

Concurrent Session D
Monday 31 August
2.25pm – 3.15pm

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30 Aug – 2 Sep 2015
Novotel North Beach Wollongong



Session 3

The Vertical Campus - Lessons and Speculations for Building Tall Universities

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James Wilson is a Principal of Lyons, an architectural and urban design practice based in Melbourne, Australia. He has extensive national-wide experience in design collaborations with University stakeholders, utilising specialist workshop methodologies to translate the underlying vision that each client has for their project, to encourage a unique outcome.

James is an acknowledged leader in 'next generation' learning space design, campus regeneration projects and building the campus tall; his recent projects include RMIT's Swanston Academic Building, La Trobe University's Sylvia Walton Building, University of Adelaide Medical and Nursing Schools, and University of Newcastle's 'NeW Space' project.

James was also a key contributor in the formation of Melbourne White Night "an annual 'dusk 'til dawn' art festival - that attracts over half a million people to the Melbourne CBD in a single evening.

The University campus has, by economic and real estate necessity, evolved in many worldwide precincts into the 'tall' University. Whilst tall buildings are not necessarily recent phenomena in Universities, the translation of the contemporary multi-faceted campus 'type' into vertical buildings has typically tended towards programmatic separation and stratification - generally more typical of more commercial building models. This presentation aims to explore new ideas in this field, including benchmarking exemplar projects, exploring some 'lessons learnt' and speculating on new design benchmarks for this unique learning environment - *The Vertical Campus*.

How can tall institutional buildings be designed to encourage the transition of inhabitants from 'passive' to 'active' mentors and collaborators – ie. a true vertical academic community? How can learning and research infrastructure and programmatic needs be developed to respond to the urban environment, but still act like a 'campus'? What role does design play in making this a reality? In the information age of 'generation next', education is in an enormous state of flux and competition for students is global –vertical campus design needs therefore to be both an economic reaction to both the value of campus real estate *and* be an attractor for the intrepid global learner. The flagship nature of these building types can also act as effective marketing tools, and can display a more sustainable model of University – one that is compact, flexible and which possess a 'critical mass' of academic activity.

To maximise success and social collaboration, serendipitous connections and vertical interactivity need to be *amplified* in order to achieve key outputs of the contemporary University – innovative learning and research. This paper will explore how program can be stratified vertically, not just horizontally, and how this transforms the typical campus model of an active ground plane into a three dimensional collaborative environment of interactivity, which recasts every level of the building to uniquely engage with the changing vertical environment.

This paper will also discuss intelligent building design strategies and innovative engineering solutions that enhance this idea of breaking down vertical 'stacking' boundaries. Recent project exemplars from Lyons will be utilised to illustrate these key design directions that can be undertaken including;

- University of Newcastle's 'NeW Space' – a 10 level urban regeneration project that will effectively form a new campus for the University in the CBD,
- University of Adelaide's AMNS – a 14 level building on the edge of the Adelaide CBD, that fosters relationships between learning and research in medical and nursing fields,
- RMIT University's Swanston Academic Building – a 12 level radical learning facility that has been in operation for three years, and globally recognised as a leader in educational facilities.

Through these and other global exemplars, the paper will discuss design and sustainability strategies that articulate building form and program, that can speak to and from the campus and its culture, and explore new opportunities for Universities that embrace the vertical.