Constructing an Urban Future: The sustainability and resilience of cities – infrastructures, communities, buildings and housing.

• Paper / Proposal Title:
Teaching Resilience: Aspects of a University Urban Design Curriculum for 21st century Cities

• Format(s):
Pre-recorded Film/ Written paper

• Author(s) Name:
Michael Jasper

• University or Company Affiliation:
University of Canberra, Australia

• Abstract (300 words):
Urban design as a postgraduate university degree emerged in the 1960s as a reaction to the urbanistic shortcomings of town planning. A primarily architect-led response to post WWII reconstruction in Europe and urban renewal projects of the 1950s-60s, urban design education has received renewed priority in recent years. The global importance of the city as the focus of sustainable planning and design was announced in the 1987 United Nations’ report Our Common Future. In intervening years, efforts at policy formulation and implementation have progressed as national initiatives but such efforts in university education have lagged. With epistemic transformations such as climate
change science and a surge in urban migration, the re-examination of urban design curricula is timely as universities seek to develop programs that address city sustainability. What general direction should a contemporary urban design curriculum take to address the scale and complexity of intertwined urban forces and values: should curricula be focused on practice or more research-led and future-policy biased? Should the design studio remain the core of curricula, and if so, which kinds of studio problems are most relevant today? Should the focus be on normative institutions and traditional urban scale problems or more focused on future infrastructures and regulatory controls at multiple scales? Alongside courses in history of city form, visualisation, public policy, and urban economics, what other topics should be included and which collaborative/interdisciplinary models might be adopted? To begin to answer these questions, this paper undertakes a comparative survey of four approaches to a contemporary urban design curriculum. Focusing on key aspects, program structure, and future challenges in the university education of architects and urban design professionals, the paper contributes to scholarship on the practice and theory of city design education and aligns with core Conference themes of sustainability and resilience in cities.

• Author(s) Biography (200 words each):

Michael Jasper is an architect, educator, and scholar based in Australia. He is Associate Professor of Architecture at the University of Canberra where he directs the Master of Architecture degree and teaches in the major projects studio and advanced architectural analysis streams. Prior to joining the University, A/Prof Jasper was a Partner in Cooper Robertson & Partners, a prominent New York architecture and urban design firm, where he directed many of the firm’s major institutional and urban scale projects. His clients included Yale University, California Institute of Technology, and the Cities of Baltimore, Detroit, District of Columbia, and Miami. Jasper’s research investigate two strands in the practice and theory of architecture, the first focusing on architecture composition at multiple scales, the second engaging the theorisation of modernist architectural discourses with a particular focus on the second half of the 20th century. A/Prof Jasper’s teaching develops translational knowledge across three domains: form generation, architectural history-theory, and complex architectural and urban-scale project design. He was Visiting Scholar (2015) at the Columbia University Graduate School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation, and Visiting Scholar (2013) at the American Academy in Rome. He is the author of Architectural Aesthetic Speculations and Deleuze on Art.