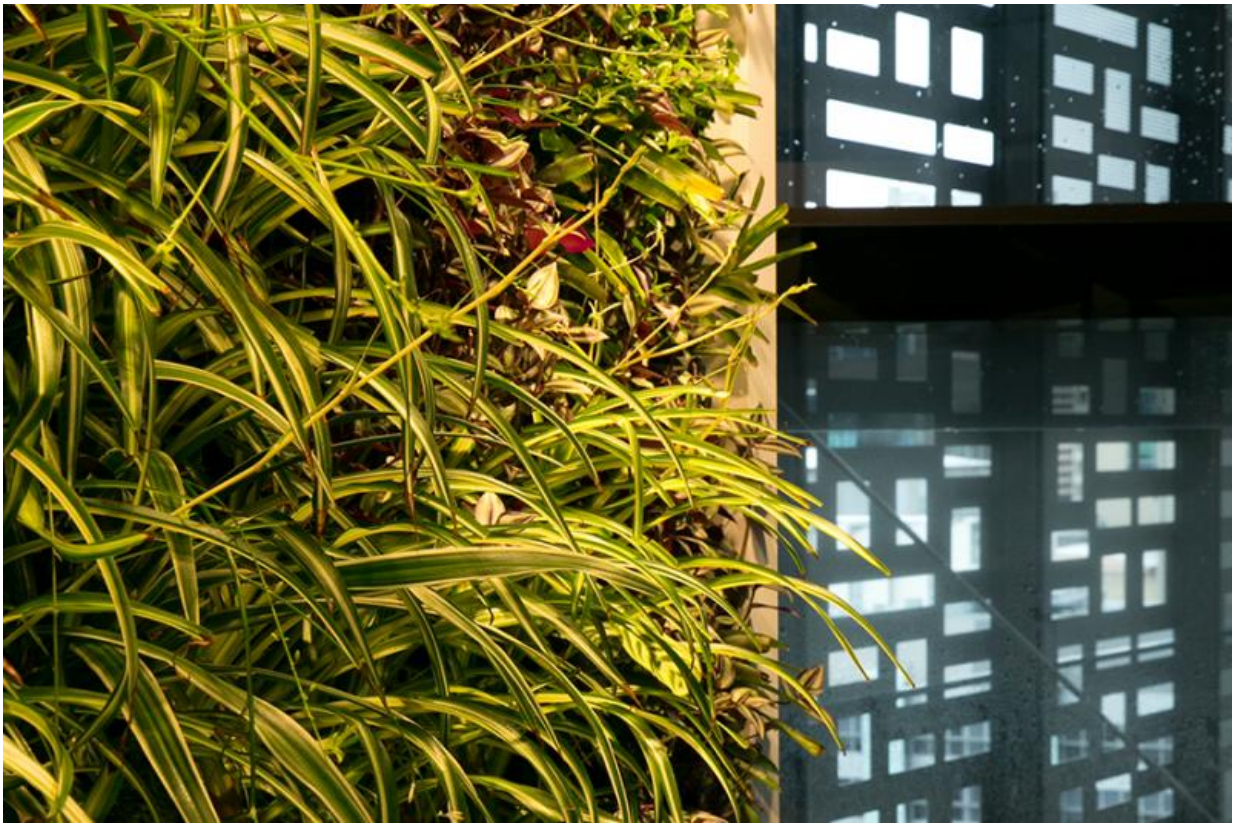


New guide a world-first template for greening urban roofs and walls

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Credit: Carmen Lee Platt

The development of green roofs and walls is now easier, with a landmark new guidance note providing advice about developing urban canopy on commercial and residential buildings.

Research shows green roofs and walls on commercial and [residential buildings](#) provide sustainable benefits ranging from reducing urban [heat island effect](#) and better air quality to green spaces for the enjoyment of building tenants and urban food production.

The Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) green roofs and walls guidance note, launched this week at the University of Technology Sydney, looks at green walls and roofs from the surveyor's perspective, encompassing technical factors, value and community impacts.

Launched by the NSW Planning Minister, Rob Stokes MP, the guide endorses the licencing of roof top spaces for the development of a [green roof](#), and in so doing offers the world's first template for owners to adopt when licencing rooftops for commercial uses.

"This guidance note will make it easier to use innovative building elements to help deal with the [urban heat island](#) effect and future climate impacts. It will give the private sector the practical information to help keep our city cool and help people save energy," the Minister said.

UTS researcher and report co-author, Associate Professor Sara Wilkinson said efficient use of urban space was essential to meet increasingly complex population, energy, climate, sustainability and quality-of-life challenges in our built environment.

"With roofs making up around 32 per cent of horizontal surfaces in urban areas, there is great scope to utilise these areas in ways that benefit the community and environment, in particular in minimising rising urban temperatures and better capturing rainfall," Associate Professor Wilkinson said.

"We have observed other less expected benefits too, such as these structures bringing biodiversity back to otherwise barren urban areas

including bees, birds and small mammals. They have significantly improved [air quality](#) around buildings and can soak up rainfall that would otherwise be lost down drains or cause flooding."

"This guide presents a practical and tangible solution to the built environment's mitigation of climate change. The guidance note offers the world's first template for owners to adopt when licensing rooftops for commercial uses. Rooftops can be income-generating spaces for owners, and the note proposes an approach to valuation of these spaces."

Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) at UTS, Professor Glenn Wightwick, said the university was proud to sponsor the guidance note's launch.

"UTS has long been focussed on mitigating the campus's impact on climate change," Professor Wightwick said. "We recognise the importance of sustaining our local and global environment, organisational health and our ability to create a positive, viable future for our communities.

"We are therefore delighted that UTS features on the cover of the guidance note, a reminder to all who use it of the cutting-edge approach taken to green roofs here in Australia."

Chairman of the RICS Oceania World Region Board, Murray Coleman OAM, said he was excited to have the support of the NSW Government and UTS for the guidance note.

"The launch of the guide by Minister Stokes is recognition of the collaborative work undertaken by RICS, our professionals and others leading thinkers in this area. We are proud of our role as advocates for sustainability in the built environment; this [guidance](#) note is an important resource for any owner, investor, occupier and developer looking to

install a green roof or wall on their premises," Mr Coleman said.

Provided by University of Technology, Sydney

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