

# 2019APCS

*Griffith University Young Professionals' Forum*

## Final Communiqué

*Brisbane, 10 July 2019*

### Introduction to the 2019 Asia Pacific Cities Summit and Mayors' Forum

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An initiative of Brisbane City Council, the Asia Pacific Cities Summit (APCS) and Mayors' Forum is the region's premier Summit that brings together one of the largest number of city leaders with the best and brightest in business. The APCS is focused on bringing business, industry and cities together to enable them to build relationships and effectively contribute to the success and sustainability of our cities into the future.

The Young Professionals' Forum is a long-standing and esteemed feature of the APCS and Mayors' Forum. The prestigious program aims to provide the next generation of leaders with tailored professional development, the chance to develop ideas and city solutions, and network with city and business leaders.

The 2019APCS welcomed back Griffith University as the Major Partner for the 2019APCS Young Professionals' Forum. The 2019APCS Griffith University Young Professionals' Forum presented a curated program in which young professional delegates engaged in thought-provoking conversation and collaborated to propose city solutions to urban challenges relating to the 2019APCS sub-themes:

- Innovation of Cities – Empowering cities, residents and business through innovation and technology
- Mobility of Cities – Moving and connecting people within cities
- Liveability of Cities – Vibrant, diverse and inclusive cities
- Sustainability of Cities – Driving resilient and healthy cities.

These solutions were showcased to all of the attending Mayors, government officials and business leaders on the final day of the 2019APCS.

## Preamble

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Cities are important actors on the global stage. Today, half of the world's population live in cities and by 2030, some 70% will live in cities. The trend is most evident within our neighbourhood.

The Asia-Pacific region is home to most of the world's fastest growing urban areas, and these cities are increasingly recognised as global economic powerhouses. Yet cities of all sizes populate the vast landscapes of this region—from the highlands to the lowlands, through rural and regional areas, along the coastlines and atop the smallest of islands.

Today, the cities of the Asia Pacific sit on the frontline of some of the most pressing social, economic, environmental, development, energy and resource challenges, as well as being at the centre of opportunities for growth and innovation. Cities are increasingly seen as important and global actors, connecting with each other to drive global policy agendas forward.

The Asia Pacific Cities Summit and Mayors' Forum (APCS) provides an important opportunity to share experiences, learn about developments, and consider the futures of the cities in our region.

## 2019APCS Young Professionals' Communique

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One of the hallmarks of the APCS is its recognition that young professionals bring a distinctive perspective to bear on our experience and understanding of cities. We can make an important contribution to the future development of cities.

We, the 2019APCS Young Professionals, are ready to engage in the challenge.

As the leaders of tomorrow, we are keen to play a role in how our cities grow and develop. We value the opportunity to engage in the APCS and to have the space to explore, develop and share our distinctive perspectives and experiences.

Through this Summit we have explored some of the key issues facing our cities and considered how cities will address the challenges of managing rapid urbanisation and social change. The pace of this change is accelerating, and its impacts are less predictable. This demands that we must become more agile and thoughtful in how we respond to change.

The 2019APCS Griffith University Young Professionals' Forum has reflected on core themes relating to the *innovation*, *mobility*, *liveability* and *sustainability* of cities. Drawing on the insights of global experts including the Co-Founder of Netflix, Marc Randolph, and inputs from researchers with specialist knowledge, we have been encouraged to question:

- How do we encourage and capitalise on social and cultural diversity?
- How do we best learn from each other and translate our learnings into innovation?
- How can we promote social justice and help create more inclusive cities?

- How can we best develop and harness new technologies for economic and social development and city governance?

These questions underpin the more specific urban challenges set through the Young Professionals' Forum. Working together, our emphasis has been actively engaging with these larger challenges and identifying innovative solutions and concepts that recognise practical constraints and how to respond to them.

## Innovation of cities: Empowering cities, residents and business through innovation and technology

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Today's cities are hubs for innovative practice, however much of this innovation is disconnected from the operation of a city. Establishing cities as innovative ecosystems requires attention to design. Multiple factors need to be considered to create an empowering network within which entrepreneurs and innovative communities might thrive. Innovation is not simply the domain of governments; a multitude of diverse actors must be involved. Modern cities are well placed to take up this challenge of inclusivity by drawing on new technologies and social media platforms to engage local business, community groups and citizens as co-designers and co-producers of their city's innovation ecosystem.

### Urban challenge

How do we leverage digital technologies to involve citizens and businesses as active participants to improve the planning and operation of our cities?

### Key concepts

- For government to demonstrate commitment to innovation in our communities by providing incentives, both monetary and non-monetary, to citizens and businesses to engage in collaborative problem solving and innovating for social impact.
- Creation of a digital platform connecting citizens to public facilities, spaces and infrastructure using individual QR codes, this may include bathrooms, public transport hubs, park facilities amongst others. The platform will then allow community members to vote on its status or lodge an issue as it arises, generating work requests that might be picked up and resolved by local small business providers.
- Creation of a platform where organisations and business professionals can post callouts for assistance in problem solving or for startups to propose ideas. A range of methods can be utilised to ensure active participation in the community, including townhall sessions, social media and published newsletters.
- Leverage public spaces and community centers with consistent free access to the latest technology by taking advantage of the 5G network. This would then provide additional hubs for co-working and networking arrangements and promote accessibility for more community members.

## Mobility of cities: Moving and connecting people within cities

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Our urban landscapes are expanding and transforming. Moving people and goods across and between locations and within cities efficiently remains a key challenge. Automation, electrification and integration of multiple modes of transport systems has an impact not only on our ability to be mobile, but also on the competitiveness, liveability and sustainability of our cities. How we integrate these transport systems, ensuring safety and accessibility, to connect people, goods, services and destinations through new technologies and innovations will impact on whether or not our cities will thrive.

### Urban challenge

What long-term investments should be made to support clean, shared and integrated transport networks that will serve our citizens and cities into the future?

### Key concepts

- Prioritise and promote active transport such as walking and cycling as well as minimising options for private car use in central business districts, through zonal taxing or fees.
- Integrate real time digital sensors to better collate data on how citizens are using public transport systems and respond with agility to not only meet, but anticipate citizens' transport needs.
- Trial clean, sustainable automated bus loops to keep people moving within inner city areas, while testing and promoting driverless vehicles in city-spaces.
- Invest in integrated transport infrastructure solutions to enable seamless interaction and payment across private and multiple public modes of transport. This integration will connect people from inner city spaces to the 'last-mile' of their commute via the most efficient mode of transport.

## Liveability of cities: Vibrant, diverse and inclusive cities

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The liveability of a city can have considerable impact on individual and community health and wellbeing outcomes. Liveability is not merely about aesthetic appeal or functionality but is directly related to and reflective of the quality of a city's social fabric. This presents challenges, particularly as cities seek to address the needs of the most vulnerable, disadvantaged or isolated.

Today's most liveable cities are those that do not shy away from these challenges, but positively engage and cohere their diverse communities. Creative endeavours allow communities to share their identities and offer the potential to activate, reimagine and enrich city spaces in ways that build aesthetic appeal while generating social interaction and belonging. These endeavours can be transformative, while offering new lessons about city liveability in a global world.

## Urban challenge

How can urban planning and activating public spaces maintain quality of life that is inclusive to growing, aging and diverse populations?

### Key concepts

- Integrate social connection into public spaces through interactive displays, conversation benches and more planned events in order to target social isolation in our cities.
- Develop new community gardens and better utilise already existing ones. Further, online engagement through cooking tutorials can be used to engage youth in the project and bridge the gap between different generations, in order to engage with aging populations and to provide them with a sense of place and purpose.
- Invite community members to share their experiences and empower them to be involved in designing public spaces that meet their needs, in order to encourage the active participation of local communities. In particular, cities can allow communities to repurpose old spaces and run programs that they are actually interested in. This could be a tool shed, a social enterprise cafe and other cultural and artistic activities.
- Cities can support and activate existing cultural hubs by making them more accessible to the wider public and ensuring these spaces feel safe for the public to visit at night. This would encourage the wider community to engage in these rich, authentic cultures.
- Our solutions call upon city planners to think differently about the way we plan cities by shifting the focus towards the user and hearing the perspectives of people with varied experiences and needs. This will ensure that our public spaces are accessible and fit for purpose for the people who will use them, now and in the future.

## Sustainability of cities: Driving resilient and healthy cities

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The arrival of the urban century requires us to think specifically about what sustainable cities look like across various contexts, and to look more closely at how cities need to adapt differently to the opportunities and challenges they face. It is clear that the potential exists for cities of the Asia Pacific to work together more effectively, including through regional networks and strategies, to share knowledge, identify risks and translate best practice in ways that increase overall resilience and adaptability.

Collectively, we are unsure about our cities' futures. Disruption across all sectors will undeniably cause significant social, economic, cultural and environmental upheaval. This will impact all of us, from those working in industries facing major changes, to those experiencing the effects of changes in climate and weather patterns.

## Urban challenge

How can new world cities collaborate by sharing their learnings with emerging cities to achieve long-term sustainability and resilience?

## Key concepts

- Agree to a common Asia Pacific cities statement that acknowledges the sustainability challenges facing all cities across region, and commits to transparency, accountability and openness.
- Deepen people-to-people connections between Asia-Pacific cities beyond this Summit, including through a city-city exchange program for planners and policymakers to improve understanding, transfer knowledge and skills, and foster connections that might guide, inform and inspire future planning in the region.
- Encourage and invest in multi-city research collaborations aimed at tackling the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in cities, and in the region. Evaluate and report on outcomes to the Asia Pacific Cities Summit.
- Establish a city-to-city mentoring program and create a digital knowledge hub where participating cities might share common issues, approaches and lessons learned for improving sustainability.

## Conclusion

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As future leaders, we realise we will need to listen deeply, stand in the shoes of others and build on the strengths and lived experiences of all our communities to find common solutions to shared problems.

Thank you to the 2019APCS for the opportunity to bring our distinct perspectives to bear, for your commitment to listen to what we have to say and for the opportunity to work together in creating better cities in the future.

