limit where users sit. Our new system overcomes these barriers by delivering high-quality sound to a range of compatible devices across our entire venue.”

How It Works

Auracast represents a breakthrough in Bluetooth® LE Audio technology. It allows a venue to broadcast its sound directly to any number of compatible devices—without individual pairing. For listeners, joining the Hall's broadcast is as simple as connecting to Wi-Fi.

At City Recital Hall, patrons have two easy options:

Option 1. Bring your own device.

If your hearing aids, cochlear implant processor, earbuds, or headphones support Auracast, you can connect directly through your Bluetooth settings and select the Hall's audio feed—no accessories or pairing codes required.

A growing list of Auracast-enabled devices can be found via the Bluetooth® Technology website. [Find an Auracast™ Product | Bluetooth® Technology Website](#)

Auracast Earbuds include – Audeara Buds, JBL Tour Pro 3, Senheisser True Wireless 4

Option 2. Borrow a receiver.

For those without Auracast-ready equipment, free receiver packs are available at the Cloak Room. Simply plug in your own headphones

or request a neckloop, scan for the Hall's broadcast, and adjust the volume to your comfort. Step-by-step instructions are available on the Hall's **Accessibility** webpage, and friendly staff are always ready to help. [Accessibility at City Recital Hall - City Recital Hall](https://www.cityrecitalhall.com/visit/accessibility/) (Link: <https://www.cityrecitalhall.com/visit/accessibility/>)



AURI Auracast Receiver.

Meanwhile, the hearing loops at the Box Office and Cloak Room remain available for telecoil users—creating a seamless combination of traditional and next-generation listening support in one venue.

Collaboration and Support

The installation was delivered in collaboration with leading audio-visual distributor **Jands**, and supported by the **NSW Government's** Sound NSW Venue Upgrade Grant Program. **Hearing Matters Australia** was proud to support City Recital Hall's successful grant application, recognising the project as a model of what modern accessibility can look like.

This partnership reflects a growing recognition that accessible sound is not a technical extra—it is *cultural infrastructure*. Just as good lighting and comfortable seating shape audience experience, so too does the ability to clearly hear what's on stage.

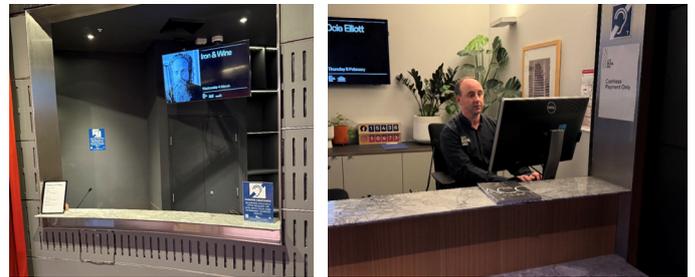


Ed Nixon Technical Director CRH with Andrew Bellavia from Aura Futurity. Photo by Brendan Lonergan.

"At City Recital Hall, we chose to install an Auracast system in the auditorium because it integrates seamlessly with our existing audio infrastructure and delivers a far more consistent, high-quality experience for patrons with hearing disabilities. While our original

T-Loop remains in place, it now acts purely as a backup in the highly unlikely event of an Auracast outage. We've installed two Auracast transmitters in the auditorium to ensure even coverage across all seating and standing areas, plus an additional transmitter in our function room and two more as floating units for foyer activations. We've also added localised T-Loops at our Box Office and Cloakroom, giving patrons a clear and dependable way to hear staff even in noisy environments. These decisions were all about strengthening accessibility, improving clarity, and ensuring every visitor can fully engage with the experience."

— **Ed Nixon**, Head of Technical Operations, City Recital Hall



City Recital Hall Cloakroom where the Auri Receivers can be collected. City Recital Hall Ticket Office – Has a hearing loop installed.

Image: Supplied by CRH.

A Growing Sydney Movement

City Recital Hall's upgrade forms part of a wider movement across Sydney to make high-quality hearing access a standard feature of public venues. Earlier this year, the Sydney Opera House became one of the first venues in the world to introduce Auracast across its performance spaces, setting a global benchmark for inclusive sound design.

With more Australians now adopting hearing aids, earbuds, and consumer devices that support Auracast, the promise of "connect and listen" experiences is quickly becoming a reality. Soon, patrons will expect the same effortless audio connection that they already enjoy with Wi-Fi in cafés or airports.

What Audiences Can Expect

For concertgoers and visitors alike, the difference will be immediate and meaningful:

Cleaner, clearer sound in reverberant or noisy environments, with speech and music delivered straight to the ear.

Freedom of seating—no longer tied to a specific loop zone, patrons can choose seats based on comfort and sightlines.

No special headset required if using Auracast-ready devices, though free receivers remain available for anyone who prefers them.

Seamless coverage from foyer to auditorium, ensuring consistent sound during announcements, pre-show talks, and performances alike.

Tips for First-Time Users

If it's your first time connecting, here are a few helpful pointers:

Check your device: Many 2024–25 models of hearing aids, earbuds, and headphones already support LE Audio and Auracast.

Use a neckloop if needed: For hearing aids with a telecoil program, the receiver-neckloop setup remains a simple bridge between old and new.

Arrive a few minutes early: Connecting only takes a moment, but staff can help guide you through it if you're unsure.

Learn more: To keep up to date with the available Auracast devices range visit the Auracast™ [product finder](https://www.bluetooth.com/auracast/find-a-product/) (link: <https://www.bluetooth.com/auracast/find-a-product/>) for the latest compatible devices.

Why This Matters

For people who are deaf or hard of hearing, true accessibility is not just about louder sound—it's about clarity, intelligibility, and choice. City Recital Hall's dual-system approach recognises that different listening contexts call for different solutions. Whether through telecoil loops or Auracast streams, every visitor can access sound that meets their needs.

The shift also mirrors a broader transformation in assistive listening worldwide. Manufacturers are rapidly introducing Auracast-enabled hearing aids, earbuds, and smartphones. At the same time, forward-thinking venues like City Recital Hall are re-imagining accessibility as a core service layer, as vital to the visitor experience as lighting, seating, or acoustics.

A Benchmark for Australian Venues

By linking advanced technology with social inclusion, City Recital Hall has created a new benchmark for accessibility in live performance venues. Its collaboration with **Jands** and **AuraFuturity**, backed by **the NSW Government**, shows what can happen when policy, technology, and purpose align.

Kate Wickett summed it up best:

"City Recital Hall has always been about the power of music to connect. With Auracast, that connection is clearer than ever. We're ensuring that everyone—regardless of how they listen—can experience the same beautiful sound."

The Sound of Inclusion

City Recital Hall has long been one of Sydney's most beloved spaces for chamber music, jazz, and contemporary performance. With its new Auracast broadcast audio system and refreshed hearing loops, it is now equally a leader in accessible sound design.

Whether you tune in through state-of-the-art hearing aids, consumer earbuds, or a simple loan receiver, one thing is certain: at City Recital Hall, **great sound truly is for everyone.**

If you would like to check out the City Recital Hall Auracast experience for yourself please check out the extensive list of upcoming events on [City Recital Hall - City Recital Hall](https://www.cityrecitalhall.com/) (Link: <https://www.cityrecitalhall.com/>).

- 1. Astral & CRH Presents: HAAi**, 5 December 2025. (Contemporary Music)
- 2. Gondwana Choirs: Voices of Angels**, 8 December 2025 (Classical Music)
- 3. Australian Brandenburg Orchestra: Noel! Noel!**, 11-13 December 2025 (Classical Music)
- 4. Sydney Festival & CRH Presents: Emma Donovan**, 16 January 2026 (Contemporary Music)
- 5. Thinkable: An Evening with Steven Pinker**, 7 Feb 2026 (Talks)
- 6. Australian Chamber Orchestra: Rachmaninoff's Rhapsody**, 10-11 February 2026 (Classical Music)

Have you any experiences in using Auracast? If you have, I'd love to hear from you!