

**SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES – CONCURRENT SESSIONS**

**Allen Kong**

Allen is Director, Allen Kong Architects. He has built an award winning international reputation for designing sustainable social architecture. Early work includes disaster relief reconstruction in Afghanistan, followed by research work for Melbourne University Antarctic Studies. Recent work has been affordable accommodation for homeless aged people; people with dementia and other disabilities. His work has received many international awards including UN World Habitat Award, UN Scroll of Honour, Human Settlements, and from International Union of Architects. He is a Fellow Australian Institute of Architects (FRAIA); Member Association of Consultants in Access Australia (ACAA); Member of Building Appeals Board, Victoria; Member of International Union of Architects, Architecture for All; Member AIA National Access Work Group; and Chair of AIA Victoria Access Committee.

**Apeksha Gohil**

Dr Apeksha Gohil is an Occupational Therapist (OT) and currently a lecturer at Monash University. She received her Doctorate from the University of Illinois at Chicago with a focus on Universal Design (UD) as an emerging area of practice for OTs. She brings knowledge and skills in project management related to environmental accessibility through her work in India and in the United States. Her research focuses on the role of OT in the UD process to enable OTs to consult with various stakeholders from diverse contexts such as housing, healthcare, public spaces to reach targeted UD solutions to improve environmental accessibility.

**Bill Forrester**

Bill Forrester has more than 35 years experience and is an acknowledge world leader in accessible tourism, universal design and social inclusion, and the economic impact the retiring Baby Boomers will have on the tourism sector. He is a business focused professional who has a fundamental belief in sound economic management and understand the competitive advantage to be had from effective environmental sustainability and social inclusion. Having formed Travability, he is using his corporate experience to drive cultural change within the Tourism and Travel sectors to provide a truly inclusive experience for everyone through the concepts of universal design.

**Cathryn Grant**

Cathryn Grantis an occupational therapist and access consultant and works at Architecture & Access.  Cathryn has worked as an occupational therapist in hospital and community settings both in Australia and overseas. Her work as an access consultant involves assessing and providing advice on access to the built environment for people with a disability.

**Chris Maclean**

Chris Maclean is Senior Policy Officer, Ageing and Disability with Local Government NSW, the peak body for councils in NSW. His role includes assisting councils with their Disability Inclusion Action Plans, and overseeing the inclusive tourism project. Chris’s involvement with, and commitment to, community inclusion and universal design spans many areas. He brings learnings from over thirty years in community development including sport and recreation, events, arts and cultural services, disability, aged care, children and family services and working with communities from the Kimberley Region in WA to the North Queensland tropics and several capital cities around Australia.

**Courtney Wright**

Dr Courtney Wright is Research Fellow, Griffith University. For the last seven years, Courtney has researched housing for people with disability. Her PhD study, completed in 2016, sought to understand what people with neurological disability want from their homes and communities so that housing can be better designed to meet people’s needs. Her research has informed policy development around the National Injury Insurance Scheme in Queensland, practice guidelines for inclusive housing, and two Commonwealth Government Inquiry submissions. Her work has been widely published in international journals, and presented at several national and international conferences. Courtney is passionate about social justice and working with people who have disability to enable them to live the life they want to live.

**Diana Palmer**

Diana has held an executive position with IDEAS (a non-profit organisation) for more than 20 years. Diana’s career and passion for information provision for people with disability, comes from a varied background. Evolving from initial training as a general nurse specialising in neurosurgery, and ten years in the hospitality industry specialising in hotel room sales and reservations. In 2010 Diana was awarded a Blakeney Millar Churchill Fellowship to study the provision of accessible, relevant information enabling people with disabilities to make informed travel choices - travelling to USA, Canada, UK, Sweden, and China.

**Elise Copeland**

Elise Copeland is a registered Occupational Therapist who completed her Masters at AUT focussing on universal design in the built environment. Elise, as Principal Specialist Universal Access and Design in the Auckland Design Office is part of Auckland Council Project's Design Review Panel, advising on projects such as the City Rail Link and major streetscape upgrades. Elise collaborates with a wide range of disability organisations to support better practice in universal design. Additionally, she is the Deputy Lead Officer for Auckland Council's Disability Advisory Panel. Elise develops and curates content for the Universal Design Hub of the Auckland Design Manual.

**Elizabeth Ainsworth**

Elizabeth Ainsworth, BOccThy (Hons), MOccThy (ConPrac), is a private practice Occupational Therapist and Access Consultant who has been working in the housing field in Australia for over 25 years. She has a keen interest in Universal Design and has presented papers both nationally and internationally on the impact of this design approach on housing design and home modification practice. Elizabeth is a consultant to individuals and their families, and clients in the insurance, legal and construction industries; an expert witness for the Supreme Courts in Queensland and Canada; and a Livable Housing Assessor. She is currently completing a PhD in home modifications at the University of Queensland.

**Emily Steel**

Dr Emily Steel is a Senior Lecturer in the School of Health and Wellbeing at the University of Southern Queensland. Her research has investigated how contemporary human rights principles are translated into policy in Australia, with a focus on assistive technology, accessibility, and choice for people with disability.  Emily is an occupational therapist and has represented Standards Australia on the ISO Technical Committee 173 Working Group 10 (cognitive accessibility) and Occupational Therapy Australia on Standards Australia Committee ME-067 (assistive products).

**Professor Jill Franz**

Dr Jill Franz is a Professor in spatial design in the School of Design, Creative Industries Faculty, Queensland University of Technology (QUT). She has extensive experience in senior management as well as in architectural and interior design practice, research and education. In addition to higher degree research supervision, Dr Franz leads a group of researchers undertaking cross-disciplinary collaborative exploration of the relationship between the environment and issues to do with health, wellbeing and social justice. She is currently working on several government and not-for-profit funded projects in the area of student wellbeing and learning, dementia, aging and disability.

**Karen Fankhauser**

Karen Fankhauser was born with a form of muscular dystrophy. After a fall in 2013 left her fully reliant on a wheelchair, she spent three months in a nursing home learning how to dress, toilet and shower herself.  At that time she didn’t know what universal design was but knew that all housing needed to be more accessible. Karen has since become actively involved in advocating for universal design in housing and visitor experiences. She is a dynamic member of Mornington Peninsula Shire’s disability advisory committee and was awarded Mornington Peninsula Shire’s Citizen of the Year in 2018.

**Libby Callaway & Kate Tregloan** (joint presentation)

Libby Callaway is a registered occupational therapist, senior lecturer in the occupational therapy department at Monash University and director of Neuroskills Pty Ltd. At Monash, Libby leads a range of collaborative research projects focused on housing, technology and workforce design for people with disability, funded by state and federal government.  Libby consulted to the National Disability Insurance Agency during development of their Specialist Disability Accommodation Framework, and at Neuroskills she works with current and future National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) participants on pre-planning and NDIS plan implementation.

Associate Professor Kate Tregloan is an academic and registered Architect.  She focuses on what the creative disciplines, and creative education, offer to interdisciplinary impact and community need and is most interested in how tools can inform the values and judgments of creative practice.  She has applied this in funded research of supported housing design for people with disability, and assessment tools for creative interdisciplinary learning.

**Lisa Stafford**

Dr Lisa Stafford is a lecturer in the School of Public Health and Social Work at Queensland University of Technology, and a volunteer Director Centre for Universal Design Australia, and has a lived experience with disability. She is a social scientist and social planner, with 20 years experience in the field of disability and inclusion with a specific focus on social-spatial needs of children and young people. Her research areas include disability and participation; spatial justice and inclusive communities including universal design, neighbourhoods, mobility, inclusive play spaces, and regional perspectives. Lisa has expertise in person-environment studies, and participatory methods that enable all voices to be heard.

**Lorraine Guthrie**

Lorraine has been the CEO of Barrier Free NZ Trust for nine years where she leads initiatives advancing the Trust’s vision of genuine accessibility and usability of public places. Highlights include the collaboration with disability sector groups to have NZS4121 made free to the public, the growing acceptance of accessibility auditing as a profession, and more recently the Accessibility Charter. Lorraine has a background in education leadership and governance, advocacy and mediation and in community organisations working to improve outcomes for those disadvantaged by bureaucracy. She believes true collaboration, being helpful and not critical, and providing answers is the key to success.

**Margaret Ward**

Originally a practicing architect in the area of housing, Dr Margaret Ward has had a varied career as a policy writer, service provider and advocate in the areas of social inclusion, housing and disability. She received the Public Service Medal for her work in the Queensland Department of Housing. Dr Ward is currently a Research Fellow at Griffith University in Brisbane, Australia. Her doctoral thesis on inclusive housing raises the question of responsibility and distributive justice. Dr Ward is currently convenor of the Australian Network for Universal Housing Design, which has lobbied for regulation since 2002.

**Michael Bleasdale**

Michael Bleasdale is the Managing Director of Home Modifications Australia (MOD.A), after being MOD.A’s CEO since February 2014. Michael oversaw the transition of MOD.A to a national peak industry body with members in all states and territories, promoting the benefits of home modifications and accessible home renovations to governments, providers and consumers. As well raising the profile of home modifications domestically he has forged linkages with home modification organisations and experts internationally. Michael has over 30 years’ experience in community service, working directly with people with disability and in frontline and executive management of national organisations.

**Nadia Feeney**

Nadia Feeney is an experienced digital program manager with extensive knowledge of the tourism industry. Working for ATDW over the past eight years, Nadia has been centrally involved in delivering Australia’s internationally unique digital database of tourism products. Working closely with Australia’s state tourism organisations, Nadia has influenced, and project managed many changes and advancements to the ATDW-online platform - the latest being the incorporation of accessible facility content for tourism products nationally. This project was developed in conjunction with Destination NSW and Local Government NSW, which aims to provide accurate and comprehensive data for the growing accessible tourism sector.

**Penny Galbraith**

Dr Penny Galbraith FAIB, FRICS is a project manager, builder and access consultant with a career-long interest in accessibility and universal design.  Consultancy roles have covered a range of clients and built environment forms.  Recently, Penny assisted the Australian Human Rights Commission build an evidence base in respect of housing policy and standards as well as delivering accessibility and universal design training in Sri Lanka. Penny is an Accredited ACAA Access Consultant, Director of the Centre for Universal Design Australia and Subject Matter Expert on disability for the Australian Building Codes Board.  Strategy, research and futures thinking underpin Penny’s work.

**Queenie Tran**

Queenie Tran is the Chief Operating Officer of Summer Housing, a not-for-profit organisation with a mission to create, lead and demonstrate long-term sustainable changes that stop young people being forced to live in nursing homes. With extensive experience in architecture and access, Queenie’s background offers a unique perspective on accessible housing and the integration of assistive technologies to provide built solutions to suit all people. She provides expert guidance in accessibility across residential, health, commercial and industrial projects in her capacity as the Director of Wall to Wall Design + Consulting, access consultancy. Queenie is also a Director of CUDA.

**Richard Bowman**

Richard Bowman is the principal of Intertile Research, a niche ceramic tiling and slip resistance consultancy. Richard, a ceramic engineer, is President of the Australian Ceramic Society. He chairs the International Ergonomic Association’s Technical Committee on Slips, Trips and Falls, and is Honorary President of the Slip Resistance Group of Spain. Richard serves on various Australian, American, and British Standards Committees and is involved in ISO standardisation of ceramic tiles. He seeks to develop caring standards that provide public benefits universally.

**Thea Kurdi**

Thea Kurdi is an accessibility specialist and dynamic speaker known for her enthusiasm for teaching. She has presented workshops, keynote addresses and lectures at local and international events for design professionals, building owners, and policymakers. Thea was recently selected to give a TEDx talk next January. From the human rights code to evidence-based design and increased marketability, she shares her passion for how accessibility is fundamental to successful architecture. Thea is an Associate with DesignABLE Environments based in Toronto, Canada, and RAIC Affiliate.

**Theresa Harada**

Theresa Harada is an ethnographer at the Australian Centre for Cultural Environmental Research, at the University of Wollongong. Her research interests include understanding how different forms of mobility are entwined in aspects of identity. The interest in mobility is driven by the imperatives of climate change and the need for working towards more sustainable futures while giving attention to issues of social justice and equity. Theresa teaches in the Faculty of Social Sciences and Psychology at Western Sydney University and works as a Research Fellow at Macquarie University.

**Tom Bevan**

Tom Bevan is the Metro Access and Inclusion Officer with Hobsons Bay City Council. He is part of the team that spearheaded Council’s first ever Universal Design policy. He leads the Accessible Beaches Project, which pushes the boundaries of universal design in the natural environment. Before coming to local government, Tom spent a decade working with Lonely Planet, holding executive positions in sales, marketing and publicity. Whilst volunteering for the Big Issue's Street Soccer program, he jumped sectors to work for disability service provider Yooralla where he established the UCAN Café, which change the story of disability one coffee at a time.