

World Cities Summit Knowledge Council 2026

Global Experts to Advance Solutions for Growing Urban Challenges

16 June 2026 – The Centre for Liveable Cities (CLC) announced the third iteration of the World Cities Summit (WCS) Knowledge Council. The Knowledge Council, comprising eminent urban thought leaders, will discuss future-oriented solutions to shape liveable, sustainable, and resilient cities amid today's complex global issues. Council members bring a wealth of experience and expertise, positioning them as key voices in shaping global thought leadership and tackling the complex challenges facing cities today.

2. Led by Dr Cheong Koon Hean, Chair of the Lee Kuan Yew Centre for Innovative Cities (LKYCIC), Professor of Practice, Singapore University of Technology and Design (SUTD), the Council comprises 15 industry and thought leaders across diverse backgrounds and sectors. Members are appointed for two years from 1 June 2026 to 31 May 2028. Please refer to the Annex for the full list of Knowledge Council members.

3. The new Knowledge Council will have their first meeting and discussion on 17 June 2026, in Singapore, with a focus on two key themes – Regenerative Urban Development and Urban Liveability for Future Cities, aligned with the Summit's theme "Liveable and Sustainable Cities: ACT Now!".

4. The objectives of the Council are to:

- Provide thought leadership on global trends in relation to urban challenges and opportunities,
- Advise on strategic innovation and research priorities and initiatives, and
- Shape the World Cities Summit agenda and strategic objectives.

Contributions from WCS Knowledge Council 2024 - 2026

5. Members of the WCS Knowledge Council of 2024 – 2026 made significant contributions throughout their two-year tenure. Members provided valuable perspectives and guidance in the following areas:

- CLC's research projects (e.g. the Regenerative Cities, Future of Urban Liveability, Sustainable Mobility),
- Research congress and symposiums (e.g. 2024 Science of Cities Symposium, NUS Cities Symposium 2026 Panel on Regenerative Cities),
- Research publications and articles (e.g. CLC's "The Regenerative City: Moving Beyond Sustainability" publication, the International Journal for Smart and Sustainable Cities, CLC's flagship Urban Solutions series)
- Collaborations (CLC-C40 Memorandum of Understanding to strengthen city networks and exchange knowledge on liveable and regenerative cities, CLC-ARUP workshop at London Climate Action Week 2025).

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About the World Cities Summit

The biennial World Cities Summit (WCS) is a platform for government leaders, industry experts and academia to address liveable and sustainable city challenges, share integrated urban solutions and forge new partnerships.

Jointly organised by Singapore's Centre for Liveable Cities (CLC) and the Urban Redevelopment Authority (URA), WCS brings together a diverse urban ecosystem to share integrated solutions, showcase real-world case studies, and forge impactful partnerships.

Visit <https://www.worldcityssummit.com.sg/> for more information.

About Centre for Liveable Cities

Set up in 2008 by the Ministry of National Development and the then-Ministry of the Environment and Water Resources, the Centre for Liveable Cities (CLC) aims to distil, create and share knowledge on liveable and sustainable cities.

The CLC's work spans four main areas: Research, Capability Development, Knowledge Platforms, and Advisory. Through these activities, it hopes to provide urban leaders and practitioners with the knowledge and support needed to make our cities better.

For more information, please visit www.clc.gov.sg.

About Urban Redevelopment Authority

The Urban Redevelopment Authority (URA) is Singapore's land use planning and conservation agency. Our mission is 'to make Singapore a great city to live, work and play'. We strive to create an endearing home and a vibrant and sustainable city through long-term planning and innovation, in partnership with the community.

URA's multi-faceted role includes being the main government land sales agent. We attract and channel private capital investments to develop sites that support planning, economic and social objectives. We also partner the community to enliven our public spaces to create a car-lite, people-friendly and liveable city for all to enjoy. In shaping a distinctive city, URA also promotes architecture and urban design excellence.

Visit www.ura.gov.sg for more information.

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List and Biographies of WCS Knowledge Council Members

Name	Designation
Amanda Sturgeon	Chief Executive Officer, Biomimicry Institute
Arun Jain	FAICP, Urban Designer, Urban Strategist and Fulbright Specialist
Brent D. Ryan	Professor of Urban Design and Public Policy, Department of Urban Studies and Planning, School of Architecture + Planning, Massachusetts Institute of Technology
Carlos Moreno	Scientific Director of the research lab "Entrepreneurship Territory Innovation"; Affiliation: IAE Paris-Sorbonne, Université Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne
Cheng Hsing Yao	Chief Executive Officer, GuocoLand
Prof Cheong Koon Hean	Professor of Practice and Chairman, Lee Kuan Yew Centre for Innovative Cities, SUTD Chairman, WCS Knowledge Council 2026-2028 Chairman, LKY WCP Nominating Committee
Chrisna du Plessis	Research Professor, University of Pretoria
Frederick Teo	Chief Executive Officer, GenZero
Jordi Vaquer	Secretary General, Metropolis
Kotchakorn Voraakhom	Chief Executive Officer, LANDPROCESS, Porous City Network
Maria Vassilakou	Founder and Chief Executive Officer, Vassilakou Urban Consulting, GmbH, Vienna Solutions
Sally Capp AO	Vice-Chancellor's Fellow, University of Melbourne, Former Lord Mayor of Melbourne
Sowmya Parthasarathy	Focus Markets Leader (India, Middle East and Africa); Fellow, Arup
Steven Lewis	Global Head of Insight and Global Head of Research, Real Estate Management Services, Jones Lang LaSalle
Zhu Xufeng	Professor and Dean at School of Public Policy and Management, Tsinghua University

Details

Chair

Name	Dr Cheong Koon Hean	
Designation / Company	Chair of the Lee Kuan Yew Centre for Innovative Cities (LKYCIC), Professor of Practice, Singapore University of Technology and Design (SUTD)	
Region	Singapore	
Area of Expertise	Urban transformation and strategic land-use planning	
Brief Bio	Prof Cheong Koon Hean is Practice Professor and Chairman of the Lee Kuan Yew Centre Innovative Cities (SUTD) and also Chairman of Centre for Liveable Cities Knowledge Council. She is also Singapore's Non-Resident Ambassador to Finland and Rector of NUS College. Prof Cheong was formerly the CEO of the Housing and Development Board and the Urban Redevelopment Authority; and the Deputy Secretary at the Ministry of National Development. She played a key role in the physical transformation of Singapore, including introducing a generation of smart and sustainable public housing estates, and oversaw the management of over 1 million flats.	

List of Members (Arranged in alphabetical order)

Member 1

Name	Amanda Sturgeon	
Designation / Company	Chief Executive Officer, Biomimicry Institute	
Region	Sydney, Australia	
Area of Expertise	Regenerative and Biophilic Design	
Brief Bio	Amanda Sturgeon is the CEO of the Biomimicry Institute where she fosters a thriving ecosystem 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 on 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.	

Member 2

Name	Arun Jain, FAICP	
Designation / Company	FAICP (Fellow of the American Institute of Certified Planners), Urban Designer, Urban Strategist and Fulbright Specialist	
Region	Seattle, United States	
Area of Expertise	Metropolitan governance, urban resilience, and integrated planning	
Brief Bio	Arun is an urban designer and urban strategist with over 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 spans 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.	

Member 3

Name	Brent D. Ryan	
Designation / Company	Professor of Urban Design and Public Policy	
Region	Massachusetts, United States	
Area of Expertise	Research on aesthetics and policies of contemporary urban design, design and planning studies of shrinking cities	
Brief Bio	Brent D. Ryan is Vice Provost and 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 deindustrialization 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.	

Member 4

Name	Carlos Moreno	
Designation / Company	Associate Professor, Université Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne; Scientific Director, ETI Chair	
Region	France, Europe	
Area of Expertise	Research on complex systems, smart cities, Founded “15-minute city” concept	
Brief Bio	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 organizations, 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 prioritise residents' well-being.	

Member 5

Name	Cheng Hsing Yao	
Designation / Company	Group Chief Executive Officer, GuocoLand	
Region	Singapore	
Area of Expertise	Architecture and Urban Development	
Brief Bio	Mr Cheng Hsing Yao 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 neighbourhood. 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.	

Member 6

Name	Chrisna du Plessis	
Designation / Company	Research Professor, University of Pretoria	
Region	Pretoria, South Africa	
Area of Expertise	Sustainability, urban resilience, regenerative development	
Brief Bio	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.	

Name	Frederick Teo	
Designation / Company	Chief Executive Officer (CEO), GenZero	
Region	Singapore	
Area of Expertise	Climate solutions and sustainable finance	
Brief Bio	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.	

Member 8

Name	Jordi Vaquer	
Designation / Company	Secretary General, Metropolis	
Region	Spain, Europe	
Area of Expertise	International Affairs	
Brief Bio	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.	

Member 9

Name	Kotchakorn Voraakhom	
Designation / Company	Chief Executive Officer, LANDPROCESS, Porous City Network	
Region	Thailand, Asia	
Area of Expertise	Landscape Architecture and Biophilic Design	
Brief Bio	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, organizations 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 a member of the World Economic Forum's Global Commission 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.	

Member 10

Name	Maria Vassilakou	
Designation / Company	Founder and Chief Executive Officer, Vassilakou Urban Consulting, GmbH, Vienna Solutions	
Region	Austria, Europe	
Area of Expertise	Urban sustainability and mobility	
Brief Bio	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 world's 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.	

Member 11

Name	Sally Capp AO	
Designation / Company	Vice-Chancellor's Fellow, University of Melbourne, Former Lord Mayor of Melbourne	
Region	Australia	
Area of Expertise	Civic leadership and urban revitalisation	
Brief Bio	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.	

Member 12

Name	Sowmya Parthasarathy	
Designation / Company	Focus Markets Leader (India, Middle East and Africa); Fellow, Arup	
Region	United Kingdom	
Area of Expertise	Master planning, urban design and sustainable infrastructure	
Brief Bio	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.	

Member 13

Name	Steven Lewis	
Designation / Company	Global Head of Insight and Global Head of Research, Real Estate Management Services, Jones Lang LaSelle (JLL)	
Region	United Kingdom	
Area of Expertise	Large-scale real estate transactions, sustainability strategies	
Brief Bio	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.	

Member 14

Name	Xufeng Zhu	
Designation / Company	Professor and Dean at School of Public Policy and Management, Tsinghua University	
Region	China, Asia	
Area of Expertise	Policy Process theory; Think Tanks and Expert Participation; Sustainable Development; S&T Governance	
Brief Bio	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.	