

# Conference Chair's Welcome

Welcome to this year's AAEE 2007 conference. The organisation of this conference has been a fascinating and hectic process. 2007 has also been a fascinating and hectic time at the University of Melbourne, with major changes underway for implementation in 2008.

The theme for this year's conference is:

## **Connecting Industry, Teaching and Research through Engineering Education**

This theme has been echoed at various meetings this year within the Review of Engineering Education.

We invited eminent keynote speakers to explore various aspects of these connections. We also worked with Engineers Australia to develop an Industry Day that includes two keynotes and 30 invited, senior industry representatives to workshop how we can build closer connections between industry and universities for teaching purposes. The outcomes of the workshops will be made available after the conference.

Engineering Education is also emerging as a serious research discipline. This issue is addressed by several keynotes as well as a special workshop session on day three that explores research in engineering education and how we can best support that within the AAEE community. This discussion will contribute to a global conversation around Engineering Education Research sponsored by the ASEE and SEFI.

We have also welcomed the national judging of the inaugural EWB Challenge into the conference. Likewise, The Natural Edge Project volunteered to run a series of sustainability workshops on day three.

We have also been able to organise a series of major workshops that bracket the conference, with the Symposium on Engineering Mathematics on Friday before the conference, a workshop on Learning Styles on Sunday and Problem Based Learning on Thursday following the conference. Other workshops run throughout the conference.

The conference has been deliberately planned to appeal to a wide audience. It is a place for presentation of research findings in engineering education. It is also a place to share classroom innovations, to attend workshops on engineering practice and to network with other academics teaching similar subjects and disciplines. It is a place for new academic staff to immerse themselves in the practice and theory of engineering education.

There are 77 papers, 7 keynote speakers and 12 workshops. For the first time, we will record all of the keynote presentations. These will be available from the website after the conference.

Another aim of the conference is to create an opportunity to establish collaborative partnerships and to explore ways of funding innovative projects. There is a workshop for those seeking Carrick funding on day one and a forum for those who wish to develop curricula under the CDIO umbrella on day three.

In the spirit of active learning, this conference will be asking all authors to be brief and to the point. Their role is to prompt the audience into discussion, facilitated by the Session Chairs. Authors will limit their presentation to 6-8 minutes, with the focus on the take away message.

There is clearly more than anyone can absorb within the time available. I hope that you are able to make some useful choices from the menu and find many learning opportunities, engaging in discussion with old and new colleagues so that you take away some good ideas for the future. (There is a space at the back of your Program to jot down your good ideas). Please make new members of our community feel welcome at the conference.

Finally, I thank all the members of the organising committee, the conference organisers, the program committee and the reviewers for all the work that they have put into the organisation of the conference.

Enjoy!

**Roger Hadgraft**  
AAEE 2007 Conference Chair  
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