

# RICS Global Construction & Infrastructure Conference

**Date:** 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2026

**Location:** APAC, EMEA, Americas

**Theme:** Reimagining construction and infrastructure: embracing transformation and embedding sustainable practice

GST	CET	BST	
10:30	08:30	07:30	Registration and virtual networking
11:10	09:10	08:10	<p><b>Welcome remarks from RICS and the morning Conference Chair</b></p> <p><i>Nicholas Maclean OBE, RD, FRICS, President and Chair of Governing Council, RICS</i></p>
11:20	09:20	08:20	<p><b>Opening keynote: Global construction and infrastructure – outlooks, opportunities and challenges</b></p> <p>This keynote presentation will help you to understand the state of play for construction and infrastructure in 2026. It offers a forward-looking forecast of the key trends and developments that will need to be navigated over the next 5 years.</p> <p>Hear about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Technological advances within construction, including robotics and automation.</li> <li>• Changing markets, such as the pivot to constructing mission-critical data centre and energy assets.</li> <li>• The impact of global policy and political upheaval on construction activity and sustainable development.</li> <li>• How the construction and infrastructure sector can plot a path forward.</li> </ul> <p><i>Speaker: Dr Nicholas Fearnley, Director and Head of Global Construction Forecasting, Oxford Economics</i></p>
12:05	10:05	09:05	Virtual networking and exhibition break

12:15	10:15	09:15	<p><b>Panel discussion: The infrastructure investment gap – a global overview</b></p> <p>It's been estimated that a minimum investment of \$3.7 trillion per year is needed in infrastructure to rapidly reduce emissions, support urbanization, and strengthen the resilience of our cities. Whilst some markets are experiencing a construction boom, for others, bridging this financial shortfall will be essential to ensuring future-proofed, fit-for-purpose infrastructure.</p> <p>In this economics-focussed session, a panel of global experts will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide a comparative market picture of infrastructure investment and urban development.</li> <li>• Discuss the emerging global markets undergoing a construction boom, where financing is currently flowing (and where it is not), and what the barriers are to unlocking capital and closing the investment gap.</li> <li>• Share how cities can leverage sustainable investment opportunities and labour market factors.</li> <li>• Reflect on what this all means for the sector and future developments.</li> </ul> <p><i>Moderator: <b>Karen Ching MRICS MCMi ChMC</b>, Global Client Development Program Director, AtkinsRealis</i></p> <p><i>Speakers: <b>Steve Lewis MRICS</b>, Partner &amp; Hong Kong Leader - Infrastructure, Capital Projects and Construction Advisory, Ernst &amp; Young Transactions Limited; <b>Holly Davis MRICS</b>, Major Projects Advisory, KPMG; <b>Laeq Hassan FRICS</b>, Chair of RICS KSA Board</i></p>
13:00	11:00	10:00	Virtual networking and exhibition break
13:15	11:15	10:15	<p><b>Panel discussion: The future workforce – addressing the labour and skills gap challenge</b></p> <p>A shortage of labour and skills remains one of the most pressing challenges facing construction on an international level. In this session, a global panel will look at how the industry can improve career visibility for young people, build a new talent pipeline, upskill existing professionals, and take advantage of digital transformation.</p>

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How can we improve the diversity of the profession, remove barriers to entry, and close the demographic gap?</li> <li>• Where will we find talent in the future and do new pathways to entry need to be established?</li> <li>• What is the story we tell about careers in construction and infrastructure and how do perspectives differ around the world?</li> <li>• What opportunities lie in emerging digital technologies and new, non-traditional roles – and how can we create a resilient profession that holds the skills of the future?</li> </ul> <p><i>Moderator: <b>Alison Watson MBE</b>, Founder and CEO, Class of Your Own</i></p> <p><i>Speakers: <b>Lauren Lemcke MRICS</b>, Senior Project Surveyor, AECOM; <b>Sarah Hayford</b>, CEO, The Land Collective; <b>Dr Eugene Seah FRICS</b>, Chief Executive Officer, DLS Consultancy Pte Ltd</i></p>
14:00	12:00	11:00	Virtual networking and exhibition break
14:15	12:15	11:15	<p><b>Panel discussion: Beyond net zero – regenerative design, living buildings and bio-based materials</b></p> <p>Can the construction of new developments restore the balance between the natural and built environments and have a positive impact on the planet?</p> <p>This case study-oriented session will spotlight the concept of regenerative design and the innovative bio-based materials that are changing the ways we approach net zero, aiding the capture of embodied carbon, and benefiting both the environment and building users. Panellists will share exciting real-life examples and transformative learnings on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How regenerative design and green materials can move from an ambitious idea to common practice.</li> <li>• The growing demand for mass timber construction and CLT and the ways engineered wood usage is being scaled for larger projects.</li> <li>• Navigating the supply chain and cost challenges involved in procuring and using bio-based materials.</li> </ul>

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What steps you can take to influence clients, combat hesitancy, and align longer-term benefits with investment opportunities.</li> </ul> <p><i>Moderator: <b>Tim Foreman</b>, Associate Teaching Professor, Cambridge Institute for Sustainability Leadership</i></p> <p><i>Speakers: <b>Joe Giddings</b>, European Networks Lead, Built by Nature; <b>Elina Kalliala</b>, Sustainability Director, Transport, Ramboll; <b>Juliana Renn</b>, Head of Sustainability, HLM Architects</i></p>
15:00	13:00	12:00	Virtual networking and exhibition break
15:15	13:15	12:15	<p><b>Panel discussion: Circular construction and supply chain challenges – recycling, urban mining and challenging demolition</b></p> <p>Circular economy concepts continue to grow in popularity as a sustainable solution to supply chain disruption and resource scarcity. Developers are establishing ambitious ‘Zero Waste to Landfill’ goals whilst some major cities are setting deadlines for achieving full circularity.</p> <p>Join our expert global panel for a look at the latest approaches within circular construction and procurement, their challenges and benefits, and what action needs to be taken for long term, systemic change.</p> <p>They’ll consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Designing for disassembly and reuse: How can the default of demolition and disposal be challenged and what opportunities does the end of a building’s life hold.</li> <li>• Comparative global attitudes: What barriers and regulations might affect scaled rollouts of reuse and what lessons can be taken from existing circular initiatives.</li> <li>• Innovations in recycling and reuse: How can digital tools be utilised in identifying, sourcing, costing, and maximising opportunities for reuse.</li> <li>• Urban mining: How can we unlock the resources that are held within our cities to create a further source of recovery and reuse.</li> </ul>

			<p><i>Moderator: <b>Aythan Lewes MRICS</b>, Director, EALA Impacts CIC</i></p> <p><i>Speakers: <b>Carolina Montano Owen</b>, Technical Lead of Sustainable Buildings, WorldGBC; <b>Jelle Buikema</b>, Project Manager, C-Creators; <b>Debbie Ward</b>, Director - Reuse &amp; Circular Economy, The Alliance for Sustainable Building Products; <b>Dr Ali Al Jassim</b>, President of Circular Cities Network and Chairman of The Society of Sustainability &amp; Green Materials</i></p>
16:00	14:00	13:00	Virtual networking, exhibition break and Americas' region registration
16:30	14:30	13:30	<p><b>Welcome remarks from afternoon Conference Chair</b></p> <p><i><b>Michael Hardman MRICS</b></i></p>
16:45	14:45	13:45	<p><b>Spotlight session: The future of smart assets – digital twins and building connectivity</b></p> <p>Join this session for an engaging look at how digital twins and IoT technologies can be applied to optimise building design, enhance management and operation and create smart ecosystems.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What are the implications of smart assets for the built environment and sustainability, and how can they reduce costs, waste and carbon emissions, and benefit users?</li> <li>• What is the potential for scaling up digital twins across major infrastructure and transport systems?</li> <li>• How can the technology support decision-making and investments – and what challenges do they pose around data transparency and trust?</li> <li>• What lessons can be taken from real life usage cases and success stories.</li> </ul> <p><i>Speakers: <b>Dr Bola Abisogun OBE</b>, Founder and Chief Excitement Officer, Digital Twin Skills Academy CIC; <b>Mark</b></i></p>

			<b>Coates, Vice President of Infrastructure Policy Advancement at Bentley Systems</b>
17:20	15:20	14:20	Virtual networking and exhibition break
17:30	15:30	14:30	<p><b>Panel discussion: The energy transition – geothermal infrastructure and heat networks</b></p> <p>Could unlocking the untapped potential of geothermal power hold the answer to decarbonising global electricity and heat systems?</p> <p>Geothermal resources are available everywhere in the world and could pose a sustainable and controllable source of power for commercial, industrial and urban networks - yet despite growing interest and investment, usage levels remain comparably low.</p> <p>In this enlightening panel discussion, you'll hear:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Why geothermal energy has historically lagged behind other renewables in much of the world, and what role new infrastructure might play in the next step of the ongoing energy transition.</li> <li>• How geothermal technologies can be scaled up, and what opportunities or blueprints for the future lie in established supply chains, existing expertise, and waste heat.</li> <li>• Diverse case examples of domestic heat networks, data centre plants, successful collaboration and the repurposing of fossil fuel sites.</li> <li>• What debates and barriers are impacting the growth of geothermal networks in new markets, including cost, labour, and concerns around environmental impact and site longevity.</li> </ul> <p><i>Moderator: <b>Roger Esson MRICS</b>, Regional Market Director - North, RICS</i></p> <p><i>Speakers: <b>Professor Jon Gluyas</b>, Orsted/Ikon Chair in Geoenergy, Carbon Capture &amp; Storage, Durham University and Board Member, National Geothermal Council</i></p>

18:15	16:15	15:15	Virtual networking and exhibition break
	16:25	15:25	<p><b>Spotlight session: Putting AI into practice – compliance, value and application</b></p> <p>As the usage of AI within construction becomes more widely adopted and integrated into processes, AI literacy is an important skill that can help futureproof the profession, enhance decision-making and data management, and allow companies of all sizes to gain a competitive advantage.</p> <p>Join this enlightening session for a look at how to implement AI tools in practice and make the most of what this rapidly changing technology has to offer:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Navigating regulations: Advice on how to comply with professional, national and international AI rules and standards to ensure correct usage and ethical innovation.</li> <li>• Challenges and constraints: Managing client expectations around AI efficiencies, tackling trust around data, the importance of avoiding a ‘race to the bottom’ and ensuring the AI adds positive value to individuals, partners and the profession.</li> <li>• Practical tips and demos: A show-and-tell of uses and tools that can be taken away and applied to your practice today.</li> <li>• Practice cases: Hear real-life examples of how AI tools have been integrated into project and building lifecycles.</li> </ul> <p><i>Speakers: <b>James Garner FRICS</b>, Head of AI and Data, Gleeds</i></p>
	17:05	16:05	Virtual networking and exhibition break
	17:15	16:15	<p><b>Closing keynote: Combatting the sustainability slowdown – accelerating carbon measurement, resilient infrastructure and green development</b></p> <p>The RICS 2025 Sustainability Report revealed a lessened demand for sustainable buildings, a lack of progress in carbon measurement and a widening gap between climate commitments and practice.</p>

		<p>This presentation offers a forward-looking perspective on why we are seeing a slowdown, the blocks to sustainable investment and how the industry can act to promote decarbonisation, encourage the adoption of sustainable processes and accelerate green transformation, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Policy and regulations: Green legislation reform and the importance of green building certification.</li> <li>• Green finance and investment: The appetite for green financing and borrowing, and how the industry can demonstrate long-term economic benefits to clients and investors.</li> <li>• Resilient infrastructure: Tapping into adaptation finance, ESG goals and structuring projects that attract investment.</li> <li>• Skills and knowledge gaps: How the can sector build more capacity for sustainability work and embed approaches into professional practice.</li> <li>• Action: Ideas for high-level activities to speed up the sustainable transformation of the construction industry.</li> </ul> <p><i>Speakers: <b>Mina Hasman</b>, Sustainability Director &amp; Climate Action Lead, SOM</i></p>	
	17:50	16:50	Conference closing remarks
	18:00	17:00	End of conference