Student Precinct Project Update

August 2016

We are excited to be co-creating the new Student Precinct on the Parkville campus with our students. The Student Precinct Project will create a new vibrant centre for our student communities. To keep you updated, this regular newsletter will let you know the latest news and highlights, along with the many opportunities to get involved.

We value your feedback so please feel free to contact us at student-precinct@unimelb.edu.au.

News and Highlights

The mid-year break has given the Student Precinct Project valuable time to consolidate input from our students, captured during our May Engagement activities, to run a number of focus-group sessions with key groups and student organisations, and to make progress against key project milestones. Here’s just a few of the highlights we thought you may be interested to hear about.

Communications and Engagement

The consultation activities held across campus in May were a great success. Around 400 students ‘had their say’ by posting comments on our interactive comment wall and at our student precinct engagement office. Following 17 hours of engagement at seven different pop-up locations we had more than 800 comments. The project team including our Student Ambassadors, had conversations with students from across the campus and listened to first-hand views of what the students need and want from student-led services and spaces and from the new Student Precinct.

What we heard was that students are excited and three ‘hot topics’ kept coming up: Students want food and retail to be a big part of the Precinct; that there is more demand for informal study and social space than there is available; and, that the Precinct should have a focus on events, activations and opportunities that enable all students to get involved.

During mid-year break we have been busy collating and reviewing the input gathered from our Students and using this to shape the engagement activities we have planned for the next stage of the Project’s student engagement program.

All current UoM students are invited to get involved in the Community.

Interested in participating? If you are a current UoM student and you would like to get involved, follow the link http://go.unimelb.edu.au/9twa to answer a few quick questions to register your interest and ensure that you are eligible to take part, and the team will be in contact with you soon to let you know when the conversations begin.

So, on that note, we are pleased to announce that the Student Precinct Co-creation Community has been launched!

The Community will be the primary engagement activity during semester 2, although you will see our Student Ambassadors out and about at key events. The Community will provide a discussion forum that for the most part will take place online, with opportunities for face-to-face focus-group sessions as well. The Community will be run by industry-leading co-creation experts, The Lab, who have picked-up the key ideas and themes captured to date with the aim of getting to the heart of what it is that students need and want from the Precinct. The online community will enable us to qualitatively explore at a deeper level how best the new student precinct design and amenity can enhance the UoM student experience and ultimately the University’s reputation as a leading university.
Talking with our Students about the Student Precinct Project in the last few months, a number have asked us ‘What is an Urban Design Framework’?

Key to any infrastructure Project is an understanding of the location, not only in terms of what is there – its buildings, paths and landscape – but how it works with what is around it.

The Student Precinct site, located on the corner of Swanston and Grattan Street is a key entry point into the University and provides an exciting series of spaces.

The Urban Design Framework is being prepared by Architecture firm Jackson Clements Burrows, and will provide the Project with a detailed understanding of the location, site and how it fits within the broader University campus context.

The UDF is being shaped by input from key stakeholders from across the University, including our student organisations and student representatives, to give us a picture of opportunities and constraints that we can explore further in the next phase of the Project.

We are also very excited to welcome Zachariah Dahdoule, current Master of Architecture student, to the Student Precinct Project Team.

Zack is working as a Project Assistant on the Urban Design Framework, working closely with colleagues at Jackson Clements Burrows.

### Working with our Student Organisations

We are continuing to work alongside Colleagues from UMSU and GSA to capture a comprehensive view of the student-led services and amenities and to understand the potential for how these can best support our student communities in the future Student Precinct.

Understanding the opportunities, interdependencies and synergies has been vital to ensuring we get the best outcome for UoM students and our student organisations.

Two major activities to date have been developing the service scope for the future Precinct from the perspective of our student-led services and amenity, and a thorough analysis of the arts and cultural facilities used by students and student organisations.

The outcomes from both of these initiatives will inform the next stage of the Project and we look forward to updating you again in the coming months.
In Focus: Our Student Ambassadors

We are delighted to welcome back two of our Student Precinct Project Ambassadors, Guo (Candace) Tang and Chukwuma (Chuma) Okonkwo who will work as part of the extended project team.

Following the engagement activities of last semester, our ambassadors will be active once more supporting a range of face-to-face student engagement activities in Semester 2.

Candace is undertaking the Master Marketing Communications.

“I am interested in being involved in the Student Precinct Project because I think the project is going to benefit all students at the University of Melbourne, and it is every student's responsibility to facilitate this project. Moreover, I like to make conversations with students to find out their insights. I want to work in educational institutions upon graduation, therefore, I am very excited to get involved in school projects.”

Chuma is undertaking the Master of Public Policy and Management.

“My interest in being part of the Student Precinct Project springs from the fact that it is student-focused and driven by students' needs, bringing together student services in the place where students activities happen the most. This resonates with me greatly and it is a privilege to be part of a project that will nobly transform students' Melbourne experience.”

Want more information? Join our Mailing List!

To subscribe to our mailing list sign up for updates at bit.ly/studentprecinctupdates.

Please encourage your unimelb friends/classmates/club members/colleagues to sign up for updates too.

We always welcome general enquiries via our mailbox student-precinct@unimelb.edu.au.

If you are a subscriber to our mailing list and have indicated you would like to receive project updates, we will keep you updated regularly via your nominated email address. If you also elected to hear about consultation opportunities, we will let you know as relevant opportunities arise.

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