

UTS and the Idea of The City in the Twenty-first Century

The Idea of The City: the twenty first century knowledge driven city

The City is a centre for commerce, for government, for education, for health services and for many other activities. It is a hub for transport, communications, financial, legal and IT services. This Idea of the City is a powerful concept, and metaphor, which has been much celebrated in art, literature, film, music and much explored through many areas of scholarship. It exhibits dynamism, sense of excitement and sense of potential to be achieved which makes it a people magnet that draws people in for employment, education, health, habitation, sport, entertainment and tourism. It attracts migrants and provides their first homes and places to build communities. It is a highly designed and engineered environment which challenges us to solve complex environmental and technological problems and to explore evolving social modalities.

In the twentieth century, The City had a strong sense of place which was marked by major institutions and buildings including parliaments, courts and banks. In the twenty-first century, The City has become a node in the global transport, communications, financial, cultural and political networks. Each node is a metropolis which finds its peers among the other great cities of the world. They are globally connected by power and influence as much as the tangible links. The sense of place has become a sense of connections giving The City as metropolis a character which is not shared by other 'cities' which may be populous but are not connected and influential. It is unlikely to be centre for industry but is rather a manifestation of the knowledge society in that it is driven by the generation and application of knowledge and hence characterised by professional practice in new and emerging domains.

These notions of the city parallel the songlines of Aboriginal tradition. Through physical routes and oral traditions, both physical and social goods are transported across the continent. At the intersections of those lines are important meeting places where goods are traded and songs and stories exchanged.

In Australia, that character is found only in Sydney and Melbourne. They have more in common with other great global cities than with other Australian cities. It is displayed in their multidimensional diversity and complexity and reflected in the reference points they use. It is shown in the growth of strong and vibrant ethnic communities, varieties of dwellings and lifestyles, choice in education and employment. To ensure that they will function viably and coherently in the long term, they need to engage with issues of social justice and environmental sustainability.

The Idea of The City University:
the twenty first century knowledge driver

The City University is much more than a university which happens to be located in a city. It is a University which derives its character from The City. Teasing out the depiction of The City and locating its characteristics in university suggests that The City University is a university which is:

- Closely intertwined with the strands of The City – government, business, law, IT, media, entertainment and tourism, infrastructure – and its various communities.
- Focussed the generation and application of knowledge in the service of society
- Characterised by professional practice in new and emerging domains.
- Globally connected, especially with peers in other metropolises.
- Engaged with the design, engineering, technological environmental and social challenges of The City.
- Societally and communally engaged, contributing to public debates and the exploration of contested and evolving social modalities.

Its characteristics and opportunities may be identified by considering The City University's peers which include:

- City U Hong Kong
- Columbia University, New York
- University of London
 - including Birbeck, Goldsmiths, Institute of Education, Kings College, Queen Mary, London Business School, Royal Holloway
- City University New York
- La Sapienza, Rome

Examination of these characteristics and the scope and programs of these and other peers provides a glass in which UTS might shape its future. It suggests that UTS might begin a conversation around a character which is, *inter alia*,

- Globally focussed
- Knowledge intensive and professionally expressed
- Influential with government, business, the professions and the broader communities.
- Local and international students
- Very strong postgraduate presence, both coursework and research.
- Built on innovation, techno savvy, just in time development and delivery.
- Graduates who are cross-disciplinary, adaptable and experts in change.
- An institution where people pick and choose what they need.

Alex Byrne
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Appendix: Sydney City Council Area Facts and Figures (Source SCC website)

Demographics

- 40% of the City of Sydney residential population is aged between 20 and 35.
- Over half (53.3%) of city residents aged 15 and over have never married.
- Reflecting the city's growing student population, nearly a half of city residents (43.8%) live in non-family households, including group households.

Place of Birth

- The City of Sydney's tremendous cultural diversity stems from the fact that almost half its residents (45.0%) were born overseas.
- Over half (51.1%) of all City of Sydney residents had both parents born overseas, including 12% born in China.
- A considerable proportion of young migrants to the city are overseas students.

Languages Spoken

- Almost 30% of the resident population speak a language other than English.
- The most common second language is Chinese, spoken by 9.5% of the population, and Indonesian (3.1%).

Education

- Nearly 30% (27.6%) of city residents are enrolled in study.
- Of the City of Sydney residents age 15 and over, 57.9% possess a post-school educational qualification including 37.1% with a Bachelor degree or higher.
- Of these, more than one-in-four (27.9%) hold a qualification in Management and Commerce, one-in-five (19.7%) in Society and Culture, and 5.6% in Information Technology.
- The proportion of City workers attending further and higher educational institutions continues to increase. In 2001, 15.5% combined work with some form of educational attendance, including 9.7% who were attending university.
- Between 1991 and 2001, the number of University attendees amongst the City of Sydney workforce has virtually doubled, at a time when the workforce overall has increased about a quarter.
- 68.1% of the city workforce holds a post-school educational qualification.
- 40% of the city workforce, more than 100,000 workers, hold a bachelor degree or higher educational qualification, an increase of 43% from 1996. The 1996 figure, in turn, was an increase of more than 50% from 1991.
- Of the men and women in the Sydney metropolitan area who had a degree in Management and Commerce, 38.3% were employed within the City of Sydney LGA. Similarly, of those who had a degree in Society and Culture, 38% worked in the City. 25% of those with a Creative Arts degree worked in the City.

Work

- 72.9% of City of Sydney residents are in the workforce.
- Nearly one-half (47.2%) of city residents are employed in high skill occupations, classified as managers, administrators or professionals.

Income

- The median average City of Sydney residents aged 15 years and over receives a weekly income of \$A605 which is 35.9% higher than the median metropolitan Sydney individual income.
Every day, a workforce several times the City of Sydney's residential population commutes to the city. The cosmopolitan nature of this workforce is one of the city's great strengths, adding to its vitality and driving its economic success.

Industry of Work

- 23% of the workforce is employed in the Finance and Insurance industry, and a further 21% in Business Services (which includes legal, accountancy and management consultancies)
- Just under 10% of the City is employed in Government Administration.
- Over 18,500 people are employed by Retail establishments, comprising slightly more than 6.2% of the total employment.
- Over 25,000 City workers, approaching 10% of the workforce, are employed in the hospitality industries by Visitor Accommodation establishments and City Restaurants and Cafes.

Hours of Work

- City of Sydney workers are working longer hours than ever before.
- The proportion working more than 48 hours a week increased from 16% in 1996 (and 13% in 1991) to over 23%.

Internet Use

- The 2001 Census indicated that 80% of the City workforce had access to the Internet, either at home work or elsewhere. This was considerably in excess of the Sydney metropolitan level of 60%.

Occupation

- Almost 60% of the city workforce falls into the top three high-skill occupation categories: 31% are professionals, 16% associate professionals and a further 12% managers and administrators.

Quality of Life Indicators

- In 2001, international human resources company, William M. Mercer Companies, rated Sydney 4th out of 200 cities based upon quality of life criteria.

Transport and Traffic

- Well in excess of half a million people use the CBD daily.
- More than 200,000 people commute to the CBD by train daily.

Cultural Capital

- 158 performing arts and music companies offer Sydney audiences a choice of 2,054 performances annually or 5.6 performances daily.
- By the year 2005, it is anticipated that a further \$80 million worth of additional city performance venues will be built.
- The City of Sydney has increased spending on the arts by 300% since 1995/96, to more than \$4 million (excluding the annual New Year's Eve celebrations).

Economic Performance

- The city economy is becoming increasingly specialised in financial and business services, information technology and telecommunications (IT&T) and retail.

- Of the nation's top 100 companies, 60% are headquartered in greater Sydney, most within the CBD itself.
- Two thirds of Australia's banking and finance industry business, almost three-quarters of financial services and nearly half of Australia and New Zealand's top 500 companies are located in Sydney. Sydney has more than twice the international flight departures and two and half times the departures to Asia per week than Melbourne.
- Sydney is regional headquarters to around 500 global corporations operating in the Asia Pacific region. This represents more than 60% of the national total.
- Significantly, one third (33%) are in the IT industry.
- In 1999, 70% of the top 100 Australian IT companies were headquartered in Sydney, as were two-thirds of the 50 largest computer software producers.
- 65% of Australia's Internet traffic is carried by NSW-based Internet service providers, making Sydney the national leader in the Internet industry.
- In 1999, it was estimated that 85% of all call centres servicing the Asia Pacific region were located in Australia. Within Australia, 50% of these centres were located in Sydney.
- The Australian call centre industry was estimated to be worth almost US\$6 billion, is growing at a rate of 20% per annum and employs more than 160,000 people.
- Sydney is the regional headquarters to more than 500 global corporations operating in the Asia Pacific region.
- Sydney's economic size is estimated at approximately US\$175 billion, which represents 25-30% of Australia's total economic activity.
- Sydney's economic size is equivalent to the economic size of Singapore, about half that of Hong Kong.

Computer Literacy

- Australia has the 7th highest per capita rate of personal computer ownership in the world, behind the United States.
- In terms of Internet usage, Australia ranked 10th in the world, behind the United States, Finland, Norway and Iceland.

Skilled and Educated workforce

- Sydney has one of the most skilled labour forces in the world and the level of education participation in Sydney is even higher than the national average.
- According to UNESCO, Australia had a greater proportion of residents undertaking tertiary study per 100,000 people – 72% of the relevant age group – than the United States, most Asian countries and European countries such as France, the United Kingdom and Germany.