Ethical Cities:
Locking in Liveability

16 February 2016
Melbourne, Australia
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Urban Thinkers Campus in figures

21 COUNTRIES REPRESENTED

266 PARTICIPANTS

138 ORGANIZATIONS

8 CONSTITUENT GROUPS REPRESENTED
Introduction to the Urban Thinkers Campus

Cities that fail to build ethical futures, social inclusion and citizen engagement become less attractive, less sustainable and more vulnerable to the negative effects of shocks and mega-trends over time. On the other hand cities that purposefully works towards just, sustainable and well-governed futures – ones that create shared value for all its dwellers, particularly the most vulnerable and marginalized – will be more resilient and successful.

The “Ethical Cities: Locking in Liveability” Urban Thinkers Campus was co-organized by the UN Global Compact - Cities Programme and World Vision International to place a distinct emphasis on the ethical city as an urgent objective in the New Urban Agenda. Hosted at RMIT University in Melbourne, Australia, the Campus focused on the principles, policies and action planning aimed at bringing ethics and values to the forefront of city planning, urban governance and sustainable urban development.

It explored the notion of the ethical city through three core themes: (1) Ethical Urban Development, (2) Resilience and (3) Inclusion and Right to the City. Ethical cities are environmentally, socially and culturally sustainable, and utilize transparent, accountable, respectful, democratic, and inclusive mechanisms of engagement. This Urban Thinkers Campus proposes that The City We Need is Ethical and Just.

The City We Need principle(s) addressed

- The City We Need is socially inclusive.
- The City We Need is well planned, walkable, and transit-friendly.
- The City We Need is a regenerative city.
- The City We Need is economically vibrant and inclusive.
- The City We Need has a singular identity and sense of place.
- The City We Need is a safe city.
- The City We Need is a healthy city.
- The City We Need is affordable and equitable.
- The City We Need is managed at the metropolitan level.
Matrix of linkages - TCWN 1.0 vs. new recommendations

Applying an ethical framework to *The City We Need*, the following changes were proposed via the Urban Thinkers Sessions in terms of a new principle, revised ordering and wording of existing principles.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Principle (revised)</th>
<th>Suggested Additional Narrative</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>New Principle:</strong> (1) The City We Need is ethical and just.</td>
<td>It promotes free and open access to information, transparency in government, and active and inclusive community engagement. It advocates and monitors ethical behaviour at all levels and across different sectors in the city. It places emphasis upon the rule of law and the administration of justice.</td>
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<tr>
<td>(2) The City We Need is socially inclusive.</td>
<td>• City governments should establish plans and governance structures to promote social inclusion.</td>
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<td>It provides choice and opportunity for all people to participate in social, economic, cultural and civic expressions. It eliminates all physical, spatial, and sociological forms of segregation and exclusion, and promotes accessibility.</td>
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<tr>
<td>(3) The City We Need is affordable and equitable.</td>
<td>• The city invests in a comprehensive housing programme, specifically addressing the needs of vulnerable groups, to promote and guarantee land tenure security for all.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Communities proactively participate in planning, design and decision-making around the provision of infrastructure, housing, and basic services for all, inclusive of low-income and vulnerable groups. Public services are designed, planned and monitored together with the communities they serve and consciously include the changing needs of women, youth, people with disabilities, and vulnerable populations.</td>
<td>• Local authorities partner with businesses to achieve a local planning vision and equitable outcomes around infrastructure, housing and basic services.</td>
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<td>(4) The City We Need is a healthy city.</td>
<td>• The city proactively manages air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions.</td>
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<td>The city's parks and gardens are havens of peace and tranquility and harbor local flora and fauna and biodiversity. It promotes city greening planning and integrated water cycle management. Public and environmental health and wellbeing underpin the equitable operation of the city, through an accessible and responsive health system and a proactive focus on wellness, healthy and active lifestyles. All entities providing public services (health, water, energy, transport, housing) work together with the citizens to achieve this goal.</td>
<td>• The local authorities create and maintain community spaces that encourage active lifestyles of people from all ages.</td>
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<td>• Cities promote policies and investments that advance health care services supplied by the state.</td>
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<tr>
<td>(5) The City We Need is economically vibrant and inclusive.</td>
<td>• The city promotes a knowledge economy and recognizes the economic advantages of cultural diversity.</td>
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<td>It encourages and fosters local commercial and non-commercial economic development which includes social and environmental considerations, from domestic family production to the smallest entrepreneur to the largest corporations. It provides a one-stop shop for streamlined licensing and other administrative services. It recognizes and protects the specific needs of the informal sector of the economy in its economic development policies and strategies.</td>
<td>• It values the importance of creativity, innovation and corporate social responsibility in business.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Measures are in place to facilitate cross-agency collaboration around policies, programmes and projects.</td>
<td>• Local authorities adopt a more entrepreneurial and innovative approach to meeting community needs.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• All levels of government work with business to encourage ethical investments in the city.</td>
<td>• All levels of government work with business to encourage ethical investments in the city.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Measures should be implemented in every city to ensure transparency of political funding.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• The local authorities should encourage and support community activism, particularly in local politics in order to enhance participatory democracy.</td>
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<tr>
<td>(6) The City We Need is a safe city.</td>
<td>The city promotes safety in all types of spaces – public, semi-public and private – for community and individual well-being.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The city is welcoming night and day, inviting groups of all ages to use the streets, parks, and transport without fear. Public officials - the police, the fire department, and health, welfare, transit, and environmental services - and neighbourhood residents and community groups communicate frequently. The community is empowered and well informed to identify and address safety concerns at the community and neighbourhood levels. Resilience is at the core of ensuring the safe city by recognizing risks and vulnerabilities.</td>
<td>The city is resilient and identifies, manages and mitigates risks and vulnerabilities.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Public spaces and streetscapes are designed and promoted with safety in mind.</td>
<td>Cities put measures in place to foster a change of attitude to alcohol, drugs and violence in the city.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
(7) **The City We Need is a regenerative city.**
It is designed to be resilient by being energy efficient, low-carbon, and increasingly reliant on renewable energy sources. It replenishes the resources it consumes and recycles and reuses waste. It uses water, land, and energy in a coordinated manner and in harmony with its surrounding hinterland in support of urban and peri-urban agriculture.

- It promotes ethical consumerism such as pre-cycling to minimize waste and ethical sourcing from local markets.
- It is self-sufficient, absorbs growth, reuses resources and promotes a "do no harm" or precautionary principle. It challenges the status quo at each decision-making opportunity.
- The city has a shared, inclusive, aspirational document/plan, which has been developed by all stakeholders that exists outside the cycles of government.

(8) Original Wording: **“The City We Need has a singular identity and sense of place”**

It recognizes culture as key to human dignity and to sustainability. It involves cultural actors to unlock the creative potential of all citizens.

- It strengthens the bonds between city and its surrounding hinterland.

New Proposal: **The City We Need has multiple and evolving identities and senses of place.**

- It recognizes and celebrates diverse culture as key to human dignity, social cohesion and to sustainability and as a means to unlock the potential of all citizens. It strengthens the bonds between city and its surrounding hinterland. It celebrates multiculturalism and promotes contemporary indigenous knowledge, culture and perspectives.
- The city puts in place measures to diversify political representation in local councils by gender, race, ethnicity, etc.
- The identity of the city can be enhanced and encouraged through cultural events and activities.

(9) Original Wording: **“The City We Need is well-planned, walkable and transit-friendly”**

Schools are within walking or biking distance from homes. Offices are located no farther than a few transit stops away from homes. Shopping for daily necessities is within walking distance of residential buildings and located near transit stops. Open space for recreation is near schools, work, and home.

New Proposal: **The City We Need is connected, well-planned, walkable and transit-friendly.**

- Learning and work opportunities are within walking or biking distance, or within a few transit stops, from homes. Shopping for daily necessities is within walking distance of residential buildings and located near transit stops. Open space for recreation is near schools, work, and home. There are multi-modal forms of public transport that are reliable, responsive, affordable and accessible for people with additional needs.
- The inner core of the city should be well-planned and highly walkable.
- Urban planning is used to foster cultural transformation whereby more people shift away from private cars to public transport, cycling and walking, and
- The city ensures transit networks and local learning facilities are well located.

(10) **The City We Need is managed at the metropolitan level.**
It coordinates sectoral policies and actions (economy, mobility, biodiversity, energy, water, and waste) guided by sustainable, strategic and comprehensive local and national urban frameworks, monitored by an independent party. It recognizes the principle of subsidiarity where the appropriately affected communities are engaged and empowered to develop solutions for the common good and governed by a holistic view of the issues being considered. Communities and neighbourhoods are participants in metropolitan decision-making and are able to hold city authorities accountable.

- A city's biggest resource is its citizens. This should be recognized in policies, programmes and projects.
- It is crucial that measures are implemented to enhance cooperation and coordination between governments at all levels.
- There is a need to focus on long-term community resilience through accountability measures. Therefore it is recommended that government policy should be ethical and underpinned by recognition of greater community benefit or greater good.
- Local resources should be mobilized around sustainable development and it is important to recognize the scope for a sharing economy.
Cities are the result of a complex interplay of places, people and power, which in turn shapes and is shaped by technologies, resources and socio-cultural phenomena. Given the practical realities that cities face, we need ethical frameworks to guide city governance and sustainable urban development, and to enhance the livelihoods for all urban dwellers, particularly the most vulnerable.

All ethical city strategies should explicitly articulate how they will advance the following:

- **Resilience:** Build social capital, preparedness, confidence, skills, infrastructure and capacity for all citizens to engage and be sustained, in response to both sudden shocks and longer-term changes.

- **Inclusion and the Right to the City:** Promote social and economic inclusion, where vulnerable groups, including children and youth, are considered as key contributors to the city’s sustainable development.

- **Ethical Urban Development:** Demonstrate accountability, multi-sectoral engagement, leadership of ideas and by example, innovation, mutual respect, care, social justice, sustainability and reflexive governance.

The Resilience Urban Thinkers Session highlighted climate resilience as a critical determinant of a safe city, reinforcing the need for community-led policy and project development to address climate change rather than relying solely on local government. Participants agreed that capacity development activities should be directed at enhancing systemic thinking at the community level, as well as the ability of local government to co-design, implement and monitor policies and projects with their communities. The participants recognized the importance of including indigenous knowledge into resilience planning.

The Inclusion and the Right to the City Session explored how vulnerable groups, such as migrants and refugees of all ages, face challenges in accessing their rights and entitlements to services and livelihood opportunities in the city. Specifically, children and youth often feel excluded from economic, political and social life. Participants agreed that cities need to promote the genuine inclusion and participation of the most vulnerable within city governance and development processes. They highlighted the critical roles that government, civil society, research institutions and businesses play in fostering social inclusion and economic integration pathways that create shared value for all urban dwellers.

The Ethical Urban Development Session highlighted the importance of recognizing biases and divergent interests of various city stakeholders and how they work to shape urban development. Participants agreed that the key to success when embracing an ethical framework for urban development is to ensure more effective civic engagement, particularly during the planning to implementation stages for local and citywide projects. Participants considered the achievement of continuous and ongoing participation between stakeholders as a crucial factor underpinning ethical urban development. They emphasized the importance of open and transparent governance and respect for the rule of law.

Based on these discussions, the Campus proposes the additional principle: **The City We Need is ethical and just.** It promotes free and open access to information, transparency and accountability in government, and active and inclusive community engagement. It advocates and monitors ethical behavior at all levels and across different sectors in the city.
Key recommendations

This Campus proposes the following recommendations to achieve the ethical and just city we need. The Campus recommended that adoption of an ethical framework by cities would guide development, enhance resilience, and promote inclusion and the right to the city for all.

The City We Need is Ethical and Just

An ethical approach to urban development requires the promotion of open, accountable and transparent governance, which relies upon the application of the rule of law and the administration of justice. The availability of measurable data is essential and as such emphasis is placed on the promotion of good, open and transparent data. Cities need to support vulnerable groups of all ages and backgrounds to be well informed about their rights, and on where they can seek support from local services and regulatory bodies. Better outcomes around all aspects of city development are envisaged in instances where engaged and enlightened leadership exists based on ethical urban values.

Diversity is key to success

The City We Need has multiple and evolving identities and senses of place. The social, cultural and economic benefits of diversity should be recognized at all levels of the city and promoted citywide. It is important to recognize the multicultural nature of most modern cities and also the value of contemporary indigenous knowledge, culture and perspectives within a knowledge economy.

Resilience lies at the core of what constitutes a safe city

There was a clear consensus that notions of resilience, risk exposure and vulnerability should be embedded as core elements of a safe city. It is essential for cities to develop a culture of safety, to include the costs of externalities in decision-making, and to enhance community skills and capacities to lead this process in terms of policy development and project implementation.

An economically vibrant urban economy is entrepreneurial and ethical

An ethical city puts measures in place to alter the current form of urban development through ethical investment flows and clear business cases (including consideration of the public good) that incentivize social entrepreneurship and innovation capable of delivering ethical outcomes. This can be supported by appropriate reforms to the taxation systems and regulatory regimes. The corporate sector should also recognize the economic benefit of shared value creation that advances social progress (see Urban Solutions – Given the Chance), as well as the business value in ethical procurement, supply chains and production.
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Urban connectivity and mobility are basic needs
The importance of digital connectivity and urban mobility is essential to city development. Digital connectivity can reduce the need for mobility and transform the way we work, play, interact, participate and govern. This may require that we recognize the changing nature of work and embrace new technologies and technological-cultural change. Well-planned cities also rely on local governments and policymakers to better understand population growth trends, spatial settlement patterns, and labor markets to make urban planning decisions that are more adaptive to the needs of all dwellers, especially vulnerable groups. This includes adaptive planning, inclusionary zoning and sustainable urban mobility plans.

Respect and Access to Natural Resources and Landscapes
It is essential that natural resources and landscapes in the city are protected and accessible. Urban ecological services should be recognized and prioritized for the role they play in sustaining urban health, environmental protection, aesthetics and liveability. Urban parks, gardens, green corridors and the broader built environment should be designed and maintained in such a way that protects, and where possible restores, local flora, fauna and biodiversity.

Authentic and Continuous Stakeholder Engagement
It is essential to promote cross-sectorial engagement around the vision for the city and its implementation, engaging all levels of the city and its residents. This may require, when an ethical lens is applied, placing the common-good over individual interests and prioritizing the long-term perspective over short-termism. It will involve negotiating potential outcomes between various interest groups based on recognized shared values, and fostering engaged and enlightened leadership. It may also require a willingness to experiment and innovate in settings for stakeholder engagement, which includes the most vulnerable and marginalized.

“The push of people to the cities must ensure that development is ethical and inclusive” - @TimCostello speaking at #UrbanThinkers #RMIT
https://twitter.com/WorldVisionAus/status/699365542835040256

World Vision AUS
@WorldVisionAus  15 Feb 2016
Key actors

Participants identified the following key actors and proposed actions to advance the notion of an ethical and just city:

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT:**
- Recognize and promote the social, cultural and economic benefits of diversity, and ensure the built environment is reflective of the needs of all vulnerable groups (inclusionary zoning, affordable housing and public transport, safe and accessible public space).
- Ensure information is highly accessible to all urban dwellers, especially marginalized groups including children and youth, who are able to engage and fully participate in local and city decision-making processes.
- Promote place-based decision-making, integrated planning involving all key stakeholders, and develop local partnerships.
- Adopt more entrepreneurial, less risk averse and innovative approaches to deliver current and future needs of local communities.
- Initiate pilot projects around participatory democracy and participatory budgeting.

**RESEARCH INSTITUTIONS:**
- Share multidisciplinary evidence-based ideas to support the development of urban solutions and policy reform aimed at the social and economic inclusion of vulnerable groups.
- Support re-qualification pathways that enable the transferability of qualifications and skills of marginalized job seekers, such as migrants and refugees, to enable dignified access to the local job market.
BUSINESSES:
- Promote the economic benefit of shared value creation with partners and throughout the corporate sector, transforming untargeted corporate social responsibility initiatives into inclusion programmes targeting vulnerable groups.
- Create and promote an inclusive and culturally diverse workplace, removing any communication and cultural barriers in job recruitment and selection processes.
- Commit to corporate social responsibility across all business sectors and provide funding for relevant activities.
- Collaborate with the local government and other key stakeholders, recognizing a shared responsibility to the city’s liveability for all its citizens.

CIVIL SOCIETY:
- Advocate for increased transparency, accountability and community participation and consultation in governance processes including budget allocation and monitoring, and investments into urban infrastructure.
- Determine and advocate for the unmet needs and priorities of the community, especially those of the most vulnerable and marginalized.
- Ensure that care and support are provided to those who are not adequately supported by government services, and advocate for greater service delivery and diligence from government departments.

Jacqueline Trieu  
@jackie_trieu 15 Feb 2016
@LordMayorMelb talks about the heart of #ethicalcities - public participation @WorldVisionAus #UrbanThinkers
https://twitter.com/jackie_trieu/status/699417895891432960
CHILDREN AND YOUTH:
- Children and youth should be encouraged and able to actively engage in local to citywide decision-making processes, and be recognized as both knowledge experts and change agents in the development of their communities and cities.

- Be active participants in defining an ethical and just city and monitoring the city’s progress towards improved liveability.

MEDIA:
- Act as a watchdog to protect public interest against unethical behavior at the local, city and national level.

- Raise public awareness on the importance of ethical leadership, governance, resilience and inclusion to sustainable urban development.

Outstanding issues

When promoting the importance of *The City We Need* principles, it is crucial to recognize that there are a number of significant barriers that would need to be overcome to achieve an ethical and just city.

First, change on the scale required is long-term. Although the New Urban Agenda has a 20-year time horizon, it would be crucial to encourage cities to include intermediate milestones. To some extent, this will be influenced by the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals. Second, existing power structures need to be taken into consideration because calls for equity tend to challenge those with most power and resources. Finally, concerns were expressed by Campus participants regarding the question of “who to include and how” or more specifically who is exactly the “we” that is referred to when talking about vulnerabilities.

A *“The City We Need”* principle that proved to be contentious was the suggestion that cities should be managed at the metropolitan level. It is important to keep in mind the need for subsidiarity which implies that “social problems should be dealt with at the most immediate (or local) level consistent with their solution.”

It is critical to take into consideration locational differences and traditional methods and approaches rather than pushing the goal of metropolitan level urban management. The consideration of this principle by the participants raised a number of questions such as: What is the best way to promote coordination between adjacent cities, how are decisions made, what are the funding implications, especially when resources are limited, and what does a metropolitan approach mean for citizen participation and political representation?

At the same time, we see increasing evidence of the internationally connected nature of cities (through alliances, coalitions and other arrangements). It is important to take these new forms of city-to-city collaboration into account.
Urban solutions

An extensive number of potential urban solutions were discussed during this Urban Thinkers Campus. Some examples are shared below as indicative of the richness of the conversations that took place. In addition, a more detailed urban solution from the Brotherhood of St. Laurence and its implementing partner ANZ Bank was submitted to the World Urban Campaign. The other examples here would be further elaborated in due course.

**Given the chance: Employment pathways for refugees and asylum seekers**

For many recent migrants, especially refugees and asylum seekers, inclusion into urban centres in Australia is challenging. Multiple barriers to social and economic participation exist, including language and cultural differences, and employer recruitment practices which screen out migrants on the basis of unrecognised skills, qualifications, and experience. These barriers can lead to extended periods of unemployment, inequality and exclusion for recent migrants. Meaningful economic participation through sustained employment is central to the liveability experienced by migrant groups. Responses are required that engage employers, and enable marginalised job seekers to overcome barriers and integrate into Australian economic life.

‘Given the Chance’ is a corporate paid work placement program that provides refugees and asylum seekers in Australia with the skills and experience to help them gain entry into the workforce. The programme enables marginalized job seekers to gain entry to the economy of their city through professional employment opportunities. For more details on this solution see attached document. This urban solution is being scaled up by The Brotherhood of St Laurence and ANZ Bank across Australia, and was submitted separately to the World Urban Campaign.

**Promotion of deliberative development models in the city**

The vast majority of property development is speculative and this has significant shortcomings, particularly in terms of appetite for innovation and lack of connection between the developer and the ultimate user. Speculative property development is focused exclusively on profit maximization. The ex-
Plan away from the car

In general, our cities have been built to accommodate the car. It was proposed that we look to a new phase of city planning where we move away from the reliance on the car as a primary means of transportation. This could be achieved through a “car last, pedestrians first” policy. This proposal echoes the comments made by the Lord Mayor of the City of Melbourne, Robert Doyle, who stated that he was unaware of any modern city that is planning to encourage more cars to come into the city centre. The types of measures that can speed this transition include removing on-street parking, reducing road construction or turning existing roads into green spaces and bike lanes. Likewise, it would make sense to increase development densities in proportion to public transport usage. Following the October 2015 local elections, the new council members in Oslo have introduced a proposal to ban cars from the city centre.

Capture redundant spaces

There is recognition amongst the Melbourne Urban Thinkers Campus participants that there is significant redundancy in our cities and in how the local economy functions. A key solution therefore is to promote policies that identify and make use of this redundancy in terms of goods, products, services and so on. This urban solution is being explored by Hip V. Hype Consultants, Maddocks Lawyers, Social Enterprise Finance Australia and the City of Melbourne.

Acknowledge and plan for the changing nature of work in the city

The current model of employment concentration in a central business district is breaking down and one of the key challenges is to decentralize jobs around the city. While this does tie into the notion that The City We Need should be walkable, it takes it further by emphasizing the potential to take advantage of Internet connectivity to promote working from home. There were even suggestions that internet connectivity should be free so as to speed up this rapid transition in where work is located in the city. This is a proposal that has been put forward for consideration to the City of Melbourne as they work to develop a new Future Melbourne plan.
List of all countries present

1. Australia
2. Bangladesh
3. Canada
4. Chile
5. China
6. Colombia
7. Denmark
8. Finland
9. Iceland
10. India
11. Ireland
12. Italy
13. Mexico
14. Namibia
15. New Zealand
16. South Africa
17. South Korea
18. Sri Lanka
19. Netherlands
20. United Kingdom
21. United States of America

Speakers

Michael Nolan, Inaugural Chair, UN Global Compact - Cities Programme
Uncle Colin Hunter, Wurundejeri Tribal Council Elder.
Martin Bean, Vice Chancellor and President, RMIT University.
Ralph Horne, Director, UN Global Compact – Cities Programme, Deputy Pro-Vice Chancellor for Research and Innovation, RMIT University.
Tim Costello, CEO, World Vision Australia.
DOUGLAS RAGAN, Chief of Youth and Livelihoods, UN-Habitat.
Toby Kent, Chief Resilience Officer, 100 Resilient Cities - Resilient Melbourne.
Steve Chadwick, Mayor, Rotorua Lakes Council (New Zealand)
Martin Thomas, CEO, Habitat for Humanity Australia.
John Watson, Cities Editor, The Conversation.
Cezar Busatto (by video), Chief Resilience Officer, City of Porto Alegre (Brazil)

Robert Doyle, Lord Mayor of the City of Melbourne (Australia).
John Fien, Director of the Swinburne Leadership Institute, Swinburne University of Technology.
Austin Ley, City of Melbourne.
Robyn Waters, The International Real Estate Federation.
Brendan Barrett, UN Global Compact - Cities Programme.
Carmel Guerra OAM, CEO, Centre for Multicultural Youth.
Ramesh Kumar, General Manager of Social Participation and International Affairs, AMES Australia.
John Van Kooy, Senior Research Officer, Brotherhood of St Laurence.
Danielle Curry, General Manager of Retail (Victoria & Tasmania), ANZ Bank.
Liz Johnstone, Associate Director – Sustainability, AECOM.
Maree Grenfell, Resilience Coordinator, Resilient Melbourne.