



**20-21 August 2014 – Sydney Town Hall**

## **GROUND BREAKING CONFERENCE UNLOCKS THE POTENTIAL OF UNIVERSAL DESIGN**

Sydney will host Australia's first Universal Design conference on 20 – 21 August 2014. Instigated by Council on the Ageing NSW (COTA NSW) and supported by the City of Sydney the conference gives Australians their first local opportunity to hear from some of the world's leading proponents of universal design.

"People may already understand that universal design is about making products or environments more accessible. But it's much bigger than that," says Jane Bringolf, of COTA NSW. "Universal design puts a person's experience at the centre of the design process. People who apply the principles of universal design ask themselves how they can make sure a product, building or environment can be used by everybody, equally."

Conference attendees will have an unprecedented opportunity to hear about universal design in an international context. It will provide valuable insights for people working in the built environment, urban planning, architecture, and building and design.

"Universal design has the potential to transform people's lives by making small but significant things – like a cupboard – useable by anyone, regardless of their age, or level of capability. At the same time, it can transform something as large as a city, making it as easy for a person with a walking frame or pram to get around as a kid on a skateboard. The City of Sydney recognises this and has lent its wholehearted support to the conference" says Dr Bringolf. "We're delighted that Lord Mayor Clover Moore will open it."

"Dr Gerald Craddock from the world-leading Centre for Excellence in Universal Design in Ireland will give the keynote speech, discussing how universal design helps to create environments and products that are accessible, safe, and easily used by everyone," said Dr Bringolf. Kay Saville-Smith, a sociologist and director of the Centre for Research, Evaluation and Social Assessment will provide the second keynote presentation, which will address how the issue of affordability is often used to rationalise poor design. "In fact, the application of universal design can actually contribute to affordable housing solutions, not hinder them" says Dr Bringolf.

**Date:** Wednesday 20 August, 9am – 5pm, Thursday 21 August 2014, 8.45am – 4.30pm

**Venue:** Lower Town Hall, Town Hall Sydney

**Price:** 2 Day Conference \$600.00 (inc. GST), or \$320.00 (inc. GST) for Wednesday or Thursday only. Student rates and bursaries are available – [click here](#) for more information.

For general enquiries, please [visit the website](#), call 1300 789 845 or send an [email](#). Limited sponsorship opportunities are available, please contact Melanie Robertson on 02 9660 2115 or email [melanie@intermedia.com.au](mailto:melanie@intermedia.com.au) to request a media kit.

The conference was organised by Interpoint. It has the support of the NSW Government (keynote sponsor), and the support of the Queensland Action for Housing Design, Australian Network for Universal Housing Design, Local Government NSW, and Institute of Access Training Australia.

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