



ARCOM 2017: Brutally Innovative Construction Call for Track Proposals

ARCOM returns to Cambridge in September 2017, a city with a reputation for discovery and innovation. The conference will be hosted on the grounds of Fitzwilliam College, renowned for several award-winning buildings including the auditorium where the plenary sessions will take place. The auditorium won the RIBA Awards, the Concrete Society Award and the Brick Development Association Award for Building of the Year in 2005. Fitzwilliam College is also notable for being one of the earliest educational buildings that British architect Sir Denys Lasdun designed. Inspired by Le Corbusier, Sir Denys Lasdun is well-known for his contribution to brutalist architecture in Britain, most remembered for his design of the National Theatre on London's South Bank.

Although founded in 1869, Fitzwilliam House as it was known received its Royal Charter in 1966 when it became Fitzwilliam College. In fashioning a modernist style for the College's Hall and Central Building, Lasdun had intended to create in this building a more democratic and egalitarian collegiate ideal. As the world is seeing a resurgence of interest in the radical designs of brutalism, it is also seeing a return to the (re-)construction of the ideals of democracy, egalitarianism and fairness in society. It is in this spirit that the central theme for ARCOM 2017 is framed, that is, to facilitate conversations about *Brutally Innovative Construction*.

In preparation for ARCOM 2017, we are currently calling for conference track proposals that address this central theme – Brutally Innovative Construction. We welcome proposals of around 750 words (excluding the list of references) that respond to one or more of the following questions:

- Brutalism is paradoxical. On the one hand, brutalism symbolises hope and ambition for a better future. On the other hand, it is also uncompromising and unyielding in its beastly manifestations. As the construction industry moves towards the digital age with such developments as building information modelling (BIM), Big Data and the Internet of Things, what lessons can be drawn from the brutalist movement? Who are the winners and losers in forging ahead with brutal innovations in construction?
- The construction industry has often been criticised for its poor performance in innovation. Yet, there is recognition that such criticisms brutally ignore pockets of innovative practices in construction that are often hidden from official measures. What can the academic research community do to capture the realities of innovation practices in the sector, visible and less visible?
- Few can deny that innovators set out with good intentions. At the same time, there is recognition that innovation can also bring about unintended consequences. What are the intended and unintended consequences – both positive and negative – of brutal innovations in construction? How can researchers regard the intended and the unintended consequences of innovation in construction? What novel methods can be used to study the intended and unintended consequences of innovation in construction?

- There are a number of currents that have gained popularity in the field of innovation studies, including *inter alia* Clayton Christensen's disruptive innovation and Henry Chesbrough's open innovation. Are these fads or phenomena? What theories of innovation can (should) translate, apply to, disrupt and endure in construction with brute force?
- There is an overwhelming managerial discourse that permeates across innovation studies in construction. What other narratives might there be to bring out the full extent of brutally innovative construction?

The ARCOM Conference is an inclusive conference that covers a wide range of topics pertinent to construction work (listed below though not exhaustively). We therefore invite track proposers to reflect on the aforementioned questions alongside this diverse range of topics when developing track proposals.

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| • Building information modelling | • Research and education |
| • Equality and diversity | • Sustainability in the built environment |
| • Human resources management | • Construction design & technology |
| • Information management | • Disaster management |
| • Infrastructure development | • Health, safety and well-being |
| • Offsite construction | • Law and contracts |
| • Planning, productivity and quality | |

Informal queries and track proposals should be sent (in .doc, .docx, or .pdf formats) to tracks@arcom.ac.uk by **Monday 2 May 2016 at 2359hrs GMT**. Please include a title for your track proposal, and the name(s) and affiliation(s) of the track proposers. Decision on final track proposals for ARCOM 2017 will be communicated in June 2016 and accepted tracks will be published in the Call for Papers for ARCOM 2017.