

# RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

## Rethinking the Campus

**Associate Professor Donald McNeill and Dr Mark Davidson from the Urban Research Centre together with the Sydney Olympic Park Authority (SOPA) have been awarded a UWS Research Partnership Program grant to discover how users interact with the Sydney Olympic Park precinct.**

'In recent years, urban policy makers have used ex-industrial sites to construct new spaces of leisure, relaxation and to escape on. Through a study of Sydney Olympic Park, this project explores - using the concept of the 'campus' - how such territories are actively used by metropolitan publics' says Associate Professor McNeill. 'Given the reconfiguration of the site to support offices, hotels, sports stadia, and educational facilities, and its positioning at the centre of metropolitan Sydney, it's important to identify the Park's diverse publics, and to elicit - rather than presume - their emotional, discursive, and physical responses to its spaces.'

A number of focus groups will be held to allow members of the four ideal typical groups (work users, students, sports and music fans, recreational users) to share their opinions with each other for a creative exploration of Park use. In addition the micro-spaces of park use will be explored with a space audit, to provide a fine-grained analysis of the park space with a limited number of respondents.

The project will provide urban planners, geographers, and sociologists with a detailed understanding of users' perspectives on multi-use parks in Australia or overseas leading to possible new uses for public spaces. The research will not



only feed into international debates on public space but will contribute to an understanding of how Sydney Olympic Park's importance to the balanced development of Western Sydney can be enhanced and sustained.

**Project Title:** Rethinking the Campus: Sydney Olympic Park's Metropolitan Publics  
**Funding has been set at:** \$24,251  
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**For more information on UWS Research Partnership Program, check:**  
<http://www.uws.edu.au/about/adminorg/devint/ors/fundingopp/internalgrants>