

Concurrent Session E
Tuesday 13 September 2016
10:35am – 11:25am



Session 2
From Rhetoric to reality – creating the tools to implement the Monash vision.

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Ruth's interest and experience in education spans between projects which deeply explore how space can respond and support a pedagogy through to highly technical projects. Propelled by her deep curiosity about how people learn, Ruth has led projects which have been internationally recognised as exemplars of innovation in learning space design.

Michael is currently the Acting Director, Planning within the Building and Property Division at Monash University. Michael is responsible for the development of the facilities planning strategy for Monash University. Michael has 21 years experience with Monash University.

How can physical learning environments respond to new agendas for teaching and learning? How can we invest in the most versatile and effective learning spaces? Could a 250 seat tiered lecture theatre be reconfigured to a collaborative modality – what would it look like and how much would it cost?

Monash University, together with Architectus, have generated an online tool to interrogate these questions and will be sharing their learnings from this significant body of work.

In 2013, Monash University undertook a review of its learning spaces and strategies, to ensure its investment was meeting its ambitious educational (and fiscal) goals. The aim of the review was to provide a framework and best practice model for the planning, management, equipping and utilisation of and future investment in Monash learning spaces.

In 2014, the Monash Buildings and Property Division received Strategic Initiative funding to develop its 'Learning Space Design Principles'. The submission for this funding outlined a number of key projects that would inform the development of these principles.

These projects included:

- Development of a Strategic Asset Management Plan for all University academic buildings
- Development of a Unit Mapping tool for all timetabled teaching spaces
- Two Utilisation Studies of all teaching spaces to capture utilisation comparisons across peak and mid-semester teaching periods
- Development of learning modalities, and linking these back to the university's Better Teaching, Better Learning agenda
- Physical audits and assessments of all university teaching spaces for their potential redevelopment to suit new learning modalities
- Development of the Learning Spaces Design principles
- Development of an interactive Learning Spaces Design tool, linking current facilities to existing opportunities, as well as possible redevelopments to suit other learning modality and their impacts.

Buildings and Property engaged Architectus and their consultants to join the team, due to their demonstrated success in this area.

Like most universities, Monash was grappling with what 'the other side of the flip' means in a blended learning environment. What will the on-campus learning experience be, and what kind of learning environments will be required to facilitate them? Does our existing building stock support these new ways of teaching? If they don't how can we most efficiently bring them into line?

The first step was creating a common language to describe the types of future learning settings. By talking to timetablers, academics and facility planners, and visiting flagship spaces on campus, Architectus developed a set of Monash specific learning space 'modalities' with associated costing.

In parallel another team set out to audit 675 spaces across four campuses - Architectus was able to create a 3D data bank of all spaces. The models generated floor, ceiling and wall square meterage as well as occupancy numbers and condition ratings.

The third step was to bring the two together. Architectus developed Revit templates of each of the eleven modalities and proceeded to apply 'test fits' over every existing learning space. Could a 250 seat tiered lecture theatre be reconfigured to a collaborative modality? Could a flat floor tutorial room be reconfigured into a project modality? More than 7400 such questions were answered by this test fit process, and the result was a vastly expanded data bank for Monash.

Monash used the data generated to develop an online tool for the University. This tool has been utilised by the Buildings and Property Division for future planning, by the timetabling team for suitable room allocation and by the academic team for the development of new course curriculum.