

Urban Biodiversity and Design (URBIO) in Australasia

Research, teaching, and collaboration opportunities east to west

31 July 2025 – 2 August 2025

University of Western Australia, Perth, Australia

Conference organisers: Prof. Maria Ignaieva, and Dr. Simon Kilbane



Call for abstracts

Urban biodiversity and designing biodiversity-friendly environments are acute themes for research and teaching globally. URBIO (Urban Biodiversity and Design International Network) was founded as a branch of the Convention for Biodiversity in 2008. Since that time URBIO has become a well-connected international network of scholars and professionals that concentrate on different aspects of urban biodiversity and urban ecology with a specific emphasis on the application of research across urban planning and design, landscape architecture, maintenance and social and human wellbeing. While the majority of URBIO research originated in Europe and the United States, in Australia and New Zealand biodiversity-friendly landscape and planning projects and research in urban ecology is becoming increasingly popular. At the beginning of the 21st century, the loss and fragmentation of landscapes and their unique flora and fauna has become particularly acute in Australia and New Zealand who on the one hand still host unique biodiversity (as recognised biodiversity hotspots) and Indigenous cultural landscapes, yet, on the other hand are experiencing rapid urbanisation and a sustained ecological crisis. Australian urban ecology and the design of biodiversity-friendly urban landscapes is still in its infancy and currently lack a forum for the exchange of research, teaching and project ideas and experiences. Typically, Australian and New Zealand-based conferences on urban biodiversity target native components of urban ecosystems and its restoration. This conference instead opens up a wider conversation to welcome research and projects that showcase other approaches and framings of urban biodiversity and design. This is inclusive of new perspectives of urban natures including informal spontaneous and designed natures, green infrastructure, novel ecosystems as well as biodiversity friendly designs and Nature-based-Solutions. This conference is also the introduction of URBIO ideas and the opportunity for stronger integration to the international activities in research and teaching.

Aim

The goal of this conference is to recognise and reflect upon existing research, teaching and the collaboration of implemented projects across Australasia and to discuss current and future directions for joint research, teaching and professional projects and the exchange of expertise. This conference specifically targets Australian and New Zealand scholars, practitioners and stakeholders across landscape architecture, planning, urban design and the ecological sciences. However, scholars from other regions as well as other field of expertise such as geography, architecture, ecology and conservation biology would be warmly welcomed to contribute to the emerging conversation.

Target audience

The conference will host a range of keynote speakers from across the region and internationally and will combine key moments for discussion and dialogue among participants through engaging thematic-based speed talks and roundtables that will establish new levels of understanding and participation. This will be of interest to existing scholars, practitioners, local and state government representatives and others. PhD and other students will be very welcome.

Conference outcomes

We plan to publish multi-author peer-review paper based on outcomes of the conference and will also call for publishing a special issue in Urban Forestry and Urban Greening, Urban Ecosystems or Landscape Review.

Conference Programme

- Hybrid Format – lecture hall and field trip, recordings will be available
- Two days conference plus half-day field trip
- Day one: presentations and discussions. Welcome reception.
- Day two: half of the day of presentations and discussions, walk around UWA Campus. Dinner.
- Day three: field trip around Perth

Conference fee:

- \$150AUD: 3 days participation
- \$50AUD: student fee
- \$50AUD: online participation

Abstracts

Please send the names, affiliations, email addresses, 200-word texts, and keywords to urbioaustralia@gmail.com

