



# Submission for a Smoke Free UNSW Campus

April 2012

Never Stand Still

Faculty of Built Environment

Healthy Built Environments Program



THE HEALTHY BUILT ENVIRONMENTS PROGRAM

## **HBEP Submission in Favour of a Smoke Free Campus at UNSW**

I am making this submission as the Director of the Healthy Built Environments Program. The [Healthy Built Environments Program](#) is an innovative collaboration that brings the built environment and health together. The Program is situated in the City Futures Research Centre, Faculty of the Built Environment at the University of NSW. Core funding of \$1.5 million for the Program comes from NSW Health (2009-2014).

The Healthy Built Environments Program (HBEP) is contributing to revitalising the relationship between the built environment and health professions so that together we can create built environments that support people being healthy in their everyday lives. The Healthy Built Environments Program vision is that built environments will be planned, designed, developed and managed to promote and protect health for all people. A built environment that is smoke free is very much part of this vision.

Accordingly, the HBEP fully supports the implementation of a smoke free campus and congratulates UNSW for initiating such a positive health program for its staff and students.

Tobacco smoking is the leading preventable cause of death and disease in Australia. Tobacco smoke is a highly toxic, carcinogenic airborne contaminant with no safe level of exposure. Smoking leads to a wide range of diseases including many types of cancer, heart disease and stroke, chest and lung illnesses and stomach ulcers. It claims the lives of 15,500 Australians every year. Those who smoke are doing serious damage to their health.

Risks to health from second hand tobacco smoke (SHS) exposure, even at low dosage levels, are well established by medical research evidence. This is a major problem in public spaces where those who choose not to smoke are exposed to the SHS of those who are smoking in public spaces. If smoking is not permissible, then the risk from SHS is eliminated.

Australia's two leading health NGOs - the Heart Foundation and the Cancer Council - both support smoking cessation programs and other initiatives to reduce smoking. Prohibiting smoking on the UNSW campus is a positive step in supporting these critical health initiatives. For more information on the Heart Foundation's position on smoking see: <http://www.heartfoundation.org.au/driving-change/current-campaigns/smoke-free/Pages/default.aspx>

UNSW must lead by example and prohibit smoking on the campus. Smoke free public place and workplace laws are well accepted as they are based on the strong research evidence of the serious health impacts of SHS exposure. As part of the smoke free campus initiative, support should be offered to those UNSW staff and students who currently smoke so that they can be assisted to cease smoking.

UNSW is to be congratulated on making the campus a healthy place for all of us who work and study here and for the many thousands of community members who regularly visit the campus – we will all welcome the smoke free campus.

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**Director, Healthy Built Environments Program**



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