

Session 7

LEFT SIDE + RIGHT SIDE

Mr Neil Appleton

Lyons

The human brain is an extraordinarily complex organ made up of distinct parts - most of them understood in simple abstract by the common layperson. Often the brain is characterised as having a left side and a right side representing different characteristics of the human physiology and psychology. In effect the bringing together of all of these parts and characteristics is what makes a human, in all its complexity. All of these parts in some ways 'collaborate' to make us what we are.

The new Melbourne Brain Centre at the University of Melbourne and Austin Hospital is an extraordinarily complex facility not least due to the diverse range of organisations and individuals who will be accommodated within this super-collaborative think-tank.

Bringing together 700 scientists from University of Melbourne, Neuroscience groups across a range of Faculties, the Florey Research Institute, Mental Health Research Institute, Brain Research Institute, the National Stroke Research Institute and the Austin Hospital into the new 'Melbourne Brain Centre' has the potential to redefine collaborative scientific research environments.

Each one of these organisations is headed up by a number of extraordinary scientific leaders who would usually be competing for the same research dollar, either via government or philanthropic grants. The premise of the MBC is that their separate strands of research will now connect to create new paths of scientific endeavour into brain research.

Lyons, architect and principal consultant for the MBC, posited that the best way to approach this problem of creating a highly collaborative research environment, was to undertake a highly collaborative briefing and design process – in effect, engaging with a diverse range of users from many perspectives. Fundamental to the success of this project was creating a shared vision for these groups as a framework for the collaborative design process to proceed - so the design outcomes gain wide ownership amongst the users.

Neil Appleton, Design Director for Lyons on the Melbourne Brain Centre, will provide a detailed account of the collaborative design process and outcome of the 3 years of collaborative design endeavour undertaken by the whole project team to make this extraordinary collaborative facility.

This presentation will map the collaborative process from start to finish including:

- Turning a concept design competition scheme into an 'open design' project
- Two sites (University of Melbourne and Austin Hospital) – one organisational concept - one identity
- Vision scope workshopping – strategic direction setting
- Area schedules for a collaborative facility - allowing for soft science space
- 'Hunting and gathering' information in parallel with the envisioning process
- A 'vertical slice' design workshop process to gain cross sectional organisational ownership
- The design refinement process – schematic design and beyond
- Post novation team work
- User group walk-throughs prior to completion.

Presenters Biography

Neil Appleton is a design Director of Lyons and holds a Bachelor of Architecture and Master of Architecture (RMIT University).

Neil is a recognised innovator and thinker in the field of research and educational environments demonstrated by his design leadership on a number of state-of-the-art collaborative university facilities:

- Melbourne Brain Centre, Melbourne University (\$161m)
- New Horizons Centre, Monash University (\$141m)
- John Curtin School of Medical Research ANU (\$135m)
- School of Medicine UWS (\$51m)
- Colleges of Science/Chemistry ANU. (\$200m)

A leader in the delivery of Lyons's™ collaborative design process, Neil facilitates stakeholders in strategic workshops to maximise their input during the design phases of projects. He has specialist expertise in the urban design, new learning environments and flexible laboratory planning and retains a high profile in a teaching role within the undergraduate programs of RMIT.