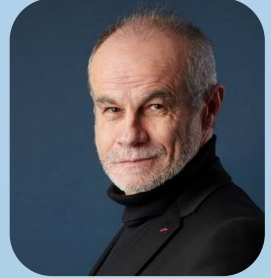


World Cities Summit Knowledge Council 2026-2028



Amanda Sturgeon

Designation Chief Executive Officer,
Biomimicry Institute

**Geography
(Based in)** Sydney, Australia

Expertise Regenerative and Biophilic
Design



Description

Amanda Sturgeon is the CEO of the Biomimicry Institute where she fosters a thriving eco-system of innovators, educators and change-makers to bring about a world that works in harmony with nature and natural systems. Amanda is an award winning Architect, author and non-profit thought leader on how people, buildings and cities connect to nature. She authored the book ‘Creating Biophilic Buildings’ and has an essay in the best selling anthology ‘All We Can Save’. She has published articles across mainstream media focused on Nature and Cities, such as The Guardian, and was part of the BiodiverCity Commission for the World Economic Forum. Amanda was previously the inaugural CEO of Built by Nature, a network and grant-making fund, focused on accelerating the bio-based building materials transformation and she has also served as Regenerative Design Lead at global consultancy Mott MacDonald, working with clients across the Asia Pacific region to bring climate and biodiversity positive solutions to infrastructure, buildings and cities.

During her decade with the International Living Future Institute as CEO she authored and developed regenerative building programs such as The Living Building Challenge and founded the Biophilic Design Initiative. Amanda was elevated to be a Fellow of The American Institute of Architects in 2015 due to her extensive advocacy for buildings and cities that work in unison with nature. Amanda currently serves on the board of Climate Action Network Australia and is on the Biophilic Cities Advisory Group.

Arun Jain

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| Designation | FAICP (Fellow of the American Institute of Certified Planners), Urban Designer, Urban Strategist, and Fulbright Specialist |
| Geography (Based in) | Seattle, US |
| Expertise | Metropolitan governance, urban resilience, and integrated planning |



Description

Arun is an urban designer and urban strategist with more than four decades of US and international experience in practice and academia. He has planned, designed, and directly influenced over 90 private and public projects across the world with a combined investment capital of over US \$14.5 billion. He has spoken at over 150 keynotes, conferences, seminars, and workshops. Arun has taught at six universities with contributions in both print and digital media. His professional experience extends across 46 countries and over 165 cities.

Arun's interests revolve around urban development strategies and tools to address complex and uncertain futures. He sees the early creation of "soft infrastructure" including the public realm as an essential basis for resilient communities. His book "Reframing Cities for Resilience: Embracing Complex & Uncertain Futures" was released February 2026 (Routledge).

Arun serves on several national and international professional committees. A Fulbright Specialist, he is a Fellow of the American Institute of Certified Planners.

Prof Brent D. Ryan

Designation

Professor of Urban Design and Public Policy,
Department of Urban Studies and Planning,
School of Architecture + Planning,
Massachusetts Institute of Technology

Geography (Based in)

Massachusetts, US

Expertise

Research on aesthetics and policies of
contemporary urban design, design and
planning studies of shrinking cities



Description

Brent D. Ryan is Professor of Urban Design and Public Policy in MIT's Department of Urban Studies and Planning. His research focuses on the aesthetics and policies of contemporary urban design, particularly with respect to current and pressing issues like deindustrialisation and climate change. Professor Ryan has published in numerous journals including the Journal of Urban Design, Urban Design International, Journal of Planning Education and Research, and the Journal of the American Planning Association, which awarded his article "Reading Through A Plan" its best article of 2011. Professor Ryan is co-editor in chief of the Journal of Planning History, published by Sage.

He is currently conducting design and planning studies of shrinking cities, rural settlements, and regions in Italy, Japan, and India, and his new book project examines the intersection of tourism, mapping, and travel guides during the 19th and early-to-mid 20th centuries. Professor Ryan holds a B.S. in biology from Yale University, a M. Arch. From Columbia University, and a Ph.D. in urban design and planning from MIT.

Prof Carlos Moreno

Designation

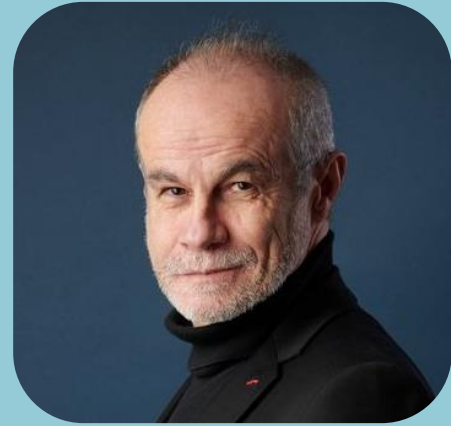
Scientific Director of the research lab
“Entrepreneurship Territory Innovation”;
Affiliation: IAE Paris-Sorbonne, Université Paris 1
Panthéon-Sorbonne

Geography (Based in)

Paris, France

Expertise

Research on complex systems,
human smart cities, Founded “15-
minute city” concept



Description

Carlos Moreno is a distinguished Franco-Colombian urban planner and professor, residing in Paris. He is best known for pioneering the "15-Minute City" concept, which promotes sustainable, human-centric urban living. This concept has been widely adopted by mayors and international organisations working towards more sustainable cities around the world and has since become a global movement. In Paris, his ideas have been embraced by the city's mayor, Anne Hidalgo, contributing to the city's transformation. Serving as a scientific advisor to various international organisations, he is recognised for his contributions to urban planning. He is also a fellow of the American Academy of Housing and Communities. As a professor at the IAE Paris Sorbonne, University of Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne, his work has earned international acclaim, including the OBEL Award in 2021, the UN-Habitat Scroll of Honour in 2022, and the Global Leadership Award for Sustainable Development from the Global Forum on Human Settlements in 2024 at the GFHS Annual Session at the UN Headquarters. In 2023, he was inducted into Sigma Xi, the world's largest scientific honour society, founded in 1886 at Cornell University. His books have been translated into numerous languages, reflecting his global influence. Pr. Moreno actively contributes to the global discourse on urban and territorial transformation, focusing on creating liveable cities that prioritize residents' well-being.

Cheng Hsing Yao

Designation Group Chief Executive Officer,
GuocoLand

**Geography
(Based in)** Singapore

Expertise Architecture and Urban
Development



Description

Mr Cheng Hsing Yao is Group Chief Executive Officer of GuocoLand, a leading real estate group that has a strong track record in creating distinctive integrated mixed developments and premium residential properties that uplift and transform their local neighborhood.

Mr Cheng is the Chairman of Centre for Liveable Cities Ltd. He is also a Board Member of the Land Transport Authority of Singapore, and a member of Changi Airport Group's Executive Committee of Airport Development.

Prof Cheong Koon Hean

Designation

Professor of Practice and Chairman, Lee Kuan Yew
Centre for Innovative Cities, SUTD
Chairman, WCS KC 2026-2028
Chairman, LKY WCP Nominating Committee

Geography (Based in)

Singapore

Expertise

Urban transformation and
strategic land-use planning



Description

Prof Cheong Koon Hean is Chair of the Lee Kuan Yew Centre for Innovative Cities as well as Professor of Practice in the Singapore University of Technology and Design. She is the Rector of NUS College and chairs the Nominating Committee of the Lee Kuan Yew World City Prize. In 2023, Prof Cheong was also appointed as Singapore's Non-Resident Ambassador to Finland.

Prof Cheong was the CEO of the Urban Redevelopment Authority (URA) from 2004 to 2010 and Deputy Secretary in the Ministry of National Development from 2001 to 2016. She steered the urban transformation of Singapore and oversaw the development of major growth areas, notably the new city extension at Marina Bay; as well as led the formulation of the Sino-Singapore Tianjin Eco City master plan.

From 2010 to 2020, Prof Cheong was the CEO of the Housing and Development Board (HDB). She introduced a new generation of smart and sustainable public housing estates, uplifted design standards and oversaw the management of over 1 million public housing flats. She also introduced a number of public housing policies that enabled better access to affordable housing .

An active contributor to international discourse on urban issues, Prof Cheong was a former global Board trustee of the Urban Land Institute and member of the World Economic Forum's Real Estate and Urbanization Council; a former Deputy President and Council Member of the International Federation of Housing and Planning. She continues to serve on several international expert panels advising on governance, planning and sustainability.

Prof Cheong is currently a board member of CapitaLand Group and Surbana Jurong. She had previously served on the boards of the National University of Singapore (NUS), Urban Redevelopment Authority, Housing & Development Board, Jurong Town Corporation, National Heritage Board, Jurong Port and the Civil Service College.

In recognition of her achievements, Prof Cheong has been conferred multiple awards. Notable ones include the Meritorious Service Medal for outstanding public service, the Urban Land Institute's Visionaries in Urban Development Award and the CTBUH's Lifetime Achievement Award.

Prof Chrisna du Plessis

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| Designation | Research Professor, University of Pretoria |
| Geography (Based in) | Pretoria, South Africa |
| Expertise | Sustainability, urban resilience, regenerative development |



Description

Chrisna du Plessis is a Research Professor at the University of Pretoria where she served as Chair of the School for the Built Environment and Head of the Department of Architecture until 2024.

Holding a PhD in urban sustainability and an honorary doctorate from Chalmers University of Technology, and with over 30 years of experience across research, practice, and policy development, her work has influenced urban and human settlement agendas across continents.

Globally recognised as a thought leader on sustainable and regenerative cities. she has delivered numerous international keynote and plenary addresses, taught at leading universities worldwide, and played a pivotal role in global networks as long-term leader of the CIB Priority Theme on Sustainable Construction and Chair of its Programme Committee. Co-author of the award-winning *Designing for Hope*, her work advances regenerative, ecosystemic approaches that support inclusive, adaptive, and future-ready cities.

Frederick Teo

Designation Chief Executive Officer,
GenZero

**Geography
(Based in)** Singapore

Expertise Climate solutions and
sustainable finance



Description

Frederick is the CEO of GenZero. He oversees the strategic direction of the company to achieve both climate impact and sustainable long-term financial returns.

Prior to his appointment at GenZero, Frederick held various leadership positions in Sustainability, Portfolio Management and Business Continuity Management in his 12 years at Temasek International. As Managing Director of Sustainable Solutions, he established the team and conceived capability programmes in clean energy, urban, and climate and nature solutions. He led key initiatives such as the establishment of Climate Impact X, a global marketplace and exchange for carbon credits, as well as Singapore's first brownfield distributed district cooling retrofit project in partnership with SP Group. He also worked on value creation projects with some of Temasek's large portfolio companies like SingTel and Mediacorp, and led corporate governance and stewardship initiatives within the Portfolio Management team. Frederick also took the lead in several community programmes. In 2014, he partnered Temasek Foundation to execute a nationwide delivery of mask kits during a severe haze episode and worked with ST Engineering on the development of the world's first N95 masks specifically designed for young children.

Frederick serves in multiple sustainability advisory roles, including on the SEforALL Governance Board, the World Economic Forum's Global Future Council on Climate and Nature Governance, and the IETA Council. He is also a member of the World Cities Summit Knowledge Council, convened by Singapore's Centre for Liveable Cities, which advances knowledge exchange on liveable and sustainable urban development.

Frederick holds a MSc in International Relations from the London School of Economics, and a BA and MA in Philosophy, Politics and Economics from Lincoln College, Oxford University.

Dr Jordi Vaquer

Designation Secretary General, Metropolis

**Geography
(Based in)** Barcelona, Spain

Expertise International Affairs



Description

Jordi Vaquer is Secretary General of Metropolis, the international association of major metropolises, which brings together around 150 global cities and metropolitan areas from all continents that have more than 1 million inhabitants. He teaches at Barcelona Institute for International Studies, and is a frequent media commentator on international affairs. He was the Director for Europe and the Director for Global Foresight and Analysis at Open Society Foundations, the leading philanthropy working on democracy and human rights. Before that he directed the Barcelona Centre for International Affairs, one of southern Europe's leading international affairs think tanks. Dr. Vaquer holds a PhD in International Relations from the London School of Economics.

Prof Kotchakorn Voraakhom

Designation Chief Executive Officer,
LANDPROCESS, Porous City
Network

**Geography
(Based in)** Bangkok, Thailand

Expertise Landscape Architecture and
Biophilic Design



Description

A leading voice in global climate resilience design, Thai landscape architect Kotchakorn Voraakhom uses design to combat the climate crisis in Southeast Asia's dense urban context. She is the visionary behind LANDPROCESS and the Porous City Network, organisations dedicated to creating porous, water-absorbing public spaces that help cities and vulnerable communities adapt to extreme weather. Her transformative work includes Bangkok's first climate-adaptive park, Chulalongkorn Centenary Park, the Thammasat Urban Rooftop Farm, Asia's largest organic rooftop farm, the innovative Chao Phraya Sky Park, and the transformation of Thailand's largest government complex with nature-based solutions.

Her global recognition includes a UN Climate Action Award, a spot on the TIME 100 Next list, and features in BBC 100 Women and Bloomberg Green 30. As a TED Fellow and one of the 15 Global Commission of World Economic Forum on Nature Positive Cities, she shares her expertise on landscape architecture for urban adaptability widely. Voraakhom holds a master's from Harvard University and an honorary doctorate from the Norwegian University of Life Sciences and is an Andrew D. White Professor-at-Large (ADW-PAL) at Cornell University. Her dedication reshapes urban landscapes to address both ecological survival and human dignity.

Maria Vassilakou

Designation

Founder and Chief Executive Officer,
Vassilakou Urban Consulting, GmbH,
Vienna Solutions

Geography (Based in)

Vienna, Austria

Expertise

Urban sustainability and
mobility



Description

Maria Vassilakou is an experienced, inspiring urban leader, devoted to open, inclusive and green cities, passionate on urban transformation processes leading to sustainable system change.

She served as Vienna's Vice Mayor responsible for Urban Planning, Traffic & Transport, Climate Protection, Energy and Public Participation from November 2010 to July 2019.

Maria Vassilakou envisages cities as open, green, affordable, family friendly and diverse places for life. In her 9 years serving as Vice Mayor she implemented successfully a vast transformation agenda comprising numerous innovative projects, contributing substantially to Vienna's Nr1 position in all major international liveability rankings within the last decade.

Maria Vassilakou now works worldwide as an independent advisor on urban transformation. After leaving office, she founded Vienna Solutions, a network of experienced Viennese urban experts and practitioners, with whom she cooperates building flexible teams to deliver complex urban projects. She shares her experience and know-how from Vienna – the worlds most liveable city – with cities, NGOs, organisations and corporations developing strategies, agendas and solutions, organizing transition management and capacity building for liveable, sustainable and inclusive cities.

Since 2019 Maria is also a member of the EU Horizon Mission experts board on Climate neutral smart Cities, currently serving as the Vice Chair of the board.

Sally Capp AO

Designation Vice-Chancellor's Fellow,
University of Melbourne, Former
Lord Mayor of Melbourne

**Geography
(Based in)** Melbourne, Australia

Expertise Civic leadership and urban
revitalisation



Description

Sally Capp AO was the first woman to be directly elected as the Lord Mayor of Melbourne. Sally served for 6 years between 2018-2024 leading the city through the pandemic period.

Sally has had other firsts in her career. She was the first woman to hold the post of Agent-General for Victoria in the UK, Europe and Israel from 2009 – 2013 and was appointed the first female director of the Collingwood Football Club in 2004.

Sally is currently a Vice-Chancellor's Fellow and Associate at the Centre for Cities at the University of Melbourne. Sally is also Chair of IT Sports Pty Ltd, sits on the Advisory Boards of Hickory Group and GJK Facilities Services and is a Strategic Advisor to the Mirrastone Group.

Sally's previous roles include CEO for the Committee for Melbourne and the Victorian Executive Director of the Property Council of Australia. Sally began her career as a Solicitor, after completing Law (Hons) and Commerce degrees at the University of Melbourne. She has held senior roles at both KPMG and ANZ, and co-founded a small business which she took to the ASX.

She is involved in a number of for-purpose organisations, currently sitting on the boards of Pathway to Politics and Cool.org and is a Patron of the Lighthouse Foundation and the Royal Women's Hospital Foundation.

Sally received the award of Officer of the Order of Australia in 2023 in the King's Birthday honours and won the McKinnon Prize for emerging political leadership in 2019.

Sowmya Parthasarathy

Designation Focus Markets Leader (India, Middle East and Africa); Fellow, Arup

Geography (Based in) London, UK

Expertise Master planning, urban design and sustainable infrastructure



Description

Sowmya is an architect and urban designer with 30 years of global experience. She is an Arup Fellow with a core expertise in master planning, urban design, and sustainable infrastructure. Sowmya is based in London, with the additional responsibility of leading Arup's work in India, Middle East and Africa, overseeing a team of built environment specialists across the region. In this role, she engages closely with governments, municipalities, private developers, investors, institutions, and civil society to deliver a wide range of projects and programmes internationally.

In wider industry roles, Sowmya is an Ambassador of the UK Design Council, an expert on the Mayor of London's Good Growth by Design Panel, and a member of the UK Government's New Towns Taskforce. In these roles she advises government and local authorities on the role of regenerative design and placemaking in city and infrastructure planning. Sowmya has a Bachelor of Architecture from the School of Planning and Architecture New Delhi, and a Masters in Urbanism from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, USA.

Steven Lewis

Designation

Global Head of Insight and Global Head of Research, Real Estate Management Services, Jones Lang LaSalle

Geography (Based in)

London, UK

Expertise

Large-scale real estate transactions, sustainability strategies



Description

Steven Lewis is the Global Head of Insight at JLL and also serves as the Global Head of Research & Strategy for the Real Estate Management Services business at the firm. Steven provides leadership across all major insight programs, working with clients, external partners, JLL business experts and over 500 talented Research colleagues to translate trends that will shape the future into actionable insights and services for our clients. He regularly engages with clients on a broad range of issues and opportunities facing the real estate sector, including sustainability and technology.

Steven chairs JLL's Global Editorial Board and serves on the Global Research Executive Board and the Global Real Estate Management Services Board, partnering with colleagues to understand and respond to macroeconomic and broader business trends in support of JLL's strategy. Steven is also co-chair of the World Economic Forum's Global Future Council on the Experience and Lifestyle Economy.

Prior to joining JLL, Steven was Global Director of Research at EY and has a background in financial services, with senior strategy roles at Kleinwort Benson and JP Morgan.

Prof Zhu Xufeng

Designation

Professor and Dean at School of Public Policy and Management, Tsinghua University

Geography (Based in)

Beijing, China

Expertise

Policy Process theory; Think Tanks and Expert Participation; Sustainable Development; S&T Governance



Description

Xufeng Zhu is Professor and Dean at the School of Public Policy and Management (SPPM) and Executive Director of the Institute for Sustainable Development Goals, Tsinghua University (TUSDG), Director of the Science & Technology Development and Governance Centre, Tsinghua University (TUSTDG), Editor-in-Chief of China Public Administration Review.

He was nominated by United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres and appointed by the Economic and Social Council as a member of the UN Committee for Development Policy (CDP).

He serves as President of the Asian Association for Public Administration (AAPA), Vice President of the Chinese Public Administrative Society, Vice Chairman and General Secretary of the China Public Management Association. He used to serve as an Executive Council member and Co-Chair of the SDG working committee of the Network of Schools of Public Policy, Affairs, and Administration (NASPAA), World Economic Forum Global Future Council member, etc.