



ASSOCIATION OF RESEARCHERS IN **CONSTRUCTION MANAGEMENT**

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41st Annual Conference, University of Abertay Dundee

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Welcome to the 41st Annual ARCOM Conference “Building Regenerative Cities”



“.... The 41st conference marks a move towards a more thematically led conference in the hope that we can start to explore together how our field feeds into the need for our cities to embrace a regenerative future”

I would like to welcome delegates to the 41st Annual ARCOM conference which this year is being held in the city of Dundee in Scotland. I would like to thank Abertay University for working with us to host the conference and providing us with an excellent environment for our three days. Unlike some of our recent host institutions, Abertay is a small institution, but this will provide an intimate conference with a campus which is easy to understand and importantly a set of spaces which will provide us with a friendly environment which is modern but also rooted in a long history of education in the city. As well as being proud to be your Conference Chair, I am also proud to be bringing the 41st ARCOM conference to the city where I was born, grew up and was educated. Indeed, my grandfather, father and sister all studied in the Old College building within which the conference will be hosted. I am a graduate of University of Dundee, where I completed my Geography degree in 2000. It was at this point in my life that I met Professor Malcolm Horner who encouraged me to join an MRes programme he has been launching with funding from the EPSRC. The programme was under the title ‘Civil Engineering’ but was designed for non-cognitive students and it introduced me to Construction Management as my specialism. I then followed this into a PhD working in the Construction Management Research Unit within the Civil Engineering Department. 25 years later I find myself still fascinated by the Construction Management field and honoured to be able to bring the ARCOM conference to the City of Dundee.

It is a city which has a proud history, and one which over the last 20 years has been on a journey through the delivery of an ambitious strategic plan to regenerate the waterfront and reshape the transport infrastructure and wider city centre. This led to a reshaping of the built environment with an emphasis on improving the socio-economic fortunes of the city following a period of decline in the latter 20th Century. It has always been a city with ambition whether that through science and engineering, arts and culture or even in the histories of its two senior football teams (both reaching semifinals of European Cup). The waterfront regeneration remodels the city centre to embrace what is potentially one of the best waterfront locations of any city in Europe. On a sunny day it is stunning, and as Scotland’s Sunny City we are hoping for good weather for September.

In recent years, our conference’s have focused on themes inspired by the challenges faced by the pandemic or the following rebuilt period. In 2024 the 40th ARCOM conference was held in London to celebrate our anniversary, and we enjoyed one of our largest conferences and were able to reflect on our achievements since 1984. The 41st conference marks a move towards a more thematically led conference in the hope that we can start to explore together how our field feeds into the need for our cities to embrace a regenerative future. This is a vision which sees the built environment as a key part of the solution to our wide range of socio-economic and environmental challenges. Such a future requires planning, design, construction, maintenance through lifecycle approaches, innovation and importantly collaboration with a wide range of stakeholders. The construction sector will be key in the delivery of regenerative environments, and a multi-disciplinary approach is required of partnership working across all sectors as well as with society. ➡➡



Views from top of the Law Hill showing the Tay Bridge



Abertay University Campus

Dundee provides an excellent backdrop to this discussion as it is heavily invested in a long-term regeneration programme reshaping the built environment and infrastructure surrounding the city centre waterfront. The last 20-25 years have seen a reworking of the road and active travel infrastructure, a new train station, demolition, a wider commitment of electric charging across the city. This has been supported by the investment in the public realm and rebuild of public and commercial buildings through a long-term development plan as well as the design and construction of a world class building in the new V&A Dundee Museum. Work is still ongoing, but it is now possible to get a sense of the difference that this plan has made to the city. Initiated over 20 years ago the planning stages will have followed a more traditional urban regeneration model focusing on socio-economic objectives. However, as time has passed these plans have required to respond to advancements in urban design such as placemaking, and priorities around climate change and wider sustainability themes. The announcement of planning permission for Eden Dundee Project (just outside the City Centre) is a truly exciting development for the city. The focus on Eden Dundee, is on the regenerative city where built environment requires to work with nature-based solutions to help regenerate contaminated land surrounding an old gas works site and to create inspiring urban spaces. Eden Dundee project presents an opportunity to consider the importance of moving the narrative around city regeneration beyond classical understandings of socio-economic regeneration or our current interpretation of how this is framed within a sustainable city agenda, and to instead to move us towards a goal of achieving regenerative cities and environments. Eden Dundee, asks us to consider how this can occur with a view to not only improving the quality of the built environment, so it becomes a better place to live, work and do business; but to also see it as part of the healing process to improve the environmental challenges we face. The keynote, and supportive panel discussion during the conference will help us as a community consider how we can contribute to helping shape a more regenerative approach to the planning, delivery and management of the built environment. This will require cross disciplinary approaches from not only policy and practice, but also from academic researchers, but this should be an inspiring opportunity for all of us.

Our keynote lecture is provided by Professor Husam Al Waer who is Chair of Urban Design at Dundee University. Based in Dundee with the ability to relate to the local context, he describes himself as an URBANIST with a background in "Architecture, Urban Planning and Sustainability", who writes and speaks extensively on making better places. He is passionate about the future of sustainable places, and towns, in particular the development of new thinking on processes and methods to unlock sustainable urbanism and the way these processes are facilitated and managed. He describes his work as sitting at the *intersection of disciplines* (sustainability, urbanism, urban design, architecture, anthropology), *the intersection of spatial scales including their core and periphery* (Buildings, Streets, Neighbourhoods, and Cities), and at the *intersection of theoretical and contemporary thoughts, policies and applications*.

The conference will have two panels across the three days aimed at fostering thoughtful interaction with key themes and providing a platform for discussion amongst the participants and with the wider delegation. A panel will focus on the context of the waterfront development in Dundee involving key stakeholders from policy and practice who will be able to share with delegates their thoughts on the progress and challenges encountered over the last 20-25 years. Building on the success of previous conferences, a panel will be developed responding to a key theme which has emerged from the papers accepted for the conference. A selection of authors will be invited to showcase their thoughts in relation to the theme and engage with each other and the wider delegates in discussion.

These will provide three important plenary pillars for the conference programme, which will also include a Langford Lecture which will showcase an early career researcher's work in relation to people, culture and social justice within construction management. Out of the nearly 300 abstracts submitted, we accepted 149 full index and working papers during the review process. This year's parallel sessions will showcase a broad array of themes, reflecting the strength of ARCOM and the diversity of research being undertaken across the field.

The social programme for the conference aims to engage delegates with venues which reflect Dundee's rich history in Discovery Point for our Monday social evening and Verdant Works for our conference dinner and prize giving on the Tuesday evening.

Discovery Point hosts the pioneering Royal Research Ship Discovery which built in Dundee saw her legendary Antarctic expedition of 1901 under Captain Scott achieves world attention. The venue is located on the banks of the River Tay and sits adjacent to the V&A Museum so delegates will be able to appreciate the outstanding architecture of this iconic building as their backdrop whilst visiting the RSS Discovery.

The Verdant Works Museum is a hidden gem of the city showcasing Dundee's industrial heritage at Verdant Works Museum. Delegates will be able to visit the museum prior to being shown into a beautifully refurbished Mill building where dinner will be served. Long before Dundee was known as City of Discovery, it was known as Juteopolis as it was the centre of the Jute industry in the 19th and early 20th Centuries, and this venue allows delegates to step back in time to the heart of Dundee's industrial era to discover more about the city's fascinating social history.

I look forward to welcoming you all delegates to Dundee and thanks to all those involved in delivering this event from Chris Neilson (Conference Secretary), Cath O'Connell (developer of our conference management system), Daniel Gilmour (our local representative), the relevant teams at the venues, the 2024/2025 ARCOM Committee members and of course our Scientific Committee for their work in supporting the review process.

A warm welcome to 41st ARCOM Conference.

Craig Thomson
Conference Chair, 2024
ARCOM Committee Chair 2024-2026

Reflecting on our 40th Anniversary Conference “Looking Back to Look Forward”

The 2024 ARCOM conference was special in that it represented our 40th anniversary since the first was held back in 1984. Early in the committee's planning cycle for the 40th conference it was logical to return to London South Bank University (LSBU) where the 1st conference was held at South Bank Polytechnic. In contrast to recent ARCOM conferences, the 1st was small in scale but provided an opportunity for the emerging construction management community to come together, present and discuss their research with its success providing the foundations for the conferences which have followed over the last 40 years. London had not held an ARCOM conference since 2005, and it was felt this would be an ideal opportunity to return to the capital.

LSBU provided an excellent venue for our academic programme and evening social event on the Monday. The HUB building provided a contemporary environment and represented a strong discussion piece for delegates due to its innovative design as a renovation project which retained the existing building frame providing a environment for teaching and collaboration in learning for students and staff. Opened only in 2022 is the largest building in the Southwark Campus, designed by Wilkinson Eyre architects and was awarded the Architect Journals Higher Education and Campus Retrofit Award for 2023 and the Award for Transformative Sustainable Design through Minimal Intervention at the Structural Awards 2023. In the last 40 years the theme of Sustainability has emerged as a pillar of our conferences and this building reflected this in its significant carbon savings, with Willmott Dixon developing the interior of the building to provide an innovative learning environment. A big thanks goes to Professor Chris Harty (Dean of School), Professor Chika Udejaja, the Estates and Catering teams at LSBU for their hard work and support to make the even such as success. The quality of the food particularly was appreciated by all the delegates.

The conference was one of our largest in recent years with just over 190 delegates participating across the academic

and social programme.

The attraction of joining the 40th anniversary conference as well as the draw of London played a role help us to achieve these remarkable numbers, but also it was strong indication of the recovery of our delegate numbers following the pandemic. The foundation was set in the record number of abstracts which were submitted in 339 (up from 307 in 2023). A total of 214 full papers were submitted, resulting in 143 papers accepted (94 indexed and 49 working papers) eligible to be presented at the conference.

This was an increase from 120 in 2023 and reflects the strength of our ARCOM community and the attraction which researchers from wider built environment disciplines increasingly find in our conference. I would like to thank the scientific committee for their contribution to the review process and the care that they provide in working with authors to develop their papers. This is a key tradition of ARCOM going back to those initial conferences with the review process seen as a developmental opportunity for authors and a process which encourages them to go further in the improving their papers. The result is a recognition within the field of the quality that an ARCOM published paper or ARCOM working paper represents.

The conference started on Monday morning with a keynote lecture from Professor Emeritus Will Hughes. Will was the perfect choice to open this conference given his long association and contribution towards ARCOM, but also his unique position in our community to reflect on the development of the field due to his tenure as Editor in Chief for Construction Management and Economics for 25 years. He also has developed and maintained the ARCOM abstract database which seeks to curate the selection of journals and papers which reflect our Construction Management field. He provided a thought-provoking lecture which was of equal relevance for those starting out in their careers as it was to those at the other end of their careers. Thanks, Will, it was excellent and so well received by the delegates.



ARCOM 2024 Conference delegates before our 40th Anniversary Conference Dinner at Lincoln's Inn, London

The challenges of AI, Ghost Writing and Open Access Publishing were explored as part of our “Meet the Editors and Publishers” panel discussion on Tuesday. Thanks to Professor Paul Chan for his careful chairing of this session, and the engaging discussions which resulted from our panel members and audience. A “Meet the Editors” panel session has been a regular feature of ARCOM conferences for several years but including the perspective of the Publisher’s provided a new dynamic which helped delegates understand the challenges faced in the publishing market. We will revisit this Panel discussion in future conferences.

On Wednesday, Professor Daniel Gilmour chaired a panel discussion focused on Circular Construction which provides a form for a rich conversation around this emerging theme. Panel members were selected from the growing number of papers which are presented at the ARCOM conference reflecting this theme, and they reflected a mix of doctoral researchers, early career researchers and more established researchers providing a mix of experience but also diversity of views. Providing a platform to explore strong themes emerging through our accepted papers is an effective way for ARCOM reflect the dominant themes currently being explored by researchers in the field.

Our social events are an important part of our conference experience, and in these we aim to provide the opportunity for delegates to network and socialise in a relaxed and hopefully fun environment. Our Monday evening social event was held at LSBU in the HUB building and sought to provide the opportunity to share good food and reflect on the memories from past ARCOM conferences. Who better to help us with this than one of our past chairs Emeritus Professor David Boyd who provided a potted history of ARCOM which highlighted its importance within in the Construction Management community as well as its evolution over the last 40 years. Thank you, David, you put so much work into this, and it was greatly appreciated by all the Committee and wider delegates.

A key part of our conference is the dinner on the Tuesday evening which was held at The Honourable Society of Lincoln’s Inn within their historic estate which dates to 1422.

We were blown away by this venue during our planning visits and thought it provided an exciting venue to celebrate our 40th. We started with a walk from LSBU for delegates to make their way to the venue. It took around half an hour, and at times was a bit busier on the pavements than we had anticipated but it took us into the heart of the capital city with some amazing sites on the way. The dinner took place in The Great Hall providing a spectacular setting was opened by Queen Victoria in 1845 and as a building combines medieval, Victorian and modern approaches to design and construction. It was a venue fitting for our 40th celebrations but also to honour the well deserving prize winners. The annual prize giving is such an important part of the conference and allows us to acknowledge the quality of the papers presented and rising researchers who will shape our field for many years to come.

The evening also served to acknowledge the contribution of our past Chairs of ARCOM who were instrumental in laying the foundations over the last 40 years. We were lucky enough to be joined by a Richard Fellows, Tony Thorpe, Will Hughes, Akin Akintoye, Dave Greenwood, Andy Dainty, Simon Smith, Ani Raiden, Paul Chan and Apollo Tutesigensi. Each shared their reflections on their time as Chair, and memories of the evolution of ARCOM. This was a real highlight, and together with David Boyd’s participation on the Monday evening we had 11 past chairs present at the conference. Thanks to each of them for their contribution over the years and their continued support of ARCOM.

Finally, I would like to thank our Immediate Past Chair Apollo Tutesigensi who led ARCOM through challenging times as we sought to bounce back after the pandemic. On behalf of the committee, I would also like to thank Chris Nielson (Conference Secretary) and Cath O’Connell (Website and Database designer) as without their hard work and dedication our annual conference would simply not be possible. Thanks, also to our sponsors who provide support for the prizes and contribute to the conference with their stands and engagement with delegates.

Craig Thomson
Conference Chair, 2024
ARCOM Chair 2024-2026



Current and previous Chairs of ARCOM

Best Paper Prizes, 2024

ARCOM's prize committee led by Professor Paul Chan of Delft University of Technology selected the winners of best paper awards, presented during conference dinner at the Lincoln Inn. All indexed papers are now available via the abstracts database on the ARCOM website. We had 8 prizes to award, as follows:

Rod Howes Award

Rod Howes was one of the founding members and the first Chair of ARCOM. He was always an advocate for advancing innovation through research. This award was given to the best paper on advancing innovation in construction management research.

The Rod Howes Award was presented to Finn Orstavik, Malena Havenvid and Mårten Hugosson for the paper entitled *The Transformative Power Of Connectivity In Construction Innovation*

This is a well-written think piece that draws on scholarship from disciplinary fields outside of construction management research to offer an alternative way to view construction innovation. This paper presents an initial effort to conceptualise the notion of connectivity, as opposed to connections, and how this relates to innovation in practice. This paper therefore has the potential to open new areas of debate and exploration and perhaps alter the ways we think about and do innovation in practice. (The award was presented by Professor Chris Harty).



David Langford Award

David Langford was the first and only honorary life president of ARCOM. Dave always undertook and promoted research that had a strong link with the people side of construction. This award was therefore given to the best paper that deals with societal issues and is often awarded to a promising early-career researcher.

The David Langford Award was presented to Ruth Sloot, Leentje Volker and Hans Voordijk for the paper entitled *Constructing Common Ground: Sense-making and Sensegiving in Public Tenders*

There has been longstanding academic and practical interest in understanding the dialogue between the client and contractor. In this paper, the authors use ideas on sensemaking and sensegiving to analyse the dynamic interactions between clients and contractors in the process of public tenders. The research is well explained and executed. There is scope to develop this further through more observational research. (The award was presented by Professor Andy Dainty).



Paul Townsend Award

Paul Townsend was a strong supporter of ARCOM and an industry representative on the ARCOM committee for many years. This award was given to the best paper that contributes fresh insights into the practice of project management.

The Paul Townsend Award was presented to Christine Räisänen, Dilek Ulutas Duman, Mikael Viklund Tallgren and Shahin Satei for the paper entitled *Achieving A Shared Representation Is Hard Work: Developing A Social Semiotic Multimodal Approach To The Study Of Social Interaction*

In this methodologically-rich analysis of the unfolding interactions of collaboration, the reader can picture themselves in the design workshops. Although collaboration has been and is still a key topic of interest, achieving shared representation is, as the authors remind us, a challenging thing to achieve. Given the rise of a range of digital technologies, the concept of multimodality and research framing on social semiotics will have strong potential in deepening our understanding of how collaboration happens/can happen in practice. (The award was presented by Dr. Apollo Tutesigensi).



Chair's Award

The fourth of the ARCOM-sponsored prizes for 2024 was the Chair's award, given to the best paper related to the conference theme: 'Looking back to Look Forward'. This award was presented to Kwadwo Oti-Sarpong and Jacqueline Glass for the paper entitled *Proliferation Of Scientometric Reviews In Construction Engineering And Management Research: Where Next From Here?*

Given the growth in the number of scientometric reviews, this paper scores highly both on currency and impact. The authors provide an analysis that gives an insight into how construction management researchers do scientometric reviews. They also express caution as they highlight the limitations of scientometric reviews in general and the ways we do such reviews in CM research particularly. Drawing on lessons learnt from this paper there is scope for the ARCOM community to think about alternatives in the ways we review previous research.



Taylor and Francis Award

The Taylor and Francis award has traditionally been given to the most theoretically-informed paper. This award was presented to Mattias Jacobsson and Henrik Linderöth for the paper entitled *Looking Inwards To Move Forward: On How To Do Things Differently In Construction Management Research*

In a transdisciplinary field like construction management, there has been a great deal of interest in a deeper reflection on what shapes our field. In this paper, the authors examine the scholarly orientations in construction management, highlighting how taking different positions (whether as a community native, expatriate or itinerant) can influence the ways we engage with theory development, as well as influence the ways we see and enact industry-academia collaborations. This thought-provoking, question-raising paper will certainly drive debate on how we collectively do things differently as construction management researchers. (The award was presented by Ed Needle from Taylor & Francis).



CIOB Award

Over a number of years ARCOM has continued to grow in its engagement with scholars from outside the UK. The CIOB award is given to the best international paper. The award was presented to Yifei Yu, Marc van den Berg and Devrim Murat Yazan for the paper entitled *Circularity Hubs In The Built Environment: Validating An Agent-Based Scenario Demonstrator*

This paper addresses the timely problem context of circularity. The use and usefulness of circularity hubs is still subjected to debate. By using the Delphi method to validate the agent-based model to show the workings of circularity hubs, the authors provide a methodologically rigorous and robust approach to provide insights and hopefully more certainty to practice. It would be interesting to see how this validation can be translated to broader impacts for changing industry practices. (The award was presented by Kris Martin on behalf of the COIB).



Emerald Award

The Emerald award has traditionally been given to the best methodology paper. The award was presented to Debs Harding and Philippa Boyd for the paper entitled *Generative AI And PhD Supervision: A Covert Third Wheel Or A Seat At The Table?*

While there is growing interest in studying how generative AI is transforming industry practice, this paper focuses on the implications of generative AI on the research process and the relationship between the supervisor and PhD researcher. Therefore, this paper is both interesting and topical. There is potential for this paper to join the growing body of scholarship that examines how artificial intelligence is changing and will change the production of knowledge (The award was presented by Rebecca Torr from Emerald).



Wiley-Blackwell Award

The Wiley-Blackwell award was given to the best paper relating to technology. The award was presented to Andreas Hartmann, Marc van den Berg, Tim Stevering, Richard Busse and Giel Klanker for the paper entitled *Circularity On Demand And At The Side: Working Rules In Infrastructure Design Practices*

When confronted by sustainability transition challenges such as circularity, we often hear about the industry's conservatism and resistance to change that is slowing down progress. In this paper, the authors go deeper into understanding how working rules in the field can shape the industry's responses emerging transition challenges. The authors draw on a strong theoretical basis to analyse two key rule patterns that currently condition and constrain participation in the circularity transition - including the need to act only when the client demands circularity, or when circularity is simply a nice-to-have add-on criterion on the side. Understanding how working rules are shaped can hold the key to unlocking future demand for embracing the transition towards a circular built environment (The award was presented by Dr. Ani Raidén).



Congratulations to all the prize winners!

ARCOM Run, 2024



ARCOM '24 Enthusiasts, Ready to Run

Starting the ARCOM conference with a social run has become a delightful annual tradition.

In 2024, we took it to London, which was a bit trickier than in previous years because there was no park near the conference venue, requiring some logistical effort. Most runners gathered at 8:30 at the LSBU Sports Centre and took the 15-minute bus to Burgess Park. A few other runners joined us at the park's entrance. Twenty runners started at 9:00. The flat two-lap course was 2.5 km long and went along tarmac paths through the park and around a lake. The weather was ideal for running, combining cool temperatures with light overcast skies.

After just 20:52, Máté Lőrincz finished first, despite running 200m more than the others. Just 7 seconds ahead of Alex Copping. Oluwapelumi had probably the toughest run since he suffered from an aching stomach and was still coming in fourth. Not everyone was as ambitious. Many runners enjoyed a leisurely jog in the spirit of the social event that the run was meant to be. Some covered the full distance, while others just ran a single lap. After that, each participant could start the conference by doing some exercises in the fresh air. A special thank you goes out to Ani and David, who were incredibly helpful: they took pictures at the start and then kept time.

As for 2025, we will maintain our favourite conference tradition but this time north of the border in Scotland. We will be running in Dudhope Park, Dundee which is a 10-minute walk from Abertay University. It's going to be a short 1-km lap around the park. You're invited to join the chase for the title or just enjoy a jog of two or three laps.



Award Ceremony



Our route through Burgess Park, London



*Jury (Prof. Boyd/Dr. Grosse)
Explaining the Rules of Engagement*

A Quiet and Gentle Force: On the Legacy and Lasting Impact of Dr Francis Edum-Fotwe on Construction Management

In the world of construction management, there are a few individuals whose influence is as extensive as that of Dr. Francis Edum-Fotwe, a scholar, mentor, and community builder. I first heard about Dr. Edum-Fotwe in 1997 in one of my very first few lectures when I commenced by first degree studies in Building Technology at the then Department of Building Technology at the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST), Kumasi-Ghana, a programme incidentally Dr. Edum-Fotwe also studied many years before me. Most of my lecturers then were either classmates of Dr. Edum-Fotwe or studied in the same department around the same time he was there as a student and briefly as a lecturer. They were always full of praise for his brilliance and their expectations that he was going to return from his studies in the UK to impart his brilliance on our young and hungry minds. It was not until 13 years later, in 2010, when I finally met Dr. Edum-Fotwe in-person at Loughborough University when I came to interview for my lectureship position at the then Department of Civil and Building Engineering (now School of Architecture, Building and Civil Engineering). He will later become a colleague, a mentor, a brother, and a father figure, always sharing invaluable insights, and providing a comforting presence that eased my transition into academic and family life in the UK.

Dr. Edum-Fotwe's work has shaped not only the construction management academic landscape but also the lives of countless students and professionals particularly those from the developing world. From his humble beginnings in Ghana and the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST), Kumasi-Ghana, Dr. Edum-Fotwe's academic journey is marked by a deep commitment to understanding and improving the construction industry. His research spans a wide range of topics, from sustainability and ethics in construction to project risk management and corporate social responsibility. This work has resonated globally, influencing both theory and practice. *Modern Construction Management*, the defacto "bible" of construction management which he co-authored latter editions with Harris, McCaffer and Baldwin, remains the foundational book for the study of construction management.

One of his most cited papers, co-authored with colleagues (Alotaibi and Price), explores the barriers to social responsibility in mega-construction projects, a topic that remains highly relevant as the industry grapples with environmental and ethical challenges.

What other way is there to leave a lasting impact on construction management than to have a co-authored paper on project control systems effectiveness published on 24th February 2025, a day after his unfortunate demise, in *Engineering, Construction and Architectural Management* (ECAM).

But Dr. Edum-Fotwe's impact is not limited to research. As a long-time academic at Loughborough University, he has mentored generations of students, many of whom have gone on to become leaders in construction and academia throughout the world.

His teaching style is known for being engaging, thoughtful, and deeply personal. He does not just teach concepts; he teaches students how to think critically, act ethically, and lead with purpose. For younger academics and professionals entering the field, his career is a powerful example of how academic excellence and personal integrity can go hand in hand. He has demonstrated by his works and deeds that being a great teacher is not just about delivering lectures, it is about nurturing curiosity, encouraging questions, and believing in your students.



Dr Francis Edum-Fotwe

"A scholar's work does not end with their passing; it echoes in the minds they have shaped and the knowledge they have shared" - Henry Adams

¹ Harris, F, McCaffer, R, Baldwin, A and Edum-Fotwe, F (2021) *Modern Construction Management*, Chichester: John Wiley and Sons

² Alotaibi, A, Edum-Fotwe, F, and Price, A D F (2019) Critical Barriers to Social Responsibility Implementation within Mega-Construction Projects: The Case of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, *Sustainability*, 11(6), 1755
<https://doi.org/10.3390/su11061755>

³ Alotaibi, R, Sohail, M, Edum-Fotwe, F T and Soetanto, R (2025) Determining project control system effectiveness in construction project delivery, *Engineering, Construction and Architectural Management*, [Ahead-of-print]
<https://doi.org/10.1108/ECAM-04-2024-0529>

Dr. Edum-Fotwe's contributions to the Association of Researchers in Construction Management (ARCOM) are equally impressive. He has co-authored at least 17 ARCOM conference papers, each contributing to the evolving dialogue in construction research. These papers cover everything from procurement strategies to knowledge management, reflecting his broad expertise and collaborative spirit. In 2000, he was instrumental in organising an ARCOM Doctoral Workshop at Loughborough University, a space where early-career researchers could share ideas, get feedback, and build confidence. This kind of support is vital for young academics, and Francis has been at the heart of it throughout his career. From 2003 to 2010, he served on the ARCOM Committee, and from 2006 to 2008, he took on the role of Treasurer. These roles may sound administrative, but they are crucial to keeping the construction management community vibrant and inclusive. His steady leadership helped ARCOM grow, and his presence made it more welcoming, especially for newcomers and international scholars.

What makes Dr. Edum-Fotwe truly special, though, is not just his CV, it is his character. Colleagues describe him as humble, generous, and quietly brilliant. He is the kind of person who listens more than he speaks, but when he does speak, people listen. His calm demeanour and thoughtful insights have made him a trusted voice in meetings, workshops, and classrooms alike.

He is also known for his supportive mentorship, especially for students from underrepresented backgrounds.

In a field that still struggles with diversity, his presence and advocacy have made a real difference. He did not only open doors for most of us from the developing world, but he also held them open for us through his exemplary scholarship, character and mentorship.

For young people considering a career in construction management, Dr. Edum-Fotwe's story is a reminder that you do not have to choose between being smart and being kind, between being ambitious and being ethical. You can be all of those things—and more. His journey shows that success is not just about publishing papers or climbing academic ranks. It is about building communities, sharing knowledge, and lifting others as you rise. Whether you are a student writing your first research paper or a young professional navigating your first project, there is something to learn from his example. As the construction industry continues to evolve, embracing digital tools, tackling climate change, and rethinking how we build enduring communities,

Dr. Edum-Fotwe's work remains more relevant than ever. His research provides a foundation for innovation, his teaching shapes the leaders of tomorrow, and his values remind us of what really matters. Dr. Francis Edum-Fotwe has not just contributed to construction management, he has helped build the very community that drives it forward as his legacy and lasting impact.

*Professor Martin Morgan Tuuli
Professor of Operations and Project Management
Director of Academic Staffing
Loughborough Business School
Loughborough University*

ARCOM Researcher Training: How are we doing?

As a member of the Association of Researchers in Construction Management (ARCOM), you play a vital role in shaping our community and advancing our field. As the lead for Researcher Training (formerly Doctoral Workshop Officer), I have been working diligently alongside our partners and members to support PhD students and early career researchers. Our collective efforts embody ARCOM's ethos, which emphasizes collaboration and enhancing public discourse to advance the field of construction management and beyond.

Recently, ARCOM has held several workshops to encourage knowledge exchange and build networks among researchers.

Modern Methods of Construction (MMC) Workshop – venue: Loughborough University (February 2025)

With support from Constructing Excellence, Offsite Alliance, and other influential industry partners, we explored opportunities for research and development collaborations in MMC. This event highlighted the importance of multidisciplinary approaches in advancing construction techniques.

The Platform Ecosystems in Construction Workshop at Northumbria University – venue: Northumbria University (April 2025)

Bringing together doctoral researchers, academics, and industry leaders, this event focused on the evolving role of

platform ecosystems in construction. The workshop showcased how interdisciplinary knowledge sharing can inform groundbreaking research.

It is imperative that we show our appreciation to our local organising teams, host institutions, and up-and-coming researchers who participate through attendance and presentations. Furthermore, the convened experts (academics and industry practitioners) offered invaluable support to researchers and their projects.

ARCOM's workshops and researcher training initiatives thrive thanks to the unwavering support of our members and industry experts. As our community gains traction, we seek to promote international collaboration and encourage our members to continue supporting these efforts. Collectively, we are dedicated to advancing cutting-edge research, honing skills, and empowering future researchers. By emphasizing collaboration, ARCOM remains committed to driving innovation and securing a brighter future for the construction management field.

We look forward to more of your creative thoughts and contributions in supporting our community.

*Dr Emmanuel Aboagye-Nimo FHEA MCI OB
Research and Development Officer*

PhD Abstract: “Integrating Social Factors into Public Procurement for Sustainable Construction: Enhancing Social Value Creation in Nigeria” by Joshua Mangvwat, University of Limerick

The construction industry is a powerful driver of economic growth, yet its impact on societal well-being, especially in developing regions of the world, remains underexplored. Public procurement, the mechanism by which governments commission construction projects, holds immense potential to enhance social value, but prevailing practices often prioritise cost and efficiency over human-centred outcomes. This research investigates how social factors can be systematically integrated into public procurement to drive sustainable construction and improve the well-being of both site workers and communities in Nigeria.

Adopting a sequential mixed-methods approach, this study bridges policy analysis, industry perspectives, and empirical data to construct a holistic understanding of the barriers and opportunities within public procurement frameworks. Through a phased investigation, the research used the lens of institutional theory to view and uncover critical gaps in existing policies, revealing that while sustainability is often discussed, its translation into tangible social benefits remains fragmented. Findings indicate that procurement in public tertiary institutions, a key sector examined, tends to treat social considerations as peripheral rather than integral to project planning and execution.

To address these challenges, this research develops an Input-Process-Output (IPO) framework that operationalises social value integration in procurement decision-making. The framework is informed by a synthesis of qualitative insights from industry stakeholders in one public tertiary institution and quantitative trends derived from a regional survey of construction professionals across 11 such institutions. Key insights highlight the need for structured mechanisms to embed worker welfare, local employment, community engagement, and fair labour practices into procurement contracts. The study also identifies critical leverage points where social factors can be embedded, ranging from bid evaluation criteria to contractor accountability mechanisms.

A core contribution of this research is its demonstration that enhancing social value through public procurement requires more than policy mandates as it necessitates a shift in procurement culture, governance models, and institutional commitment. The proposed framework therefore offers a practical roadmap for policymakers, procurement officers, and industry practitioners to transition from ad-hoc social initiatives to systematic, enforceable social value strategies. Ultimately, this research argues that the integration of social factors in public procurement is not just a moral imperative but a strategic enabler of long-term sustainability in the construction sector. By reimagining procurement as a catalyst for societal progress, this study lays the groundwork for a construction industry where economic efficiency and social responsibility are no longer competing priorities but complementary goals.

Future research could explore institutional theory across diverse sectors and regions and conduct longitudinal studies to assess the potential of lasting impact of social value initiatives in public procurement.

(Supervised by Dr. John Spillane)



PhD Abstract: "An integrated whole-life solution for modular housing in the UK: A platform-based ecosystem narrative" by Akila Rathnasinghe, Northumbria University

The slow adoption of modular construction in the UK's housing sector has been attributed to its inability to foster effective collaboration, a complexity arising from the long-standing fragmented supply chain—a one that has been widely acknowledged. To meet the growing demands and expectations placed on the housing industry, there is an urgent need for a shift towards a more integrated and collaborative environment among all supply chain actors. However, this collaboration must go beyond simply improving productivity; it requires building a foundation of trust and transparency that enables seamless information exchange throughout the lifecycle of a modular house.

This study aims to develop a whole-life housing solution that not only tackles the complexities and expectations inherent in the sector but also challenges the traditional view of housing as a mere product. This thesis advocates for a novel perspective: housing as a "servitisation" model that encompasses the entire lifecycle, from construction through to operation and maintenance. This view recognises that a purely product-oriented perspective overlooks the need for ongoing collaboration among specialised firms within the modular housing industry. To this end, the study adopts the theoretical lens of "meta-organisations" (MO), which supports the need for collective efforts and introduces the application narrative of a "platform-based ecosystem". This approach reconfigures supply chains by integrating diverse actors and enhancing specialisation, co-evolution, and value co-creation within the principles of platform architecture and governance.

Employing a qualitative approach grounded in critical realist ontological and pragmatist epistemology, this research gathered insights through an expert opinion survey of 22 highly experienced modular industry professionals (with an average of 23-years of experience) and detailed case studies of two modular housing developments by UK housing associations. The findings highlighted significant inefficiencies in the current manufacturing processes, often marked by a traditional, centralised approach that fails to leverage the unique benefits of modular construction—benefits that are already well-realised in other sectors. It also identifies crucial architectural and governance elements needed for a platform-based ecosystem that could serve as a comprehensive whole-life solution. Key recommendations include the formation of a central hub—an independent

supply chain integrator (ISCI) — to coordinate the efforts of various actors, alongside robust governance mechanisms designed to protect intellectual property and promote healthy competition.

This thesis contributes to knowledge in two keyways: firstly, by extending the scope of MO theory beyond its conventional focus on mega projects, demonstrating its relevance and adaptability to the modular housing sector by emphasising innovation and specialisation within inter-organisational collaborations; and secondly, by developing a unique interpretation of platform-based ecosystems tailored for the UK modular industry. Considering the practical contribution, the study provides actionable guidelines for implementing a servitisation approach, advocating for the establishment of an ISCI to orchestrate diverse actors and implement robust governance mechanisms that safeguard intellectual property and foster healthy competition. These contributions collectively realise the ideal: "not just a house, but a home where comfort is assured throughout its life."

Looking ahead, the thesis maps several future research and implementation pathways: extending the platform-based whole-life solution beyond modular housing into sectors such as education and healthcare infrastructure; examining private-sector servitisation models that reposition developers and contractors as long-term housing-service providers; and designing equitable profit-sharing and governance mechanisms for the ISCI, including innovative user-based payment schemes that align affordability with assured comfort.

Akila Rathnasinghe intends to pursue these avenues through postdoctoral and collaborative research. He is already developing proposals to operationalise the ISCI concept in partnership with UK housing associations and policymakers, demonstrating a commitment to translate the thesis's servitisation and platform ecosystem innovations into practice.

(Supervised by Associate Professor Niraj Thuraiarajah and Professor Paul Jones)



An Introduction to ARCOM Membership

The Association of Researchers in Construction Management (ARCOM) brings together all those interested in construction management research. Its aim is to further the advancement of knowledge in all aspects of management in construction by supporting education, dissemination, and research. Our lively newsletter keeps members in touch with the latest ARCOM news. The highly acclaimed annual conference brings together researchers from all over the world.

Various research workshops provide a means to develop specific subject themes as well as general research methodology. Our publications form a very useful resource for all researchers in this field. These activities help to encourage excellence in the research of our members. Our members include research students, lecturers, professors, consultants, other practitioners and institutions. Although we are primarily a UK association, we welcome members from all over the world. It provides opportunities for contact between researchers in similar fields and between researchers and practitioners.

We have two types of membership available: Individual Membership and Institutional Membership.

Individual Membership

Individuals taking out an ARCOM membership will enjoy a membership discount at ARCOM conferences, which is currently £25. (Please note only paid-up members are eligible for the discount).

Individual membership is open to any interested person, regardless of discipline and background. Individual members pay an annual membership fee (from 1st May to 30th April). There are two types of individual membership, the associated costs are as follows:

- Full membership: £20
- Student membership: £15

To join ARCOM as an individual member, if you have not already done so, please first create a "MyARCOM" online account, or use the "Forgotten your Password?" options if you have done so previously but cannot remember your login details. Please do not create a second profile.

Once you have a working MyARCOM profile, log in and register yourself as a member using the link in the middle of the webpage. I will then process your application. If you are a registered PhD student, please ensure that your profile reflects this and that you have ticked the option for "student", to enable you to apply for student membership.

Once everything is set up, membership payments can be made using a personal credit card via MyARCOM. To access your invoice and the payment link, please click on the 'My Activities' option on the black menu bar and then select 'Invoices and Payments'.

We can accept payments by institutional credit card. Please ask your administrative team to email the ARCOM administrator on admin@arcom.ac.uk. We also can accept a Standing Order arrangement if that is easier for you to manage.

For further inquiries about ARCOM membership contact:

Dr John P Spillane

Membership Officer,

ARCOM 7 Bell Yard, London, WC2A 2JR, United Kingdom
membership@arcom.ac.uk or ask at Conference Reception

Institutional Membership

University departments taking out institutional membership on behalf of their postgraduate research community will pay discounted fees when their Post Graduate Researchers book places at ARCOM conference. The institutional discount for institutions with an active institutional membership is currently £25 (though please note that staff members will not receive this discount as it is specifically intended to support institutional communities of post graduate researchers).

University departments taking out an annual institutional membership will also have their names included on the ARCOM website in public recognition of their commitment to developing the wider Construction Management post graduate research community.

Institutional membership relates only to Postgraduate Researchers registered at the member University. The fee payable for institutional membership is determined by the number of Postgraduate Researchers registered in the department concerned.

The annual subscription (from 1st May to 30th April) for institutional membership payable by university departments, is based on a flat band fee, as follows.

- University departments with 1–10 postgraduate researchers - £150
- University departments with 11–20 postgraduate researchers - £300
- University departments with over 20 postgraduate researchers - £500

An invoice can be raised for payment purposes, where we can also include a Reference and/or Purchase Order number, if required.

We can accept payments by institutional credit card. Please ask your administrative team to email the ARCOM administrator on admin@arcom.ac.uk

We can also accept payments by institutional BACs transfer but for most institutions this can be quite a slow process.

We also can accept an annual standing order arrangement if that is easier.

ARCOM Membership 2025



Membership Officer Dr. John Spillane provides an update

ARCOM has 100 Individual Members and 19 Institutional Members

Currently there are 100 individual ARCOM members; of which 15 are entitled to the reduced student fee of £15. The number of individual members remains steady, with circa 80-110 members, paying their membership fee each year. At this time of year, the paid membership figure is in line with these projections and is anticipated to grow, as we move towards the end of the membership cycle (30th April). Currently, our individual members originate from the United Kingdom (60 members), Netherlands (6), Sweden (3), Ireland (3), Australia (3), United States (3), Nigeria (3), South Africa (3), Hong Kong (2), Germany (2), Ghana (2), and Malaysia (2). The remainder of our membership covers individuals from Finland, Norway, Oman, Kuwait, United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and Bosnia and Herzegovina (1 each).

The number of institutional members remains steady. Figure 1 shows that the number of institutional members has increased from 14 in 2011, to 19 this year.

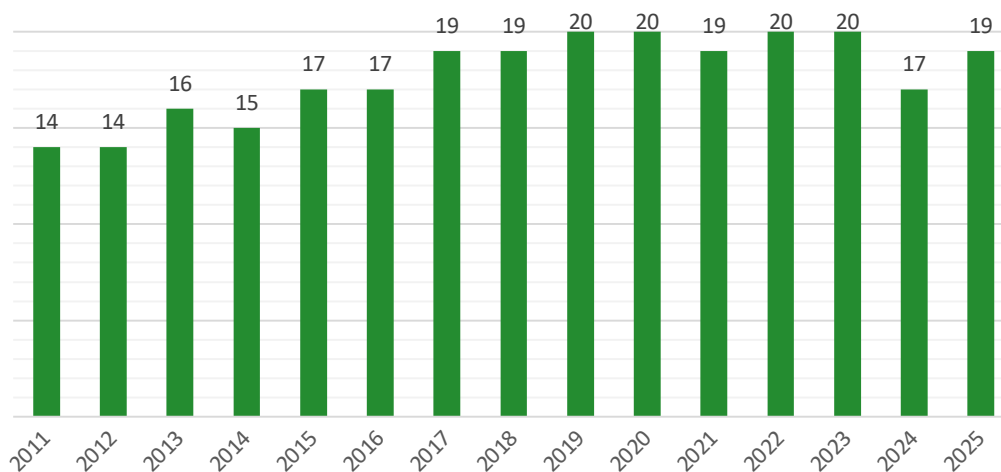


Figure 1 Development of institutional membership since 2011

ARCOM currently has 19 Institutional Members

- 16 Institutions from the UK (Glasgow Caledonian University; Leeds Beckett University; Liverpool John Moores University; London Metropolitan University; London South Bank University; Loughborough University; Northumbria University; Queen's University Belfast; Ulster University; University College London; University College of Estate Management; University of Brighton; University of Huddersfield; University of Manchester; University of Reading; University of Salford),
- 2 Institutions from the Republic of Ireland (Technological University Dublin and University of Limerick), and
- 1 Institution from Denmark (University of Southern Denmark).

For any ARCOM Membership inquiries, be they Individual or Institutional Membership, please feel free to email the Membership Officer, Dr John Spillane on membership@arcom.ac.uk.

The ARCOM Newsletter

ARCOM, as a community for junior, mid-career, and senior researchers in the field of Construction Management, aims to foster interaction and advance the discipline through its Annual Conference, Doctoral Workshops, and Seminars. In the past, ARCOM published multiple newsletters each year; however, following the COVID-19 pandemic, this was reduced to one annual edition.

Yet, we have much to share as a community. Our members include many accomplished academics who offer valuable reflections on the field. Additionally, we are organising an increasing number of doctoral development activities, such as recent seminars held in Twente, Nottingham, LSBU, and Northumbria. At the same time, our field is striving to make a greater impact on the industry and strengthen its engagement with practitioners.

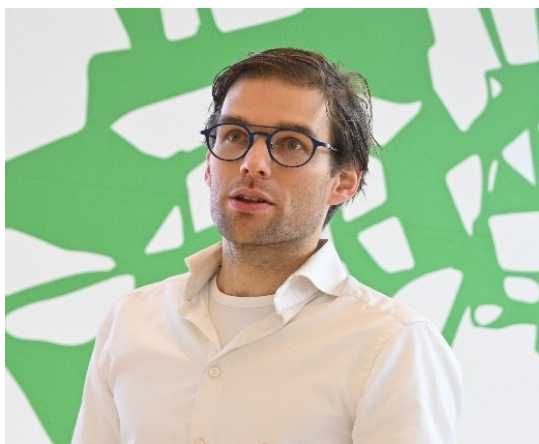
Starting in 2025, we are introducing two editions of the newsletter:

- A printed version, distributed to all Conference delegates in September, will primarily feature reflections and reviews.
- A digital version, sent via email to registered ARCOM members in November, will focus on future developments, including major research themes and previews of upcoming conferences.

The first digital newsletter will be released this November and will include a detailed outlook on the 42nd Conference in Loughborough, updates from publishers on new book releases, and showcases of PhD and EngD research.

If you are interested in becoming an ARCOM member, please contact our Membership Officer. We also warmly welcome content submissions for the ARCOM newsletter.

*Dr. Léon olde Scholtenhuis, University of Twente
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Announcement: ARCOM 2026

We are delighted to announce that the 42nd ARCOM Annual Conference will be held on **7-9 September 2026 at Loughborough University, Loughborough, UK**. Throughout the decades, Loughborough University has maintained close associations with ARCOM, and ARCOM has grown and thrived under the stewardship of Loughborough alumni serving on the ARCOM Committee including as Conference Chairs.

Loughborough is positioned in the East Midlands region of the United Kingdom. It is well connected through transport links: a mere 80-minute train ride to London St Pancras Station, and 2 hours train ride to Manchester Piccadilly Station. The nearest regional airport is East Midlands Airport (30 minutes by car) which services a variety of European cities. The nearest international airport is Birmingham International Airport (1 hour by car).

Loughborough has deep industrial roots. Situated along the River Soar, Loughborough was linked to UK's network of canals in 1778, allowing it to trade goods across the UK and marking its status as an important inland port. It is home to Britain's last working bell foundry, built in 1859, which over the years has cast some famous bells including for St. Paul's Cathedral in London, St. Thomas' Church in New York, St. Andrew's Cathedral in Sydney and Cape Town's City Hall. The world's first package tour was created by Thomas Cook Company and launched on 5 July 1841 where passengers travelled by rail from Leicester to Loughborough. The party of 485 people travelled in open tub-style carriages and was accompanied by a band, and the ticket price was one shilling per person. This, of course, makes Loughborough the original package tour holiday destination!

The rich industrial heritage of Loughborough and its strategic logistical location links perfectly with the theme for ARCOM 2026, "Network and Connectivity in Construction". This theme captures issues at the heart of construction management research – namely, bringing disparate elements together to build solutions to meet societal needs. In its broadest sense, this can relate to the collaborations of project teams, the interface between construction processes, the creation of new linkages by use of digital technology and data exchange, innovative use of construction logistics, integrated solutions to meet sustainability objectives, and strengthening our workforce through inclusive practices.

The last time ARCOM was held in Loughborough was for its 10th Annual Conference in 1994, with Professor Emeritus Tony Thorpe as Chair. A return visit to Loughborough has been long overdue and we look forward to welcoming you all back!

Conference updates

Behind the scenes, preparations for the 2026 ARCOM conference are already in progress. Please visit the 'Conference' section of the ARCOM website (www.arcom.ac.uk) for further information or keep an eye out for the November Issue of the ARCOM Newsletter for further updates.

Abstract submission for ARCOM 2026 will open in late November 2025 and close early in January 2026

Contact and Further Information

Conference Chair: Dr. Vivien Chow, University of Loughborough

Conference Secretary: Dr. Christopher Neilson, The University of Manchester

Inquiries should be directed to conference@arcom.ac.uk in the first instance



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