

# DOCTOR OF DESIGN

**DDES SPRING  
SYMPOSIUM 2026**  
JUNE 12-14



SCHOOL OF  
ARCHITECTURE,  
PLANNING +  
LANDSCAPE



UNIVERSITY OF  
CALGARY

# DOCTOR OF DESIGN

The **School of Architecture, Planning and Landscape (SAPL)** at the University of Calgary offers Canada's first distance learning, design-based doctoral degree. The DDes is a unique three-year program for architects, landscape architects and planners who want to leverage their expertise in a specific topic area into an innovation with real-world impact.

The program helps bold design professionals to rethink the status quo ways that buildings, communities and landscapes are designed, built and operated. Students formulate a design-based research question from their existing practice-based knowledge and professional experience. They develop their

research through online studio-based pedagogy with a cohort of fellow practitioner-students, working closely with assigned supervisors and participating in dedicated design research symposia to test their work with recognized external experts and thought leaders.

Through this research framework, practitioners identify and develop innovations that make ideas 'project-ready' for integration into practice. The findings of the DDes research contribute new knowledge to the design community and can be used to transform the student's practice and effect real change.

## Welcome to the DDes Spring Symposium 2026!

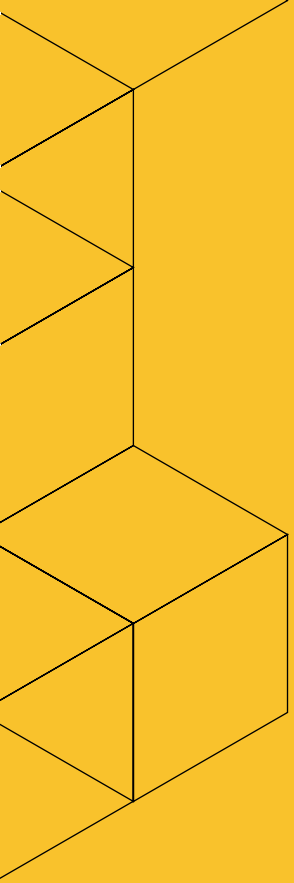
Welcome and thank you for joining us at the SAPL DDes Spring Symposium 2026. Our Doctoral candidates have been diligent in advancing their practice-based research, and are eager to share their work and wisdom with our community.

The SAPL Spring Symposium is in-person, with online participation supported for those who cannot attend. Please note that as per DDes tradition, all sessions are recorded as a study aid for candidates to refer to after the symposium.



**...the DDes is aggregating a unique ecosystem of candidates with a decidedly interdisciplinary approach across the globe, yet galvanizing consistently around both orthodox and novel sophisticated problem-solving methodologies harvested from the tacit knowledge of these master practitioners.**

**Dr. Marcelo Stamm**  
Program Critic



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**3**

Message  
from the  
Dean

---

**4**

Panelists  
& Committee  
Members

---

**14**

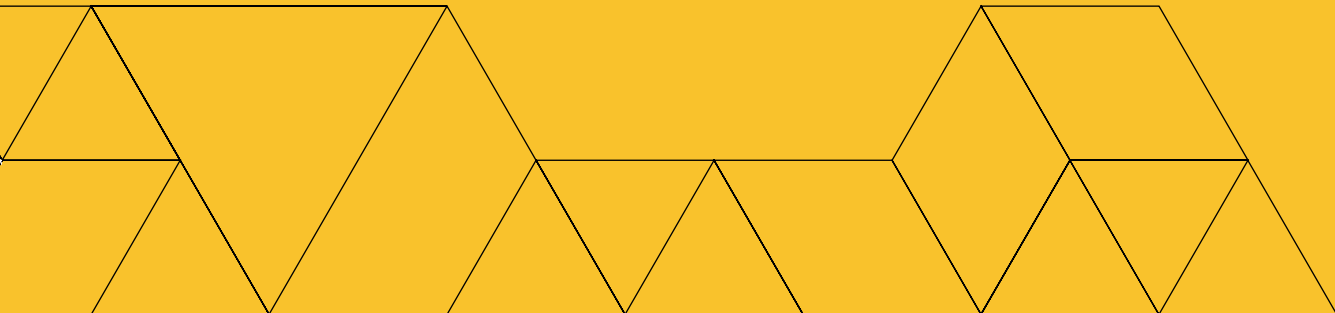
Candidates

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**21**

Research  
Abstracts

# Contents



# Message from the Dean



## John Brown

PhD, Architect, FRAIC Dean and Professor,  
School of Architecture, Planning and Landscape

The climate crisis, rising social inequality, and the digital revolution of smart cities, computational design, and robotic fabrication are rewriting the way cities are being designed, built, and operated. This creates enormous opportunities for architects, planners, and landscape architects to expand their practice, increase their value to clients, and make a bigger and more positive impact in the world. Mid-career professionals have the experience to identify and capitalize on these opportunities but often need a framework to help bring these ideas to life.

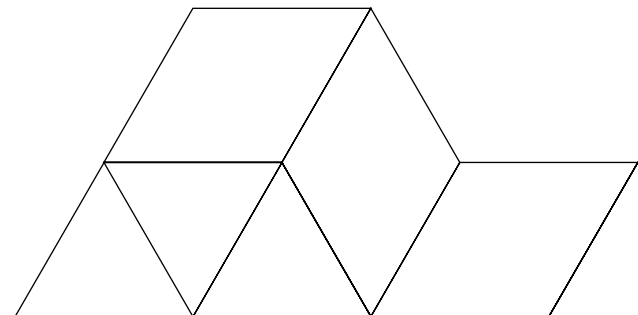
Our new **Doctor of Design (DDes)** program is a place for motivated professionals to develop their particular response to these opportunities and get them 'project-ready' for integration into practice.

DDes graduates use the knowledge generated through their research to open up new areas of innovation, create competitive advantages, and more clearly articulate their value proposition to clients and the broader public. The Doctor of Design also provides an appropriate terminal academic credential for design-based professionals interested in applying for post-secondary teaching positions.

The new Doctor of Design program is distinct from traditional PhD programs because the research is practice-focused and design-based, with candidates developing a work-integrated research program centered around a unique enquiry emerging from their experience and insights in practice. Students remain fully engaged in their working life while pursuing a research program in an intense and rigorous format that is distinct from, but parallel to, their professional work.

The DDes is structured to specifically accommodate the needs of active professionals. Candidates from around the world can complete the degree while remaining embedded in their professional offices. The semi-annual symposia, held in Calgary over long weekends in the spring and fall of each year, are important and exciting opportunities for students to come together to share their work and get feedback from their fellow students, their supervisors, and a cohort of experts.

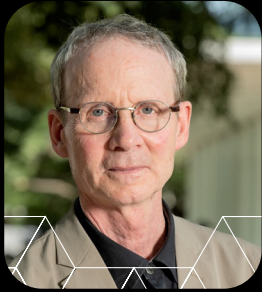
**Canada's first doctoral degree** for practicing architects, planners, and landscape architects, a Doctor of Design, is open to mid-career professionals with at least five years of work experience. Applicants are encouraged to apply early. Significant professional experience will be considered in lieu of a graduate academic degree.





# Panelists & Committee Members

# KEYNOTE SPEAKER



## Peter Hayward Jones

Distinguished Professor of Systemic Design at Tecnológico de Monterrey, Mexico City

Peter Jones, Ph.D. is Distinguished Professor of Systemic Design at Tecnológico de Monterrey, Mexico City, a member of the Faculty of Excellence. He teaches and leads research in systemic social and service innovation, healthcare systems, and dialogic design. He is also an associate professor at Toronto's OCAD University, and advises in OCADU's graduate design programs.

Peter is a co-founder and vice-chair of the Systemic Design Association and is Editor in Chief of the SDA journal Contexts. He is also on the editorial boards of the journals *She Ji* (Elsevier) and *Systems* (MDPI). Peter is founder of two continuing research institutes in Canada, Circulate Health (with OCAD) and the Flourishing Enterprise Institute (at multiple universities), that connect to multiple international institutions. Peter has published over 55 peer-reviewed articles and authored four books on complex design.

Dr. Jones has published a wide range of studies in systemic design, strategic innovation management, qualitative systems modeling, and flourishing business economics.

Research areas include: Systemic and service design, as system-oriented approaches to designing for complex human, societal, economic, community and social health contexts. New business models and ecological economics for sustainable flourishing of enterprises and communities. Scientific and clinical knowledge media design for healthcare, informatics for clinical practice, patients, and complex care problems, and clinical education innovation and multi-perspective health pedagogies. Organizational management and institutional change, involving systemic and dialogic design methodologies for collaborative decision making.

He received his Ph.D. from the Union Institute (Cincinnati, Ohio) in Design and Innovation Management, and the M.A. in Human Factors - Experimental Psychology from the University of Dayton (Ohio), USA.



## Dr. Maher Alrez

**BArch, MUD, DDes.**  
Principal, Khatib & Alami.  
**DDES Alumni**

Dr. Maher Alrez, with a DDes degree from the University of Calgary, is a qualified architect, urban designer & planner who has 23 years of experience in architecture and master planning work for both the public and private sectors. His main area of expertise comprises urban planning & design, architectural design, project, program, and design management. Maher maintained a design studio in Damascus, Syria from 2002 until 2011, and was awarded prizes in several architectural and urban design competitions. His work was published in three design magazines.

He worked as a lecturer in architectural design and architectural history at the International University for Science and Technology (IUST) in Damascus, and participated in various urban design workshops in Germany, Spain, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE. Maher is a member of the Damascus Order of Engineers and the Saudi Council of Engineers and is currently a principal at K&A's Western Province Management Office.



## Dr. John Brown

**PhD, Architect, FRAIC**  
Dean and Professor,  
SAPL

John Brown is Dean of the School of Architecture, Planning and Landscape at the University of Calgary. He is also a registered architect and a founding principal of both Housebrand Construction and FABhome. He is a recognized authority on residential practice, new models of architectural practice, and age-in-community design. He completed a PhD entitled *Going Home: Future Adaptive Building for Aging-in-Place* in 2016 through the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology, Australia.

This research explored new forms of age-in-place housing that combines mass customization and design democratization with digital monitoring/sensing and next generation home-based medical support to create a new approach to housing our older adult population and keep them out of structured care facilities for as long as possible. In 2018, Professor Brown began commercialization of this research and launched FABhome in 2020 to deliver this innovative age-in-community architectural initiative to seniors across Canada.



## Trevor Boddy

**FRAIC, Critic and**  
curator of contemporary  
architecture

**Trevor Boddy FRAIC is a critic and curator of contemporary architecture and a Vancouver-based consultant to architects, developers and museums.** His books, articles, exhibitions and consulting are dedicated to exploring the relationship between design and contemporary city-building. His writings have been awarded the *Alberta Book of the Year* and *Jack Webster Journalism* prizes, *Western Magazine Award*, the Architecture Canada/Royal Architectural Institute of Canada's *2010 Advocacy Award*, and an *Honorary Membership* in the American Institute of Architects and the Bulgarian Union of Architects.

At the 2011 UIA World Congress of Architecture, Boddy's essay (for A/V in Madrid) on contemporary design in his country entitled "MEGA + MICRO: Canada, Innovation at the Extremes" was commended for the *UIA/CICA's Pierre Vago Prize* for best architectural criticism published worldwide. In 2005, he was named Fellow of New York's Institute for Urban Design, and in 2016 of the Royal Architectural Institute of Canada.



## Stephanie Chipeur

**Assistant Professor,**  
Faculty of Law, University  
of Calgary

Stephanie Chipeur holds the Azrieli Accelerator Professorship in Law & Disability Policy at the University of Calgary's Faculty of Law and the School of Public Policy. Stephanie has a JD from the University of Toronto Faculty of Law and is a member of the Law Society of Ontario. She completed her master's and doctoral degrees at McGill University's Faculty of Law. As a wheelchair user, Stephanie brings lived experience to her research on disability law and policy.



## Dr. Darryl Condon

**Managing Principal, hcma  
architecture + design.  
DDES Alumni**

Darryl Condon is passionate about design as a catalyst for positive social change. As Managing Principal at Vancouver-based hcma architecture + design, he has created engaging public spaces across Canada for over 30 years, including community centers, libraries, swimming pools, and high-performance sport facilities. His work has received international recognition, amassing over 80 awards, including four World Architecture Festival (WAF) Awards.

Darryl's DDes research focused on developing an alternative practicing model to ensure long-term public good from public spaces and buildings. He has lectured extensively across North America, South America, Europe, and Australia. A registered Architect, Darryl is a WRLDCTY Global Fellow, a Senior Fellow of the Design Futures Council, and a Fellow of the Royal Architectural Institute of Canada. He is a Past-President of the Architectural Institute of British Columbia and has served as an Adjunct Professor at the University of British Columbia's School of Architecture and Landscape Architecture.



## Alberto de Salvatierra

**Associate Professor,  
Associate Dean  
(Undergraduate), SAPL**

Alberto de Salvatierra is Associate Dean (Undergraduate) and Associate Professor of Urbanism and Data in Architecture at the School of Architecture, Planning and Landscape (SAPL). He is also the Founder and Director of the Center for Civilization, a design research lab and think tank that has secured over \$1.4 million in grant funding for research initiatives in the past five years.

A transdisciplinary polymath, designer, and urbanist, Alberto's work has been published and exhibited globally. He has participated in Harvard Kennedy School's inaugural STS program on Expertise, Trust, and Democracy and an invited panelist and delegate to the United Nations. Alberto is the past recipient of the UN Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN) Local Pathways Fellowship, Cornell's Robert James Eidlitz Fellowship, Harvard Library's inaugural May Crane Fellowship, and Harvard GSD's Penny White Prize.



## Jim Dewald

**Professor, Haskayne School  
of Business, Strategy and  
Global Management**

Jim Dewald is a professor in the Strategy and Global Management Area. From 2012 to 2023, Jim was dean of the Haskayne School of Business. A business leader who can provide an effective bridge between strategy theory and on-the-ground practice, his research interests are related to the micro-foundations of strategy formulation and implementation. Specifically, his work has contributed to the constructs of cognitive resilience, entrepreneurial thinking and strategic response to disruptive innovations.

Jim has two books, two book chapters, and 18 academic articles published in journals such as Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice, the Journal of Management Studies, Strategic Entrepreneurship Journal, Long Range Planning, and Cities. He has received research awards from SSHRC, the United States Association of Entrepreneurship and Small Business, the Real Property Association of Canada, the Alberta Real Estate Foundation, and the University of Calgary.



## Dr. Michael Donaldson

**Founder, Design  
Workshop Architects.  
DDES Alumni**

Michael Donaldson is an architect, artist, and designer. He is the founder of the creative practice Design Workshop, in Toronto, Canada. Design Workshop was founded to explore the fundamental basis and methods of the architectural profession, and to understand how it fits into the various ecosystems in which it participates. Now approaching its 10th year, the practice is currently engaged in a variety of project types and scales, including public art, service innovations, design and construction support and traditional full-spectrum architectural and interiors projects.

Michael completed bachelor's degrees in Fine Art and Art History at Queen's University in Kingston, Ontario, prior to undertaking a Master of Architecture at the University of Toronto. Michael's design approach combines a unique awareness of the Continuum of history and culture with a fluent understanding of contemporary issues of technology and innovation.



## Dr. David Finch

**Professor and Senior Fellow,  
MRU Institute for Community  
Prosperity. DDES Alumni**

Dr. David J. Finch holds a Ph.D. in management and is an active educator, scholar, and practitioner. He has numerous academic appointments, including as a Professor and Senior Fellow at Mount Royal University's Institute for Community Prosperity, and a Visiting Fellow at the Henley Business School at the University of Reading (UK). He has also taught at the University of Calgary and Ohio University.

Dr. Finch specializes in labour market dynamics, focusing on the increasing demand for adaptive and open learning systems. He sits on the Government of Alberta's Minister's Council for Higher Education and Skills. In addition, Dr. Finch is the Research and Policy Director at the LearningCITY Collective. Before this, he was seconded to Calgary Economic Development, leading studies on labour market issues. His DDes research explores the intersection of regional economic development and adaptive learning systems.



## Dr. Teresa Goldstein

**Chief Planner,  
City of Calgary.  
DDES Alumni**

Dr. Teresa Goldstein is the Chief Planner, Director of Community Planning for the City of Calgary, Chair of the Calgary Planning Commission, and an Adjunct Professor at the University of Calgary. A Registered Professional Planner and active member of both the Canadian Institute of Planners and the Alberta Professional Planners Institute, she brings over 20 years of experience in urban planning, with deep expertise in affordable housing, housing policy, community and land use planning, and policy development.

Teresa has been instrumental in shaping Calgary's planning and housing strategies, leading transformative initiatives that have helped redefine the city's urban fabric. In 2024, she was appointed to the National Housing Council, where she contributes to addressing housing challenges across Canada. In 2023, she earned her Doctorate, with a dissertation focused on LOVE; the emotional dimensions of local area planning.



## Daniel Hapton

**Assistant Professor,  
SAPL**

Daniel Hapton is a teaching-focused Assistant Professor at SAPL and the founder of AITCH Design, a Calgary-based studio that specializes in creative renovations. His entrepreneurial spirit and love for expressive design are also reflected in his restoration of musical instruments and passion for improvisational music. Daniel's innovative approach to design is guided by the values of humor, history, multiplicity, disciplinarity, and projectivity, which also shape his work as an educator. He is committed to refining pedagogy, strengthening curricula, and enhancing course coordination.

Through collaboration, hands-on studio experience, and value-informed innovation, Daniel bridges the gap between architectural practice and education, inspiring students to rethink and transform the field of architecture.

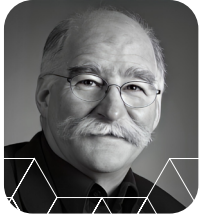


## Greg Hart

**CEO and  
Founding Partner,  
Future Fit**

Greg is a lifetime entrepreneur who has been studying, applying and innovating in the area of behaviour-based design for thirty years. He has applied these approaches in over 200 different challenging design settings from manufacturing to software and even urban spaces. His original background is in ergonomics and he also completed formal education in Critical Thinking. Greg has presented at conferences around the world and has published papers as an independent scholar in the areas of ergonomics and human behaviour as well as the relationship between cognitive diversity and democratic choice.

He is a founding partner in Thin Air Labs, an integrated investment and design company, and the co-founder of InceptionU - an unschool that connects essential design and thinking skills to in-demand technical skills like software development and machine learning. When he wants to relax, he referees lacrosse.



## Dr. Barry Johns

**BArch, AAA, MAIBC, FRAIC, RCA, (Hon)FAIA, LEED® AP. DDES Alumni**

Barry Johns is a Canadian Architect who has maintained a modest design studio in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada since 1981 after a lengthy tenure with Arthur Erickson in Vancouver; serving clients or the profession either as an independent architectural practice or, as a design consultant to other national and international architectural firms. A registered Architect since 1974 and now retired from active practice, Barry Johns developed an international reputation as an innovative and collaborative design professional.

Some of his projects include schools, offices, community facilities, colleges, university and recreational buildings and urban design - each with a commitment to excellence, a pursuit towards authenticity and ‘treading lightly on the earth’ through a portfolio of environmentally driven, sustainable design.



## Dr. D’Arcy Jones

**Architect AIBC, MArch, MRAIC. DDES Alumni**

D’Arcy Jones is the Principal of D’Arcy Jones Architects, a Vancouver-based studio recognized for their award-winning projects. He earned his Doctor of Design degree from the University of Calgary in 2024. Jones is an Adjunct Professor in the School of Architecture, Planning and Landscape (SAPL) at the University of Calgary and an Assistant Teaching Professor at the School of Architecture at Montana State University. He also serves on the editorial board of Dalhousie Architectural Press, where he edits the *Architectural Experiments* series.

Jones was the 2026 Visiting Scholar at the School of Architecture at Montana State University, where his research builds on his practice’s Prix de Rome project, which explores modern interpretations of the ideas embedded in historical solid-wood construction techniques. In collaboration with Colorado State University, his investigations into unusual technical innovations found in Gold Rush-era ghost towns will be part of a book about bohemian communities in the American West.



## Dr. Viren Kallianpur

**Program Manager for Urban Design, City of Richmond, BC. DDES Alumni**

Dr. Viren Kallianpur is passionate about cities, with two decades of experience in architecture, urban design, and planning. He currently serves as Program Manager for Urban Design with the City of Richmond, BC, after transitioning from consultancy to the public sector. Viren advocates for an interdisciplinary approach and incorporates systems thinking into his design and research projects. Originally trained as an architect, his passion for city building has taken him across continents, working in various cities and becoming a registered planner in the U.S. This diverse experience has enriched his design process, grounding it in context and cultural nuances.

Viren holds accreditations in sustainability (LEED AP BD+C), resilience (RELi AP), and health and wellbeing (WELL AP), enabling him to positively impact the communities he serves.



## Andrew King

**Chief Design Officer, Lemay**

Andrew King is a recognized design practitioner, a Prix de Rome, four Canadian Architect Awards and two AIA Progressive Architecture (P/A) Awards recipient. King is Professor in Practice at McGill University and has taught, lectured and exhibited internationally.

King leads AKAFDWRK, working with inclusionary public space, under-represented communities and cultural identity. He was named one of Canada’s design leaders by The Globe and Mail and has led the design for the some of Canada’s most influential projects, including the recently inaugurated Place des Montrealaises and the CHUM super hospital.



## Dr. Marie Cecile Kotyk

**Assistant Professor,  
SAPL. DDES Alumni**

Dr. Marie Cecile Kotyk is a social planner and housing practitioner with 15 years of experience in the public and non-profit sectors. She specializes in designing and managing community development projects and conducting research to address spatial justice and racial inequities in the built environment.

Her passion for Social justice and racial equity led her to pursue her doctoral studies in the Doctor of Design Program at the University of Calgary's School of Architecture, Planning and Landscape. Her research led to the development of a Black Housing Equity Framework, the first of its kind in Canada. This framework is designed to address systemic anti-Black racism and promote equitable housing policies and practices. In 2023, she received the Alberta Human Rights and Multiculturalism scholarship at the doctoral level for her research.



## Dr. Yanghe Liu

**Assistant Professor,  
SAPL**

Yanghe Liu is an Assistant Professor of Urban Planning in the School of Architecture, Planning and Landscape (SAPL) at the University of Calgary. His work focuses on AI-enabled urban planning, design, and analytics. He teaches community and regional planning studios, design software, and GIS. His research explores how generative AI, machine learning, computer vision, and spatial analytics can inform more adaptive, sustainable, and future-oriented planning practices. His current projects examine autonomous transit deployment and the effects of blanket rezoning in Canadian and U.S. cities.

Yanghe completed his Ph.D. in Urban Planning at the University of Florida. He also holds a B.A. in Urban Studies from the University of California, Berkeley, a Master of City Planning from the University of Pennsylvania, and an M.S. in Electrical and Computer Engineering from the University of Florida.



## Dr. Graham Livesey

**Professor,  
SAPL**

Graham Livesey is a Professor Emeritus of Architecture at the University of Calgary. He taught design, architectural history, and design theory for over thirty years. He holds a Bachelor of Architecture and a Master of Architecture from McGill University. He also has a doctorate from the Technical University of Delft in the Netherlands. In 2019 he was elected to the College of Fellows of the Royal Architectural Institute of Canada. Previously he was the Associate Dean (Academic - Architecture), Director of the Architecture Program, and a principal of Down + Livesey Architects.

With Down + Livesey Architects he worked on a variety of projects including: the Vulcan County Administration Building Expansion, the renovation of the Art Gallery of Calgary, and the expansion of the Alberta College of Art & Design. He has served as Treasurer and Canadian Director of the Association of Collegiate Schools of Architecture, member of the council of the Alberta Association of Architects, and chair of the Council of Canadian University Schools of Architecture.



## Diarmuid Nash

**BES, M.Arch., OAA(PP),  
AIBC, AAA, FRAIC(PP),  
HON AIA, HON FCARM**

His substantial expertise in the planning, design, and construction of cultural landmarks is demonstrated in projects such as the Canadian War Museum in Ottawa (with GRC Architects, Governor-General's Medal in Architecture 2008); the National Museum of Saudi Arabia, and the Etihad Museum in Dubai. He chaired the jury for the 2020 Gold Medal and the 2019 RAIC International Prize. He has recently completed a three-year term as Chancellor of the RAIC College of Fellows and is currently on the College's Foundation with a focus on fundraising for student scholarships.

Diarmuid is currently coordinating and teaching the Professional Practice Course in the Masters of Architecture program at the Daniels School of Architecture. Active on committees and Boards of the profession's provincial self-governing and national advocacy organizations, he has served as President of the Ontario Association of Architects (OAA) and the Royal Architectural Institute of Canada.



## Matthew North

**Co-Founder,  
Garden Loft**

Matthew North is a Registered Architect and one of the founding principals of Housebrand – a design/build practice based in Calgary. With more than 25 years of experience, he has completed over 250 new homes, renovations, multi-family and mixed use buildings. His technical expertise is in modular fabrication and systems optimization with a mandate to improve construction speed, quality and performance. Matthew is currently shifting his focus to Garden Loft – where he designs and fabricates modular housing for seniors and people with disabilities.

As co-founder of Garden Loft, he is responsible for the technical performance and factory production of the Garden Loft dwelling units. He is also the creator and host of Plan Attack, which publishes videos and architectural design posts on social media to reach a global audience. The goal with Plan Attack is improve overall design quality through entertainment and education.



## Matthew Parker

**Assistant Professor,  
SAPL**

Matthew Parker is an Assistant Professor with the School of Architecture, Planning, and Landscape (SAPL) – his 3-time alma mater - Matthew brings a wealth of academic and professional experience to the table. As an award-winning and internationally published designer he has made significant contributions to the fields of architecture and education.

His current research interests span a wide spectrum, encompassing the (re)production of architectural images within the contemporary mass-media landscape, innovative design pedagogies fostering alternative models of cultural and environmental sustainability, and the potentials of computation and digital fabrication to support distributed models of design-authorship.



## Dr. Troy Rhodes

**Principal Architect,  
Troy D. Rhodes &  
Company. DDES Alumni**

Dr. Troy D. Rhodes is the principal architect, interior designer, and planner for TDR Transforms and founder of XD Studio + Research Lab. After 25 years of professional design practice, his deep curiosity about the psychological connections to the built environment pushed him to pursue doctoral research related to human-centered university campus planning. The outcome of this research provides opportunities to leverage intangible elements to influence the design of the physical environment through Experience Design.

Dr. Rhodes earned his Doctor of Design degree from the University of Calgary and his Bachelor of Architecture from the University of Oklahoma. He holds architectural licenses in Oklahoma, Texas, and Kansas and is a registered Interior Designer in Oklahoma. Troy is a member of the American Institute of Architects (AIA) and is certified by the National Council of Architectural Registration Boards (NCARB). He serves on several local non-profit boards and is active in his local community volunteering his services to those in need.



## Sally Stewart

**Head, Mackintosh  
School of Architecture,  
Glasgow School of Art**

Sally Stewart is an educator and researcher working at The Glasgow School of Art where she is the Head of the Mackintosh School of Architecture and Professor of Architectural Education and Practice. She trained and practiced as an architect before becoming an academic. Her fascination with creativity began in childhood surrounded by parents, aunts and uncles engaged in creative practices for work and pleasure. This has fed a persistent curiosity in how we act when we are creative and informed her research interest in proactive based research.

Her core interest with students and collaborators is to understand what we do when we do the thing that we do as creative practitioners. Sally has been an external examiner and visiting lecturer in institutions across the UK, Japan and Europe. She is a member of the EAAE council, and project leader for the EAAE Education Academy established in 2015.



## Josh Taron

**Associate Professor,  
SAPL**

Joshua M. Taron is an Associate Professor of architecture at the University of Calgary's School of Architecture, Planning and Landscape where he runs the Laboratory for Integrative Design (LID). His current research focuses on structurally intelligent swarms as an alternative to conventional wholesale building demolition by grafting complex morphological assemblies into existing buildings. The work has been published internationally and orients itself toward finding new ways of revitalizing and sustaining the already-built environment.

Taron is also Principal of Synthetiques, an award-winning research +design+build outfit focusing on the hybrid ecologies afforded through the interface of computational and physical economies across multiple scales. He earned his undergraduate degree in architecture from the University of California, Berkeley and holds a Master of Architecture degree from the Southern California Institute of Architecture.



## Dr. Amy Tsang

**BCSLA, MLA,  
MSc, DDES.  
DDES Alumni**

Amy Tsang is the Principal of Amy Tsang Landscape Architect, bringing over 2 decades of experience in landscape architecture across a wide spectrum of project types and scales, from single and multi-family residential developments to parks, streetscapes, institutional, and commercial spaces. Before founding her practice in 2011, Amy held key roles at several prominent firms, including Stevenson + Associates, Sharp and Diamond Landscape Architecture and Planning, and Perry and Associates Landscape Architecture and Planning, where she served as a Senior Associate.

Amy's practice is defined by a strong commitment to collaboration, thoughtful design, and exceptional client service. Amy was an inaugural graduate of the Doctor of Design (DDes) program in 2023. Her research, centered on a 'Model of Care,' proposes more integrated approaches to landscape design and maintenance—a philosophy she continues to expand in her professional work.



## Dr. Sasha Tsenkova

**Professor,  
SAPL**

A strong commitment to interdisciplinary research and scholarship has guided my career. I specialise in sustainable cities, urban planning and growth management, housing policy and comparative urban development. My research and professional activities in these areas for the World Bank, Council of Europe and the United Nations include a range of housing and urban projects in more than 30 countries in Central and Eastern Europe, Latin America and Central Asia.

I have published 25 books and research monographs and over 70 articles on urban policy, regeneration, urban sustainability and housing policy. My scholarship is internationally recognised by a number of other prestigious awards for international scholars, such as Killam Fellowship, Urban Studies Fellowship, Sasakawa Scholarship, International Peace Scholarship, and British Council Award. Over the last 25 years I have lectured worldwide on urban sustainability.



## Katherine Wagner

**Architect, AAA, FRAIC,  
LEED<sup>AP</sup>, BAA (Interior Design),  
MEDes (Architecture)**

Katherine is a registered architect and associate with the national, integrated design firm DIALOG and has undertaken projects within the cultural, institutional, commercial, multi-family, mixed-use and educational sectors. Katherine is an alumna of the University of Calgary and was a member of the Advisory Selection Committee for Dean, a member of the Faculty Council, scholarship adjudicator, architecture studio guest critic as well as a sessional instructor. She is a member of the University of Calgary Sensate, serving in the public interest to promote the university in the local, national and international realms.

She is a past president of the Alberta Association of Architects, having served the regulatory body as; first vice president, vice president practice, president and immediate past president. She was elected to the College of Fellows of the Royal Architectural Institute of Canada for demonstration of great dedication to bettering her community and profession.



## Brenda Webster-Tweel

**FRAIC.  
Senior Associate,  
Stantec**

Brenda Webster is a leading advocate for regenerative urban renewal with over 30 years of experience in urban design and master planning. Known for her interdisciplinary “spongy” approach, she combines expertise in landscape architecture, architecture, and urban design to create resilient, people-first environments. She has served as the urban planning and design lead for Ontario’s Transit Oriented Community Subway and Bus Infrastructure Design Guidelines, where she navigates the technical and coordination demands posed by Ontario’s expanding transit infrastructure needs.

Since 2019, she has been an active Trustee of her Alma Mater Trinity College U of T. She continues to usher in the new Lawson Centre for Sustainability from concept to Mecanoo design to an imminent welcoming of students to their new home. She is the current Institutional Relations lead for the Federation of Architects for North, Central and South America (FPAA). During her tenure at Waterfront Toronto, she directed transformative projects, including the Port Lands Business and Implementation Plan and the Lower Don Lands Framework Plan.



## Dr. Robb Whyte

**Coordinator - Business and  
Technology Development,  
City Of Calgary. **DDES Alumni****

Robb Whyte is a multidisciplinary transportation planner and strategist based in Calgary. He has dedicated his career to public service, helping to shape the growth and change of the urban fabric of the Calgary community. Robb has worked on some of Calgary’s most significant city-shaping projects of the last 20 years including West LRT, the City Centre Cycle Track Network, residential speed limits reset, the city’s first pedestrian strategy and the data-driven decision-making framework for the parking system.

Recognizing that foundational shifts tend to come from the intersection of different areas of expertise, Robb has strived to work on the fringes of planning, bringing analytics, strategy, operations, management, and public policy into the discipline. He earned undergraduate degrees in economics and philosophy, a master’s in planning and Doctor of Design, all from the University of Calgary. His doctoral research focused on the changing nature of cities and public policy responses to address the emerging issues that they face.

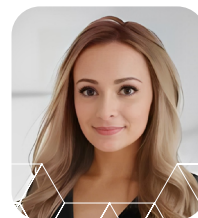


## Barry Wylant

**Graduate Program  
Director, SAPL**

Barry Wylant is an Associate Professor and Graduate Program Director at SAPL. In his work and writings, Wylant emphasizes the “how” of design thinking. With extensive experience as an industrial designer and consultant, Wylant explores the intersection of design, technology, and community impact. His design work has advanced innovation in various areas, including medical and accessibility devices, and consumer products.

His research interests focus on thoughtfulness in design, diagramming, and technological innovation. He actively seeks out opportunities in transdisciplinary settings to apply such design thoughtfulness to aging-in-place and other health related initiatives. Wylant is an innovative thinker and his commitment to bringing a sense of rigorous curiosity to the design process inspires a vision of design practice across disciplines shaping a brighter future.



## Laura Young

**MArch, B.Sc. Arch,  
RIBA**

Laura is an award-winning, creative and personable urban designer and architect with significant experience in delivering innovative, sustainable projects within sensitive contexts. Laura has held sessional and guest teaching positions at University College London, Royal College of Arts London, Royal Institute of British Architects, and University of Calgary. Laura is the Associate Urban Designer and Design Team Coordinator with B&A, based in Calgary and working throughout North America and Europe.

Laura is a UK-trained architect and has worked on various internationally acclaimed projects of varying scales in North America, Europe and Asia, with a background in constructed and conceptual mixed-use, residential, commercial, cultural and resort urban design projects. Laura was previously Principal at LLY Design (UK/Canada) and Co-Founder of Debicki-Young Design Partnership, a successful Calgary-based firm.



# Candidates



## Sarmad Al-Mashta

**Architect AIBC, OAG, AAA, MRAIC, AIA Int. Assoc., LEED AP BD+C**

Sarmad Al-Mashta is a Principal in Transportation Architecture with more than 3 decades of experience leading the design and delivery of complex urban, institutional, and mobility-focused environments. He holds a Bachelor of Architectural Engineering, a Master of Applied Science in Building Engineering, and a Graduate Certificate in Business Administration. His academic contributions include 14 years as part-time faculty in Concordia University's Department of Building, Civil, and Environmental Engineering, where he received the Global Engineering Teaching Award for excellence in pedagogy and curriculum development.

Across international and Canadian contexts, Al-Mashta has directed multidisciplinary teams on major transportation, governmental, educational, and residential projects. As design lead for the Meshahwar Villa, he guided a project recognized through nomination for the 2007 Aga Khan Award for Architecture.



## Sylvain Bilodeau

**Architect  
Architecturama**

Sylvain Bilodeau is an architect, educator, and designer engaged in architecture-based creative practice through Architecturama, the design duo he co-founded in 2012. Inspired by both material and immaterial contexts, and by the ways people occupy and perceive environments, his work manipulates programs, places, and ideas to create attentive, sensitive, and meaningful spaces. His material investigations often engage raw or "poor" materials, focusing on movement, formal openness, comfort, and perceptual resonance.

Experimentation, research, and cross-disciplinarity are central to his approach, enabling the development of a singular architectural language in which matter, geometry, and perceptive experience remain closely intertwined. His work has been recognized in Quebec, Canada, and internationally, including distinctions from the Ordre des architectes du Québec, Grand Prix du Design, Cecobois, AZ Awards, SIT Awards, Archello, Metropolis, and the American Masterprize.



## Susan Carter

**Partner and  
designer,  
DIALOG**

Susan is a partner at an international design firm in Calgary and a designer with over 30 years of experience. Large scale retail developments and mixed-use projects have been the focus of her work over the years. The evolution of the enclosed shopping center has led to a particular interest in the repositioning of these large mall sites. The complexity of uses in a large, previously single use, site is something that intrigues and excites Susan. She is passionate about the role mixed-use environments play in our everyday lives. Her work focuses on creating places where people can thrive.

Susan believes we have a responsibility as designers to contribute to the wellbeing of our communities and the environment we all share. When Susan isn't working on these large mixed-use sites, she enjoys spending time with her family, traveling, and enjoying a good glass of wine and some cheese on a great patio somewhere.



## Selina Chen

**Senior Planner,  
City of Calgary**

Selina Chen holds a Master's degree in Planning and brings over 20 years of experience in statutory planning, land-use amendments, downtown incentive programs, and municipal census work. Her extensive professional background has provided a strong foundation for her doctoral research.

She has been actively involved in industrial land development through the preparation of municipal development policies and area structure plans, the updating of zoning bylaws for industrial districts, and the creation of strategies and action plans aimed at improving the competitiveness of industrial lands. This practical expertise has significantly informed the focus and direction of her research.

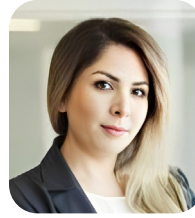


## Alkarim Devani

**Co-Founder and CEO,**  
mddl

Alkarim Devani, co-founder of **mddl** and **RNDSQR**, is a passionate innovator and design advocate redefining what it means to be a developer and housing advocate. His work has earned national and international recognition, including multiple awards such as the Canadian Architecture Awards, BILD Awards, the American Architecture Prize, and the MUDA Awards. As a frequent guest lecturer, Alkarim has spoken at top universities including The University of California, Berkeley, and The University of Calgary.

Alkarim regularly contributes his time to numerous volunteer organizations as well as a number of industry-led boards and communities including D.Talks and Calgary Housing Company. Now pursuing a Doctorate at the University of Calgary, he is focused on scaling the delivery of middle housing across Canada, with **mddl** as a finalist in CMHC's housing supply challenge.



## Azin Dilmaghani

**Senior Manager,**  
WSP Canada

Azin is a Senior Lighting Design Leader, educator, and researcher with over two decades of international experience at the intersection of architecture, lighting, engineering, and environmental design. She leads the Lighting Studio at WSP Canada, where she directs multidisciplinary teams delivering complex projects across the public realm, transportation infrastructure, healthcare, and institutional sectors. Her work focuses on integrating performance, environmental responsibility, and spatial quality within large-scale, highly coordinated projects.

Azin holds two master's degrees in architecture and is both a Project Management Professional (PMP) and Lighting Certified (LC). Her professional portfolio includes award-winning projects that emphasize sustainable design strategies, adaptive lighting systems, and the careful balance between visibility, experience, and environmental impact.



## Tom Gallagher

**PLA, LFA.**  
**Founder and Director of Design,** urban theory design

Tom is an energetic design professional dedicated to creating next-generation urban places that connect to living systems, provide a sense of permanence across time, and are crafted with exceptional artistry. He is an award-winning designer with proven talent for leading interdisciplinary projects with complex challenges requiring unconventional solutions.

Trusted for his thought leadership and collaborative approach, he previously served as Director of Design for an international, six-studio interdisciplinary firm, championing design within ecoregional contexts and deep understanding of People and Place to inspire meaningful places full of vitality, opportunity, well-being, and extraordinary experiences. His knowledge is anchored in landscape architecture, psychology, and over thirty years of practice, during which he has taught, written about, and led urban design practice. In 2025, he founded *urban theory design*, devoted to urban design as a "grand unifying theory" in service of flourishing human existence harmonized with local ecologies.



## Matt Grace

**Principal,**  
Matt Grace Sustainability Inc.

Matt is a Professional Engineer and a LEED Fellow with a career of over 30 years in sustainable buildings across Europe and Canada. This broad experience has presented him with many opportunities to enable creative solutions for more sustainable buildings, helping him understand the importance of both technical and people centred solutions.

Matt, with an undergraduate degree in Aeronautical Engineering and a Master of Science in Energy and the Environment has blended creativity and engineering rigor starting at the dawn of the green building rating movement in the UK in the early 90s, working on several European research projects and then for 5 years at The Building Research Establishment. A natural entrepreneur, Matt has successfully grown several green building consulting firms including starting and exiting from the firm he started in Calgary, Mission Green Buildings. Based in Calgary since 2007, he has collaborated with major architects, engineers, and developers, and has served on the boards of Alberta Ecotrust and Green Economy Calgary.



## Md Fahad Islam

**Designer, BArch,  
MEL in High Performance  
Building**

Fahad is a Bangladeshi Canadian designer with a Bachelor of Architecture from Bangladesh and a Master of Engineering Leadership in High-Performance Buildings from the University of British Columbia. His experience includes a wide range of residential projects, from large-scale 800-unit developments to compact 500 sq. ft. tiny homes. He has recently worked on diverse residential projects across Toronto and Calgary, including 4-plexes, garden suites, duplexes, additions, renovations, and condominiums.

He is actively involved throughout the entire project lifecycle, from initial concept to completion. He collaborates closely with developers, builders, engineers, and energy modelers to explore innovative systems that enable efficient, sustainable, and affordable construction. His approach challenges conventional practices, continuously rethinking how buildings are designed and delivered.



## Jennifer Kolstad

**Global Design & Brand Director,  
Head of Retail Design,  
Ford Motor Company**

Jennifer Kolstad is the Global Design & Brand Director, Head of Retail Design at Ford Motor Company, the first design leader to establish a vision for brand experience and environmental design. Since joining Ford in 2019 she has created a global design strategy unifying a portfolio exceeding 200 million SF with the global retail network of 10,000+ dealers. Introducing the legacy brand to neuroaesthetics and research-led design, Jennifer has constructed an award-winning internal design team and agency roster, while collaborating with external luminaries, product design, UX, technology, marketing, and global brand.

In 30 years of practice, Jennifer has challenged systems and methods within the design industry. She is the recipient of the 2023 ASID Luminary of Distinction award honouring the advancement of the design industry through innovative contributions and is the 2023 recipient of the “Beyond Automotive Design” Award for Car Design News.



## Yulia Korobkova

**Associate, Project  
Director OAA,  
LEED AP**

Dynamic and ambitious architect OAA, with more than 15 years of experience in various scale projects from residential, commercial, and industrial, to institutional buildings and urban design. Yulia Korobkova is fully involved in project development from the initial design concept to completion.

Korobkova is an OAA licensed architect specializing in mid to large-scale commercial and light industrial projects. Korobkova’s diverse portfolio includes designing and building distribution centers for the clients like Amazon, Walmart, Loblaw, Metro, and dealerships across Canada (BMW, Toyota, Honda, Acura, Audi etc.), as well as retail plazas such as Smart Centers and smaller retail outlets for Loblaws.



## Gerry Lang

**OAA, RA (NY),  
AIA, TSA, FTI**

Over almost 50 years in practice, Gerry Lang has realised projects for Canadian luminaries such as Arthur Erickson, Jones & Kirkland, Barton Myers, KPMB and Baird Sampson, developing an encyclopedic understanding of high-performance building envelope design and creative construction technique. He also spent decade in New York (2000-2009) as Design Principal of HOK NYC, completing a Masters in one year and working as a Senior Façade Consultant for Arup Facades NYC.

He has examined the relationship between design aesthetics, building performance and operational function on such projects as the Peter Munk Cardiac Centre at the University Health Network, the Energy Research Centre at University of Ontario Institute of Technology, the BMW North America Training Facility, and the Harvard Art Museum, as a consultant to the Renzo Piano Building Workshop developing the envelope with the designers. He holds a B.Arch from the University of Toronto and a M.Arch from the University of Pennsylvania.



## Sam Leika-Shukor

**Principal Architect,  
ISD Architects**

Sam Shukor is a Canadian practicing architect and Senior Architect at FormStudio Architects Inc. in Thunder Bay, with over 30 years of international experience in architecture and urban design. He is also the principal of ISD Architects Inc., a platform through which he explores early-phase design and regenerative approaches to development. His work focuses on housing, adaptive reuse, and the revitalization of underutilized sites, with a particular interest in schematic design and the early stages of the development process.

He holds a Master of Building Science from Toronto Metropolitan University and is currently a Doctor of Design (DDes) candidate at the University of Calgary. His research explores alternative architectural practice models for the regenerative revitalization of strip plazas in suburban contexts, with the aim of repositioning the architect as a strategic contributor to development processes and a facilitator of meaningful, value-rich outcomes.



## Allyse Yiran Li

**Founding Principal,  
RAAW Design  
Group**

Allyse is a second-year doctoral candidate working on her DDes project, "Tenure Hacking for Equitable Urban Development." She is a multidisciplinary design research scholar, practitioner, and middle-density developer. As a Canadian entrepreneur, her decade-long commitment to design spans both interior and urban fields, integrating design with implementation. As the founding principal of RAAW Design Group, she leads multidisciplinary teams in design and construction while conducting interdisciplinary research to equip design students with tools to navigate capital dynamics in the built environment, promoting socially just built forms.

Trained in Urban Land Economics with a focus on Real Estate Development, her academic background is complemented by years of experience in the Canadian market, bridging practice and research. By critically examining the systems shaping built environments, she seeks alternative futures for housing that promote equity and social mobility.



## Paige Lloyd

**Principal Architect,  
ARCCADD Architecture**

Paige Lloyd is the Principal of ARCCADD Architecture, a Winnipeg-based architectural practice specializing in plan-to-permit services for developers of high performance commercial and industrial assets in Canada. She is the creative force behind many notable projects in Manitoba and Saskatchewan, and as far north as Nunavut. Passionate about all that her city has to offer, Paige co-hosts a podcast called Made From What's Left, a funny, irreverent and sometimes factual exploration of some of Winnipeg's most iconic buildings, people and snacks. Paige is active in her community and industry.

Since 2010, she has volunteered as a studio instructor with the Royal Architectural Institute of Canada, helping young designers on their path to becoming architects and enriching the built environment within which they work and live. As well, for the past five years, she has served her industry as a volunteer member of the Manitoba Association of Architects Practice Committee



## Daniel Mercer

**Urbaniste, RPP,  
MCIP**

Daniel is a Registered Professional Planner in Ontario and an urbaniste in Québec. A ruralist at heart, he has focused his career on conservation-oriented projects and helping small communities transform conventional planning tools into local investments. Most recently, he served as Division Leader of Community Planning for the Municipality of Lakeshore, Ontario, overseeing GIS, development approvals, and policy planning while implementing initiatives through intergovernmental housing accelerator funding.

With 20+ years in municipal and federal government, including nearly a decade as the senior planner at Parks Canada, Daniel received the Public Service of Canada Award of Excellence for his leadership in legislative reform. He has served on the Canadian Institute of Planners' Board of Directors and continues to work on the Standards Advisory Committee. Through his work, Daniel advocates for a more dynamic model of planning that repositions planners as catalysts of change, exemplified by his emerging PlaceStory Toolkit project.



## Narjes (Nadi) Miri

**Architect AIBC, LEED AP  
BD+C.  
Principal, m+ Architecture Inc.**

Nadi is an Architect AIBC and Principal of m+ Architecture Inc., with over 2 decades of experience in creating sustainable, community-focused environments. Her work encompasses residential, mixed-use, light industrial, and commercial interior projects, guided by design excellence and meaningful client collaboration. In Metro Vancouver and beyond, Nadi has led projects including an 83-unit mixed-use development, multiple small-scale housing projects aligned with the new SSMUH policy, and over 20 custom single-family homes.

Her designs balance function and beauty, transforming complex urban sites into efficient spaces that maximize natural light and adaptability, integrating energy-efficient strategies with architectural clarity, responding to local context and future needs. Nadi has contributed to municipal design panels and mentor with the Architectural Institute of British Columbia since 2019.



## Jody Patterson

**MArch, BAS,  
RHFAC**

Jody is a faculty member and former program head in the Bachelor of Architectural Science at the British Columbia Institute of Technology (BCIT), as well as a registered Rick Hansen Foundation Accessibility Certification (RHFAC) Professional. She is recognized for her leadership in sustainable design pedagogy and commitment to an ethical built environment.

Jody holds a Bachelor of Architectural Studies and a Master of Architecture from the University of Waterloo. Periods of temporary physical disability during architectural education—combined with training in adaptive sport instruction and respite care—sharpened her interest in universal design as a cumulative interface between users and the built environment, rather than as a checklist of compliant elements. With over two decades of teaching experience across North American and European institutions, Jody has led interdisciplinary studios in various building design disciplines.



## Simon Raper

**FCSD, BA.  
Executive Director, Head of  
Savills Design, APAC**

Simon is a Fellow of the Chartered Society of Designers (FCSD), working globally from his home in Singapore. Studying for his Doctor of Design (DDes) post-graduate degree, studying at the University of Calgary. An expert in Workplace Strategy and Design, with 38 years' experience of understanding the world at work, and remains continually intrigued and passionate about what makes business and people work well together—focusing his practice on helping people thrive, through places and spaces.

Simon concentrates his thinking on recognising the influencing factors that genuinely impact the future of work and is a regular contributor at industry workshops, events, and talks. Simon also writes for various publications—for Savills, the WORKTECH Academy and VITRA. A specialist in design thinking, creative design and innovation for business, workplace strategies for corporate environments across all workplace sectors.



## Emmanuel Ssinabulya

**Principal Architect,  
Studio 1 Group**

Emmanuel is the principal architect at Studio 1 Group Ltd., with offices in Kigali and Kampala, Uganda. With over 15 years of experience in Norway, Rwanda, and Uganda, he advocates for harmony between design and the environment. Emmanuel also serves as Vice Chair of the Construction Sector Skills Council, which promotes vocational and tertiary education in Uganda's built environment to empower youth, a vital part of Kampala's urban informal economies.

He is recognized for his role in notable projects, including the Nyandungu Urban Wetland Eco-tourism Park, Kigali's car-free zone redevelopment, and the Nyanza Kicukiro Genocide Garden of Memory. Emmanuel envisions community-based welfare initiatives, believing that the poor and marginalized deserve decent living conditions and social infrastructure. His philosophy emphasizes establishing actionable relationships in urban planning, advocating for humane living standards as policy drivers for both informal and formal developments.



## Lukas Sukol

**Senior Advisor - Design, Sustainability, and Placemaking, Salama bint Hamdan Al Nahyan Foundation**

Lukas Sukol was the Head of City Design, Sustainable Planning & Approvals at Masdar City's Sustainable Real Estate division from 2019 - 2024. He was responsible for the Masdar City's Master Plan including land use, transportation, the public realm, development approvals, and sustainability. His team explores the latest strategies and technologies to pioneer a new model of development in which people live more meaningful, productive, and sustainable lives. Currently, he is the Senior Advisor - Design, Sustainability, and Placemaking at Salama bint Hamdan Al Nahyan Foundation, Abu Dhabi, UAE.

Prior to joining Masdar City, Lukas came to the UAE to help with the founding of the Abu Dhabi Urban Planning Council where he managed the Urban Design Studio for more than a decade. His work focused on development review, urban design, and master planning for the Emirate of Abu Dhabi. Lukas trained as an architect, landscape architect, and city manager and has worked internationally in Planning and Urban Design for over twenty years. He continues to research and lecture on cities and urban design.



## Francis Wang

**Head of Future Research, FW. Vision**

Francis is a multipreneur with over a decade of experience leading multiple companies to successful exits (\$70M & \$650M) in both engineering and product roles. Francis creates and coaches sustainable impact ventures in domains such as sustainability, education, and health. Leveraging his diverse background and expertise in strategic foresight, Francis cross-pollinates ideas from fields like futures studies, AI, design thinking, sustainability, and entrepreneurship to foster innovative solutions for greater societal resilience.

**DOCTOR  
OF DESIGN**

# Research Abstracts



## | Sarmad Al-Mashta

### The Shadow Line

Transportation networks optimize for operational throughput, inadvertently generating “shadow lines”—continuous corridors of underutilized land beneath elevated transit structures. These spatial discontinuities act as urban barriers that squander the ultimate non-renewable resource: human time, and by extension, human opportunity. This Doctor of Design (DDes) research reframes sustainable transportation by treating these residual spaces as a systemic design challenge and a latent resource for enhancing human well-being. The project aims to activate this dormant land without expanding physical footprints, increasing operational liability, or requiring additional public expenditure.

Grounded in Design Science Research (DSR), the study develops *The Shadow Line*, a Tripartite Framework composed of a Suitability Framework for identifying viable sites; Deployable Modular Interventions—net-zero, autonomous structures that operate independently of transit infrastructure; and an Implementation Engine that enables scalable deployment. The framework’s central innovation is jurisdictional and spatial decoupling, establishing a legally and structurally autonomous public realm financed through self-sustaining land-lease mechanisms. This approach is explicitly designed to mitigate institutional risk and overcome the governance constraints that typically paralyze innovation in transit-adjacent spaces.

By repositioning the architect as a strategic configurator, the research demonstrates how maintenance liabilities can be transformed into multifunctional, revenue-generating civic assets. Embedding diverse daily amenities directly within transit corridors advances proximity-based urbanism by bringing destinations closer to residents, aligning with transit agencies’ core missions. Ultimately, *The Shadow Line* offers a replicable, zero-cost mechanism for delivering public benefit, maximizing urban optionality, and contributing new knowledge to sustainable transportation, urban land optimization, and the design of autonomous public realms.

## | Sylvain Bilodeau

### *with/in sound — (from) sound to matter* Sound as a Mode of Architectural Reasoning.

Architectural experience is understood as haptic and embodied, yet architectural design practice remains predominantly structured by visual representation, relegating sound to a technical concern addressed through specialist expertise. This misalignment persists despite extensive theoretical, phenomenological, and sound-related research demonstrating the role of sound in spatial perception, atmosphere, and lived experience.

What remains absent are operational and teachable design methods that allow architects to reason and design through sound during early project stages.

The research project *with/in sound — (from) sound to matter* proposes a design-oriented response that reframes sound as a mode of architectural reasoning rather than as an evaluative parameter or atmospheric supplement. It introduces an audio-first design condition that intervenes during sketching and conceptual phases, when architectural intentions are still provisional and open to transformation.

Through an instrumentarium, sound-based artefacts are treated as sketches: exploratory and low-resolution representations supporting early design thinking without inducing premature visual fixation. The instrumentarium organizes conceptual grounding, curated listening practices, and the strategic use of existing auralization tools within a standardized, repeatable, and teachable process, emphasizing the sequencing of decisions rather than technological innovation.

The main outcome is a process and organizational framework that makes sonic intentions explicit, discussable, and traceable within architectural workflows. By formalizing aural literacy as design knowledge, the project contributes a transferable method that supports architectural practice and education, enabling designers to anticipate sonic consequences related to form, materiality, thresholds, and movement before formal commitments are fixed.

## | Susan Carter

### Change and the City

Her DDes project focuses on the intersection of mental wellbeing and the built environment, particularly the commercial, private sector world of development. Art and Nature are often elements of a development that get cut to reach a return on investment, but art and nature contribute to places that provide refuge, reprieve and beauty that is proven to contribute to mental wellbeing.

How can we demonstrate a mutual value for the investment where the measurements of the return on the investment is money but also the wellbeing of the community?

## | Selina Chen

Unlike residential development, industrial land is often overlooked in urban planning and public discourse, frequently perceived as obsolete or environmentally harmful.

This misperception undermines its strategic value and presents a significant challenge to sustainable urban growth in 21st-century Canadian cities.

This dissertation proposes a new planning framework—Dynamic Zoning—to reposition industrial land as a vital component of urban resilience and economic development. The framework offers a flexible, future-oriented approach that enables cities to maintain a ready supply of industrial land while adapting its use in response to evolving economic, social, and environmental needs. Through policy tools and strategic branding, Dynamic Zoning aims to elevate the visibility and perceived value of industrial areas among policymakers, politicians, and the public.

The project’s anticipated impacts include equipping decision-makers with adaptable land-use strategies, reframing public perceptions of industrial zones, and fostering broader support for their revitalization. Ultimately, this research contributes to the evolving field of urban planning by demonstrating how industrial land can be reimagined as dynamic, inclusive, and sustainable spaces within the urban fabric.

## | Alkarim Devani

### Scaling middle Housing across Canada: Empowering Everyday People to Build the Future of Housing

Across North America, momentum continues to grow to end exclusionary zoning and introduce more diverse housing typologies into established neighbourhoods. Yet, despite policy shifts, the adoption of missing middle housing remains painfully slow. At the heart of this challenge is not just technical feasibility; it’s cultural, emotional, and systemic.

This research and creative project explore how to reimagine the delivery of middle housing through a citizen-led, DIY framework that empowers homeowners, aligns with community values, and unlocks the potential of existing infrastructure. As urban land becomes increasingly inaccessible to new buyers and traditional developers struggle to deliver smaller-scale projects, we focus on equipping everyday people (middle-class citizens, entrepreneurs, and emerging builders) to take action.

Drawing on key informant interviews, design science research, and a series of community-based pilot projects, this work doesn’t just ask “how do we build more homes?”, it asks “how do we help more people build them?”. By working across sectors and creating an integrated ecosystem of education, policy tools, financing supports, and storytelling, we aim to mobilize a new generation of craft developers. Inspired by movements like craft beer and slow food, we believe middle housing won’t scale through top-down policy alone. It must be seeded through grassroots empowerment and cultivated with care, transparency, and trust.

## | Azin Dilmaghani

### OpLite - A Framework for Responsible Outdoor Lighting Design

In contemporary urban environments, exterior lighting functions as both a technical necessity and a medium of spatial expression. However, its widespread and often uncritical application has contributed to increasing light pollution, resulting in ecological disruption, the degradation of the night sky, and a growing disconnect between design practice and environmental responsibility. Despite the depth of expertise in lighting design, access to this knowledge remains uneven, often leading to fragmented decision-making and systematic over-illumination.

This research addresses the need to democratize lighting knowledge and integrate it into early-stage design processes. It identifies a critical gap between existing expertise and its application by architects, landscape architects, urban planners, developers, and municipal authorities, who routinely make foundational lighting decisions without structured guidance.

Grounded in Design Science Research methodology, the study develops OpLite, a decision-governance framework that translates complex standards, environmental considerations, and design principles into a structured and accessible decision-making process. Rather than functioning as a calculation tool, the framework operates at a pre-design level, guiding users in determining whether lighting is necessary and, if so, how it can be applied within defined contextual and ecological constraints.

By reframing lighting as a conditional, accountable intervention, OpLite supports more informed, transparent decision-making across disciplines. The framework contributes to interdisciplinary collaboration, promotes the preservation of darkness and the night sky as shared environmental and cultural resources, and advances more sustainable, inclusive, and ecologically responsive approaches to urban lighting design.

## | Tom Gallagher

### The Quintessential Framework: A novel development paradigm for the reclamation of stranded assets that facilitates incremental mixed-use development and hyperlocal agency to form self-sustaining communities.

Since the early twentieth century, the predominant form of development in North America has been sprawl, a rapacious land use pattern loosely organized into strings of automobile-centric and isolated single-use zones (like subdivisions, office parks and strip-malls) necessitating highly specialized building types, roads, and modes of ownership.

The system perpetuating this, with all of its tangible and invisible aspects, claims to exist to protect and advance community. Growth, supposedly, brings more opportunity for all. The reality of the last 80 years has shown us something meaningfully different – a great sorting of people, ever-increasing loneliness, poor socially-determined health, ecological degradation and declining resilience to climate change.

Beyond this, a key indicator that sprawl is not growth, is the trail of previous developments left vacant, lethargic or otherwise stranded after something new is developed in the latest hotspot elsewhere.

This doctoral work will concentrate on a different metric – vitality, which is advanced by building for human relationships, not a simple focus on economic wealth-building but overall wellbeing.

Specifically, this will involve the creation of a methodology for the reclamation of stranded assets that facilitates incremental mixed-use development and hyperlocal agency to form self-sustaining communities. The focus is on a novel development paradigm, the Quintessential Framework, centered on five relationships that are essential to a flourishing community and the critical mass of each necessary to achieve it.

## | Matt Grace

### The Regenerative Lens

Regenerative Buildings offer the potential of more or different life in the future. They look beyond conventional sustainable design metrics such as energy, carbon, materials, water, transportation, resiliency and indoor air quality but also include ecology, art, culture, joy, community, and human health.

This project will reshape and reframe the approach to sustainability in buildings by valuing positive contributions rather than reduced environmental impacts. It will address these complex, interconnected challenges by bridging the gaps between decarbonization efforts, cultural preservation imperatives, and the broader goal of enhancing community vitality.

Typically, the success of a building has been measured in terms of improvement over “standard practice” or marginal improvements over what is mandated by building codes or mainstream green building rating systems. Living or regenerative buildings provide paths for construction projects that measure success in terms of positive contributions rather than reduced harm. Such projects aim to be free of toxic substances, net positive for energy and water, equitable, safe and resilient.

The urgency of the need for action is underscored by Canada’s national commitment to retrofit 600,000 homes annually to meet its net-zero targets, ongoing climate crises and the polarization of green issues within many sectors of society.

The Regenerative Lens will help projects achieve alignment of regenerative building systems with wider organizational goals to broaden the horizon on which these are viewed. It will find the elements of regenerative solutions that light a spark of excitement with the client or that assist the client achieve objectives beyond the boundaries of the building.

Living or regenerative buildings provide an opportunity for the built environment to make positive contributions regarding climate change. By redefining building projects as opportunities for holistic regeneration, this project aims to contribute to a more sustainable, resilient, and equitable built environment.

## | Md Fahad Islam

### A Framework for Financially Viable Regenerative Housing

The application of regenerative design in housing remains limited, despite its recognized potential to improve environmental performance, social well-being, and long-term resilience. A key barrier is cost. Although regenerative features can reduce operational expenses over the building lifecycle, they typically require higher upfront capital investment, which limits their market competitiveness. In most market segments, financial considerations outweigh design features, making cost the primary driver of demand and a significant constraint on the broader uptake of regenerative housing.

My project addresses the viability of regenerative housing through three interlinked strategies: (1) alternative ownership models that enable long-term ecological, social, and financial value creation beyond short-term speculation; (2) reconfigurable, flexible, and adaptable housing design that reduces spatial demand in high-cost urban contexts; and (3) a service-based housing model that shifts value from ownership to ongoing performance and service delivery.

This study will use the design science research methodology to engage key informants to define the parameters for, and subsequently evaluate, the framework. Key informants will be classified into two groups: content experts and strategic experts. Two rounds of key informant interviews will be undertaken. The objective of the first round is to gain insights from the targeted key informants regarding salient issues, potential challenges, design parameters, and success indicators for the project. In the second round, participants will provide feedback on the completed design project, identifying potential strengths, weaknesses, problem areas, and any issues arising from the evaluation.

## Yulia Korobkova

Building envelope is a massive crucial element to focus for architects, engineers, developers and builders. My experience working on various projects in Canada has provided me with insights into the entire project lifecycle, from feasibility studies to occupancy and commissioning.

This exposure has enabled me to anticipate potential challenges and pitfalls across all phases. I was always wondering of areas of building envelope design improvements to meet different criteria. DDes program will allow me the opportunity to utilize my experience gained as an Architect to address a significant gap in design tools during the schematic and design development stages of projects.

Oftentimes, architects specify building envelope components during the early design phase without considering the diverse energy performance and cost impacts of various layers. On the other hand, energy simulation engineers typically become involved later in the design process, making it challenging to adjust the entire envelope to meet unique requirements. This gap may be resolved by creation of a simple architectural tool to optimize building envelope components to meet energy requirements. Indeed, given the pivotal role of the building envelope in energy consumption, budget allocation, and long-term sustainability, early decision-making regarding its composition is crucial in the design process.

The overall objective of the research is to streamline the design decision-making process, with a focus on implementing efficient façade systems that minimize energy consumption and cost while maximizing occupant comfort.

## Gerry Lang

### The Artisan Architect

One of the most enduring attractions almost 50 years of architectural practice, for someone who loves to solve the problems of making stuff, is the collaborative process that sees hundreds of interesting people (sometimes from all over the world) come together to lend their expertise to the realisation of a construction project. Dozens of consultants, perhaps 75 trades, manufacturers, builders, city officials, financiers and clients can act together on a single large building over a period of several years.

Toronto, where I have practiced for about 40 years (in addition to a decade in New York), is an especially star-struck city which often exhibits a small-town design insecurity that results in a need to import foreign talent for status. When most new architectural requests for proposals (public or private) are released in this city and others in Canada, the finalist groups are frequently dominated by well-known international firms.

Since the 1990s, two events have changed the way multi-firm projects operate: greatly compressed schedules and the internet's creation of a class of architectural stars who can practice anywhere, regardless of their understanding of the location of the project and its building culture.

A new player in the multi-firm project is needed to ensure that the design will be fortified by local constructability, lest the design intent founder in the face of costing and the inertia of 'we've never done it that way' builder expediency. The Artisan Architect, as I have named the new team member, assumes two duties - the aforementioned strengthening of the design firm's proposal in the early stages and the overseeing of the executive firm's detail realisation of that design in a more efficient process that has been streamlined by the early refinements, leading to fewer revisions in the expensive contract documents phase.

Our Toronto practice - architectsAlliance (aA) - is approached often by international firms seeking to compete for work in what is currently the busiest construction centre in the world.

Although most of our projects in the office are executed entirely by aA, we also work in association with six European and US firms; each has different priorities in the realisation of their designs.

I have participated in mid-project hand-off partnerships; rarely is the experience the best it could be. My proposal is based on the idea of Values and Value. The artisan's first duty in the project comes with early design discussions about the project's values and fortifying the proposed architecture with greater understanding of its constructability. Following these early design stages and the costing and constructors' reviews, the second duty to the project is that of refining and streamlining the contract documents stages in concert with the executive architect, creating Value for all team members by reducing the late-project re-designs that often slow down projects which proceeded without mature, vetted documents.

The careful defining of this new role and its value, with the ultimate goal of the artisan's role becoming a new part of the architects' contract language, is the object of my study going forward.

## Sam Leika-Shukor

### An Alternative Architectural Practice Framework for the Regenerative Revitalization of Strip Plazas in Toronto

This research proposes an alternative architectural practice framework for the regenerative revitalization of aging strip plazas in suburban contexts in Toronto. It responds to the growing misalignment between conventional development approaches and the complex social, ecological, and economic pressures shaping contemporary urban environments.

Rather than treating strip plazas as obsolete commercial sites, the study reframes them as strategic locations embedded within larger living systems, where housing demand, community life, mobility networks, and ecological processes intersect.

The research develops a conceptual infrastructure grounded in place-based and regenerative thinking, supported by four operational strands: design principles, an alternative architectural practice model, value-capture logic, and a business model.

Together, these components establish a methodology that moves from systemic understanding to actionable strategies. The framework is tested through design application on selected sites in Rexdale, Toronto, using comparative scenarios between conventional development approaches (BAU) and a regenerative alternative.

The research aims to demonstrate how architects can engage earlier and more strategically in the development process, contributing to projects that generate long-term economic, social, and ecological value, while offering a coherent and transferable model for suburban revitalization.

## | Allyse Yiran Li

Global cities face a paradox: housing markets simultaneously drive wealth accumulation for property owners and systemic exclusion for renters and non-owners, fuelling inequality and eroding social cohesion. The same housing markets that created wealth for homeowners in the last several decades are now creating structural inequality for renters and aspiring young buyers.

Speculative land markets in the recent years have priced out the teachers, librarians, nurses, amongst other essential workers in the urban workforce who form our social foundation. When those who sustain our collective life cannot participate in housing's wealth-building potential, we don't just create inequality —we undermine democracy itself. This is especially true for young Canadians, who without generational wealth (the 'bank of mom and dad') face significant barriers to homeownership. This doctoral project confronts the hyper-financialization of land Rent where urban affordability is examined beyond a supply and demand dogma<sup>3</sup> for globalized Canadian cities. Where existing solutions (e.g., subsidies, inclusionary zoning) fail to address land speculation as a root cause, this project looks to an alternative model: a market-based yet socially calibrated system that delivers not only affordability, but also attainability.

Drawings on critical theory and borrowing from non-Western values, historic and contemporary cases the research examines structural inequality both economically and meta-economically through embedded spatial and design thinking.

Through the Design Science Research method, this project uncovers critical system level failures in its problem space and looks to canvas alternative futures through practical implementation innovating in business models, policy interfaces and incremental phasing strategies.

## | Paige Lloyd

### MITIGATING THE LANDSCAPE OF RISK: Effective communication in design and construction:

Design-build, a widely accepted project delivery model in Canada, supports cost efficient and timely design and construction projects. However, the design-build model can contribute to a breakdown in communication between the various stakeholders. This research identifies the ways in which communication fails and develops a strategy of training centered on workshops and construction contract and specification changes to reduce risk and ensure timely, cost efficient and high-quality project delivery.

There exists extensive research regarding communication in the design and construction industry, but few resources are available to effectively deploy this knowledge to architectural and engineering practitioners, construction managers and their clients. A review of available data and the development of an innovative training program is proposed based on a breadth of practice knowledge and experience.

This research indicates that there is a demonstrable need for engaging stakeholders in meaningful ways at key points along the design and construction pathway to best influence the outcome. A particular focus on engagement typologies positions the parties as co-authors to project-specific solutions. This research describes the performance characteristics for the tools that are needed by the AEC industries.

This thesis proposes a training intensive focused on a five-part approach for improving communications between all stakeholders on construction projects: 1) Foundations of design and construction communication, 2) alignment workshops, 3) mockup workshops, 4) CCDC 14 changes, and 5) specification changes. While the design-build model of project delivery underpins this thesis, improved communication strategies could be beneficial for all project delivery formats, thus broadening its relevance to the larger design and construction community.

## | Daniel Mercer

Daniel's DDes creative project addresses the challenges facing small towns; challenges exacerbated by the rigidity of legislated town plans, which too often function as static planning documents instead of dynamic tools integrated into governance, budgeting, and placemaking. Many small towns face persistent barriers: limited capacity, shrinking populations, and the slow burning erosion of public trust in the planning system. Yet within these constraints lies opportunity.

By reframing the purpose of the town plan - from a technical document into a persuasive and implementable tool - this research explores how small towns can chart a path towards place-based economic development.

This project will explore how to create a multi-functional planning toolkit rooted in a design-science research process. The aim is to shift planning from a compliance-driven exercise to one that supports implementation, stimulates investment, and builds public trust through action. This toolkit includes three core components: Desirability (community aspirations and values), Feasibility (funding, infrastructure, and administrative capacity), and Conductors of Success (the people, processes, and products that can turn vision into action).

This approach is shaped by Daniel's professional experience in remote park communities, his leadership in legislative innovation in the federal government, and his current municipal role in the southernmost region of Canada. The toolkit hopes to draw lessons from places that have succeeded against the odds and applies them to Northern Ontario's unique geographic, cultural, and governance context.

Ultimately, this project questions the assumption that small towns must rely on large-scale, top-down interventions to survive. Instead, it positions planners as strategic translators capable of activating local assets, catalysing investment, and telling compelling stories that attract people, purpose, and capital. By shifting the product from plan to place, this work aims to alter the trajectory of planning practice in small-town Ontario and beyond while helping rebuild trust in the profession.

## | Narjes (Nadi) Miri

### Toward a Networked Architecture of Practice

This research addresses the structural barriers that limit small AEC firms from accessing complex, high-stakes projects led by major commissioning entities.

While expertise across the industry is widely distributed, procurement systems privilege large, integrated organizations that can demonstrate coordinated delivery, established collaboration, and specialized capacity. As a result, smaller firms are often constrained to operate as generalists, unable to consistently participate in complex, high-stakes work.

This project proposes a Networked Operating System for AEC Practice that reorganizes and distributes expertise into a stable, capability-based structure. The system shifts from episodic team formation to pre-aligned networks of specialized roles, enabling small firms to function collectively as a coherent and credible delivery entity that can secure and manage complex contracts. This coordination is achieved through three integrated layers:

- **Network Layer:** Facilitates ongoing teaming and resource synchronization.
- **Structure Layer:** Defines clear governance and contractual architecture.
- **Process Layer:** Standardizes project delivery and quality assurance protocols.

Grounded in the Ten Types of Innovation framework and informed by models such as Flash Teams, as well as parallel industries including film, animation, and high-tech, the research extends beyond rapid team assembly toward sustained collaboration and system-level coordination.

By shifting the basis of competitiveness from firm scale to network coherence, the project offers a viable alternative to large organizational structures, expanding access to high-impact work while redefining how architectural practice is organized, evaluated, and sustained.

## | Jody Patterson

### A Design-Stage Framework for EASE: Effort, Access, and Spatial Economy

Building accessibility is typically analyzed through compliance of isolated components, yet access is experienced cumulatively over time and across distance, sequence, repetition, and navigation. This disconnect between how inclusion is planned and how it is lived produces a condition in which buildings can be fully compliant while remaining difficult or impossible to use. This research frames the problem not as a lack of standards or intent, but a design-stage representational gap: user effort is rarely discernible at the moments when architectural decisions are made and inclusive design alternatives remain open.

The creative project addresses that gap through the development of the EASE framework: a design-stage representational artifact intended to support architectural judgment about cumulative user effort.

Adapting established practice from product design and digital user-experience design fields, the project aims to represent the flow between compliant components. Rather than proposing new accessibility standards or performance thresholds, EASE reframes how building designers learn and practice universal design: reorganizing information already present in conventional architectural drawings to make effort accumulation legible, comparable, and discussable during early design phases.

Positioned within a research-through-design and Design Science Research tradition, EASE intends to offer comparison rather than prescription. The project investigates whether making exclusion visible during early design alters architectural reasoning in meaningful ways, to promote more inclusive design. The contribution lies not in optimizing outcomes, but in reframing accessibility as an upstream design variable embedded within architectural judgment, spatial economy, and long-term project performance.

## Simon Raper

**Beta work-places**  
**A structured framework for creating innovation for adaptive workplace resilience**

The practice of workplace design is increasingly undermined by commoditisation, a trend accelerated by the COVID-19 pandemic and the widespread adoption of remote and hybrid working. As organisations struggle to justify a return to the office, central business districts globally are characterised by under-utilised or redundant buildings. This has created broader social and economic consequences for building owners, occupiers, and surrounding communities. In context, the future of work extends beyond workplace experience to wider human experience, positioning workplaces as catalysts for thriving, integrated communities where people work, live, and interact.

This doctoral research proposes the **Beta Work-Places Framework**, a structured, design-led methodology that reframes workplaces as adaptive systems rather than fixed end states or standardised assets. The framework seeks to realign financial, ownership, and delivery models by shifting focus from short-term occupier outcomes to long-term value creation for building owners, operators, and communities. Its aim is to enable collaborative, resilient, and sustainable workplace decision-making through deeper stakeholder alignment and long-term partnerships.

The research adopts a **Design Science Research Methodology** to develop and evaluate the framework. Two rounds of semi-structured interviews will be conducted with professionals across workplace strategy, architecture, design, sustainability, leasing, finance, business, and organisational change.

The first round will identify systemic barriers, opportunities, and success indicators for adaptive workplace outcomes. The second round will evaluate the framework's clarity, relevance, completeness, and practical applicability, identifying strengths, limitations, and risks associated with real-world implementation.

## Emmanuel Ssinabulya

**Community Regenerative toolkit: Managing Kampala's Informal Urbanization through Community-driven approaches**

Rapid urbanization across Global South cities has intensified uncontrolled urban sprawl, often driven by environmentally insensitive, top-down administrative strategies. Kampala, Uganda, exemplifies this trend, particularly within its watershed communities, where centralized planning models fail to reflect local realities, leading to declining public trust and persistent informalities within the built environment.

This doctoral research proposes a Smart Community Toolkit—a participatory and data-informed planning framework, designed to address the socio-economic and environmental challenges, as an effect of urban sprawl. Anchored in the Design Science Research (DSR) methodology, the study progresses through three phases: the initial key informant interviews to inform the toolkit's design; the design and development process; and follow up interviews with key informants for evaluation and refinement. The research engages two categories of key informants: Content experts with direct experience in managing urban sprawl challenges, and Strategic experts specializing in smart innovations, participatory design, and regenerative urban development.

This research is grounded in the researcher's more than 15 years of professional and academic practice in architecture and urban planning within East Africa, bringing practical insights into the project's design, testing and potential implementation. The project's anticipated impacts include a replicable toolkit that enhances community engagement, informs inclusive policy-making, and strengthens urban resilience, as well as equipping policy makers with adaptable urban planning and redevelopment strategies, reframing the public's perception of urban planning models for the informal settlements.

Ultimately, this research contributes to a collaborative discourse on sustainable urban development in the global south, by providing a contextualized model for managing effects of urban sprawl through community-driven planning, reimagining informal settlements as dynamic, functional and sustainable territories within the urban realm.

## Lukas Sukol

### Augmented Deep Design: A toolkit for navigating the integrated design process of urban planning in order to enhance value creation and ecosystemic regeneration

How do we collaborate more effectively in pursuit of common goals?

Cities are arguable society's greatest invention fostering technologies aimed at improving the quality of life of its residents. Unfortunately, as populations continue to increase the carrying capacity of the global ecosystem has become stressed. The unintended impact of the technological solutions has become too vast often eroding the social, cultural, economic and environmental systems society depends on. As populations continue to migrate to cities, urban planning presents the greatest potential for impact, both negative and positive. In order to continue to improve quality of life, an ecosystemic design approach is required. One that takes into account broader, deeper, and longer term impacts on the overall global system.

I propose a universal toolkit for navigating the Integrated Design Process of urban planning in order to facilitate maximum value creation and ecosystemic regeneration. The goal of this toolkit is to incentivize collaborative design by making it easier and more productive in generating solutions that create positive broader impacts.

## Francis Wang

As innovation accelerates, it becomes a significant disruptive vector, demanding a foundational shift in our economic goals: from mere growth to cultivating deep societal resilience.

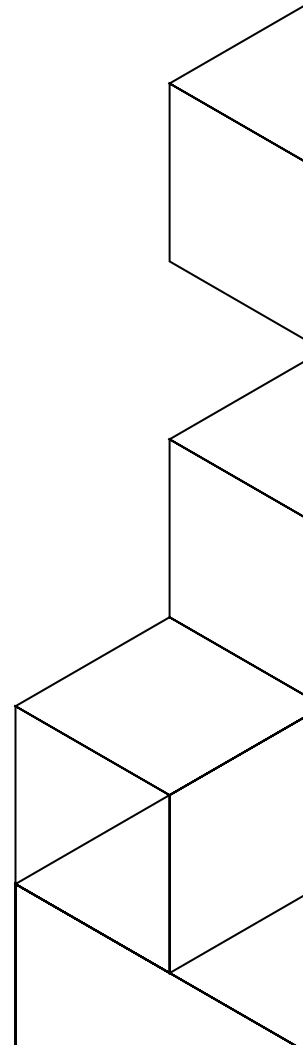
This dissertation addresses the current innovation economy's systemic myopia, a condition driven by a focus on rapid returns that often undermine societal well-being. This is exemplified by industry reports celebrating 5-7 year exit times in Silicon Valley while discouraging European ecosystems with 10-12 year timelines, signaling an overcorrection toward short-term gains (2024). This myopia is rooted in a systemic failure to accurately evaluate, capture, and invest in long-term value.

This systemic failure is analyzed within the specific context of Canada, which faces a five-front gap in its innovation economy that threatens its economic sovereignty. This manifests as a 73% leakage of taxpayer-funded intellectual property (2024) and a persistent "brain drain" of both STEM graduates and the associated legal and commercial talent required to build new ventures (2023).

To counteract these deep-seated challenges, a new "Foresight-Driven Innovation" framework is developed to enable collaborations and innovations that create long-term value. It proposes "Designing Innovation" to create ecosystems that counteract myopia. The goal is to foster a culture capable of sustaining, rather than being fractured by, accelerating innovations.

This framework explores a core mechanism in the continual aggregation of context. This moves beyond valuing discrete assets like patents to valuing the compounding knowledge, data, and shared understanding that form the true basis of long-term projects.

Modes of collaboration are addressed such that complex projects manage issues with knowledge succession, where vital understanding is lost as people enter and leave communities, by ensuring past innovation efforts are effectively collected, aggregated, and leveraged to inform future collaborations. This provides a viable path toward economic sovereignty and enables maximum societal flourishing.



# OUR NEW HOME

*Image: Riley Brandt photos,  
University of Calgary 2025*

## SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE, PLANNING + LANDSCAPE

After eight years of our school being split across an on-campus and downtown location, we have moved into an award-winning high rise as part of the city of Calgary's office tower conversion program. Our new location at **801 7 Ave SW** embodies and extends our mission to redesign cities through community-embedded, transdisciplinary learning in the heart of downtown.

Our new home features nine tower floors dedicated to innovative design education and research, a main floor community-facing Design Justice Lab, and a Digital Fabrication Workshop in an adjacent three-story annex.

We will use the building's common two-storey Atrium space throughout the year for public events, including our Design Matters lecture series where city building specialists from around the world share their insights and local panels convene to discuss the big issues facing Calgary and its citizens.

# DOCTOR OF DESIGN



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