

Concurrent Session H
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Session 7

Collaborating to Solve Wicked Problems. Are we Willing?

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Carol Harding is Deputy Director of the Australian Innovation Research Centre at the University of Tasmania and has worked in the sector for 15 years. Her interests are in workplace innovation (with a particular focus on the tertiary education and public sectors), creative thinking and design thinking. She is the Chair of the judging panel for the ATEM/Campus Review Best Practices Award: Excellence in Innovation and runs innovation and creative thinking workshops nationally and internationally.

Heather Davis has been the Program Director-Awards at the LH Martin Institute for Tertiary Education Leadership and Management since July 2012. She holds a BBus (RMIT), Master of Professional Education and Training (Deakin) and PhD (School of Management RMIT). Heather's background is in research management, knowledge work, adult education, librarianship and professional development. Her research interests include university leadership and management, collective leadership, qualitative inquiry, social complexity theories and e-learning. Heather teaches in the Institute's Master of Tertiary Education Management and Graduate Certificate programs. She is also Program Manager for the Emerging Leaders and Managers Program (eLAMP).

Public sectors around the world are transforming their cultures, their organisational structures and the way they deliver services by integrating innovation and design thinking into their processes. What can the tertiary education sector learn from these developments? Traditional problem solving approaches don't work with the sorts of challenging, complex and wicked problems that governments (and universities) are increasingly facing. Policy needs to be more fluid and adaptable in this environment and our workforces need to learn new skills and new ways of thinking. One emerging trend is the development of design/innovation labs to trial new approaches to complex policy issues and program delivery. This presentation will share (a) the results from the OECD conference held in Paris last year on 'Innovating the public sector' attended by 400 representatives from all over the world and (b) case studies on a range of design/innovation labs. In order to gain the benefits that the public sector is reaping from these design/innovation labs tertiary education institutions would need to collaborate. Are we willing/able to do so....?