

Imagining and constructing healthier buildings

The focus at this year's Green Building Conference will be on leap-frogging straight to the latest thinking, innovations, and technologies, enabling built environment designers to imagine and construct higher performing healthier buildings now and into the future.



The Green Building Conference forms part of Sustainability Week 2016, a platform whereby authorities from across the continent and beyond, together with private sector investors, business operators, professionals, and researchers examine their respective areas from a sustainability perspective, whether economic, social or environmental, and exchange ideas on how to improve and encourage sustainable development among cities.

Sharing knowledge

Sustainability Week, which will run from 31 May to 2 June 2016, aims to advance the Green Economy through the sharing of knowledge and experience across disciplines, sectors, markets and continents, while actively seeking to develop and accelerate sustainability-oriented pipeline projects. It will also call for delegates to re-evaluate their business context and the cause and effect of actions, while further engaging on key challenges and solutions which will prove to have a catalytic effect on the Green Economy.

"Green buildings form an integral part of the Green Economy conversation, especially in South Africa where energy efficiency remains a focus and, as such the Green Building Conference is a much anticipated highlight of Sustainability Week 2016," says Llewellyn van Wyk, chairperson of the Green Building Conference, and principal researcher in Building Science and Technology at the Council for Scientific & Industrial Research (CSIR).

This year's edition will be held under the theme 'Building Smart: The Necessity Imperative' and invites delegates to engage and exchange ideas around current challenges facing human settlements and strategies to manage those. The objective is to share knowledge and experiences, especially in the form of case studies, and find solutions, while sharing lessons of the past, international best practises, and perspectives from across a number of different sectors.

Accelerate progress

The theme further calls on governments to accelerate progress already under way while investigating all opportunities to ensure a positive socio-economic transformation and sustainable improvement to the living and working conditions of the

people of Africa in the long-term, and believes that through the design and construction of energy, water, and resource efficient buildings, onto which energy generation technologies such as roof top solar, and rain water harvesting can be added, self-sufficiency can become a reality.

"Promoting self-sufficiency as the challenge to supply electricity, water, and waste services in cities grows daily, is a key strategy to building resilience and ensuring low cost futures for citizens. We need to re-imagine how our human settlements are planned, designed, and managed," continues Van Wyk.

"Green buildings are being driven by Blue Chip tenants on the one end of the value chain and by the investment community on the other; facilitated by effective organisations, and encouraged through supportive government policies and well administered cities. The Green Building Conference aims to advance this dialogue with our African and international counterparts on innovative ways in which we can contribute to the great work already being done across our African cities," Van Wyk concludes.

The 10th annual Green Building Conference will be held on 1 and 2 June 2016 in Pretoria.

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