

Study tour on water sensitive cities - applications open

This is your invitation to apply for a study tour on water sensitive cities. It is an amazing opportunity to develop your leadership skills, learn about water sensitive cities, see what change looks like on the ground, and develop networks within Australia and overseas.

"I was challenged to think creatively and positively about the change that we as individuals and as a group could stimulate."

"I felt empowered (by the tour). The trip reinforced that I can personally play a key role in progressing (our city) towards a water sensitive region."



"I (now) have a passion to transform our cities into a water conscious society, and I realised we can make our visions a reality if we have patience and persistence."

The tour will include young professionals from across Australia who will:

- Travel to another Australian city to review innovative approaches to water.
- Report to the WSUD12 conference in February 2012 on ideas and successes within Australia.
- Travel overseas to further seek examples of innovation and sustainable cities.
- Report back and engage with decision makers to progress your ideas.

This is a unique experience and you should only apply if you are willing to challenge yourself and push your limits.

The aim is for a few small groups from cities such as Melbourne, Sydney, Brisbane, Adelaide, and Perth to work together and ultimately build a network of future leaders.

The group must develop, plan, book and travel on its own itinerary. This is crucial to the 'experiential learning' approach.

Background

This is the third time such a tour has been run. The first tour travelled to North America in 2005, the second tour travelled to Europe in 2009. Participants came from water authorities, local governments, environmental NGOs, consultants and academia and represented Melbourne, Sydney, Brisbane, Perth and New Zealand.

What are the benefits?

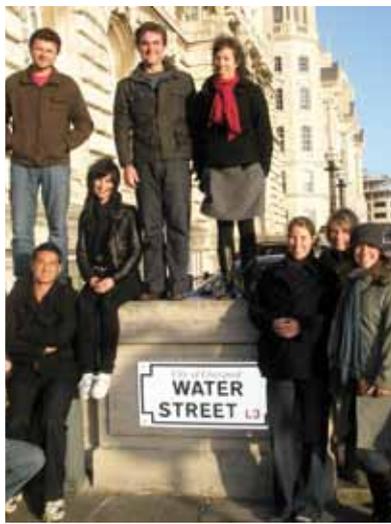
The benefits of participating in this tour are huge: personal development, exposure to some of the best thinking in urban water management, ability to manage teams, engagement with key influencers within Australia, and the opportunity to go through an experiential learning journey.

Who should go?

The study tour is open to young leaders who are passionate about water, cities and making a difference. It is an experiential learning tour, meaning that the tour is completely managed by the group itself. There is a suggested approach and key milestones, but the itinerary, the purpose and the destinations are entirely decided by the group itself.

In the past engineers, scientists, landscape architects, social scientists, environmental lobbyists, and policy advisers have been selected. This time we are looking beyond that and the tour could also include urban planners, film makers, economists, designers, ecologists, and chemists.

"Unlike the cities I had seen, Australian urban centres still maintain a closer connection with their natural heritage, and we should strive to preserve this connection as we develop our cities and towns. The importance of inter-disciplinary teams had never been clearer!"



Application process

Submit your application at:
www.clearwater.asn.au/events_and_training
by August 15th 2011

Costs

The cost is approximately \$10,000. This is expected to cover the initial trip within Australia, and overseas trip, and the evaluation and reporting costs and conference registration fees for WSUD 2012. Attendance at team planning sessions are to be borne by the participant.

Key dates

Apply by: **15th August 2011**

First briefing and team planning session
- Melbourne: **6th September 2011**.

WSUD 2012 Conference: **21st – 23rd February 2012**

For more information contact:

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Water Sensitive Cities Study Tour - Frequently Asked Questions

1. What is the Study Tour?

The tour is a series of site visits and meetings related to integrated water management – where you'll get to hear, see and ask questions about what makes a city more sustainable and what role water plays in achieving this outcome.

Expect to see various types of alternate water schemes, to hear about the strategies that cities are using to address climate change and to meet people who have challenged existing paradigms on urban water management.

But the study tour is more than this. It is also an 'action learning' project in which participants are encouraged to ask what collaboration is and what leadership is, and have an opportunity to practice these skills in a 'real life' situation. The participants work together to plan, organise and execute the tour.

The tour will include Australian and International site visits as well as an opportunity to present at the international WSUD 2012 conference in Melbourne.

2. What are the benefits of participating in the tour?

The tour is primarily a leadership and network opportunity for both the individual participants and the sponsoring organisations.

An independent evaluation of the 2009 tour¹ found that these benefits were substantial and suggested that the tour provided excellent value for money in delivering these outcomes.

The tour also develops specialist knowledge and career profile which provides a benefit to projects, tender proposals and opens the door to influencing opportunities at conferences and other forums.

From an industry perspective, it contributes to the development of a network of professionals with a common understanding of the challenges cities face on their journey towards sustainability and an appreciation of the value of inter-disciplinary collaboration to address these challenges.

¹: Leicester Street Alliance, 2010, [Evaluation of Water Sensitive Cities Tour 2009](#).

2. How much does it cost and what does this pay for?

Tour participants are responsible for all costs associated with their travel, accommodation, food and other expenses. A budget of \$10,000 has been set to cover these costs, with all money being pooled for use in the tour. This amount will include registration fees for the WSUD 2012 conference.

It is possible that there may be other incidental costs if tour participants need to travel to planning meetings in the preparation phase.

3. How is the tour group selected?

The tour is open to anyone, although it has been designed as a leadership development opportunity for young professionals in the water sector or allied sectors. This includes urban planning, natural resource management, stakeholder engagement, community advocacy (NGO) organisations as well as professionals from economic, architecture, legal, education amongst others.

Applications are assessed, by past study tour participants, for their commitment, background, interest and enthusiasm. The selection also considers the diversity of the whole group which is important in the 'action learning' process.

There is a practical limit to numbers on a study tour and so preference will be given to those who are able to demonstrate a capacity to contribute to the sustainable cities movement and are able to show how they will use the experience to influence practices in Australian cities upon their return. This does not mean that preference is given to those who are already influential leaders—the potential to be a future leader is far more important.

The tour is nominally aimed at professionals up to 35 years of age, however applications from people over 35 will also be accepted.

4. Where will the tour visit, and when?

The tour will visit cities and urban centres in Australia and overseas.

Within Australia there are a growing number of examples of innovative alternate water management practices, and these differ in their approaches between cities. Internationally there are a range of sustainable cities programs tackling water, energy, transport and urban design challenges. Previous tours visited cities in northern America, Europe and Singapore.

The actual itinerary will be designed by the tour group itself based on the personal objectives and interests of the participants. The only fixed date and location is Melbourne in February 2012 to coincide with the WSUD 2012 conference.

It is expected that the tour will involve 2 weeks of travel and will occur in late 2011 or early 2012. It is not necessary for this travel to be in a single block and is possible that the tour group might choose other times to travel – this is the group's decision!

5. What is WSUD 2012?

WSUD 2012 is the 7th International Conference on water sensitive urban design. It is being held at the MCG in Melbourne in late February 2012.

The conference theme of "Building the water sensitive community" demonstrates the industry need to bring together the numerous disciplines that are working on the recurring themes of ensuring and preserving sustainability and liveability in urban environments in the face of changing climate and growing population.

For more information, visit www.wsud2012.com

6. What is a water sensitive city?

This is a tricky question, because there are many definitions.

Monash University's Centre for Water Sensitive Cities describes a Water Sensitive City as *"one where water's journey through the urban landscape is managed with regard for its rural origins, coastal destinations and spiritual significance. A philosophy of flexibility in supply and use to meet all users' needs underpins the collection and movement of water, and the technologies to facilitate the physical movement of water are designs that manifest these ideals visually for all to acknowledge and appreciate."*

In terms of the study tour, a water sensitive city is one in which recycled water, stormwater and other unconventional water sources are used by a city to meet its water needs whilst also reducing its environmental footprint, connecting its citizens with the environment and enhancing environmental values such as biodiversity. Despite this water focus it implies a collaborative resolution of sustainability challenges across a range of sectors such as energy, transport and urban planning amongst others.

8. How many places are available on the tour?

Tour groups in the past have included up to 15 people. Groups bigger than this are likely to face logistical challenges that will detract from the experience.

If there are more than 15 successful participants, more than one tour group could be formed, especially where this makes sense in terms of the cities from which the participants come. If this occurs, the separate groups will plan separate tours, but do so in consultation with the other group(s) to avoid clashes.

9. What are the objectives of the tour?

The tour aims to build the network of emerging leaders in Australian cities who can positively influence the transition to a water sensitive future.

It also aims to create inspiration from overseas examples of sustainable cities and water management that will influence practices within Australia. A diverse tour group will be chosen so participants can draw inspiration from each others' perspectives.

To achieve this, the tour has been developed as:

- An action learning exercise where the tour group has the responsibility and accountability for the tour with minimal external guidance
- A networking opportunity that exposes participants to colleagues beyond their traditional networks
- A research exercise to explore new aspects and attributes of water management in sustainable cities
- A marketing opportunity for the sponsoring organisations which can leverage an industry leadership profile from tour participation.

10. How do I apply.

Applications can be made through the Clearwater web site – www.clearwater.asn.au

Successful applications will demonstrate the leadership potential of the applicant, the sponsoring organisation's commitment to the tour and the capacity of the participant to contribute to the debate and practice of water sensitive cities.

The outcome of applications will be known in the week of 22 August.