

For immediate release

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Competition inspires building industry collaboration & innovation

At the recent ArchEngBuild competition, 30 top architecture, engineering and construction management students from around the country showed that the future of New Zealand's building and construction industry is in good hands.

In multi-disciplinary teams of three, competitors in the BRANZ-supported event designed solutions to a critical industry issue in just three days.

BRANZ CEO Chelydra Percy says the initiative nurtures collaboration and innovation at the very beginning of students' careers.

"They come away with skills and a deeper understanding of each other's expertise that help build the capability we need to meet the significant challenges facing our industry. This ultimately benefits all New Zealanders."

For many competitors, it was the first time they had worked with practitioners from other disciplines. Experienced industry professionals were also on hand to help, creating an opportunity to share expertise and build relationships across the sector.

This year the competition brief was to facilitate a zero-carbon city through buildings that have a low environmental impact and promote zero-carbon building, design and use.

A team of Auckland students won the competition with their exciting design for a zero-carbon urban garden and community centre.

The winning students were architectural designer Ziyi (Jacky) Zheng and engineer Jiahui (Tony) Wang, both from the University of Auckland, and construction manager Luke Thompson from Unitec.

The team said their focus was on using resources and technology available now while having 'ready spaces' for future technology so adaption is as easy and cheap as possible.

“We hope this building is something that the community would be proud of as much as we are proud of designing it.”

Minister of Research, Science and Innovation, Hon Megan Woods, who presented the winners with their award, commented on the similarity between the building industry’s requirement for multi-disciplinary cooperation and collaboration and the approach required by participants.

“Bringing together New Zealand’s combined excellence in engineering, design and technology to achieve better outcomes for society, for the environment, and ultimately the economy, is a worthy project.”

This year’s event was supported by:

- Sponsors
 - BRANZ, through the Building Research Levy
 - Concrete New Zealand
 - Wood Processors & Manufacturers Association of NZ (WPMA)
 - Timber Design Society (TDS)
 - Wood Industry Development and Education Trust (WideTrust)
- Supporters
 - NZ Institute of Architects (NZIA)
 - New Zealand Institute of Building (NZIOB)
 - Engineering New Zealand (ENZ)
- Judges
 - Fiona Short, Warren and Mahoney
 - Jack Harris, JM Harris Construction Consulting Ltd
 - Russell Devlin, Solarchitect
 - Andrew Aydon, Calibre Engineers
- Mentors
 - Justin Brown, University of Canterbury (timber)
 - Enrique Del Rey Castillo, University of Auckland (concrete)
 - Andrew Aydon, Calibre Engineers (steel)
 - Brian Berg, BRANZ (building life cycle analysis and zero-carbon)
- Keynote speakers
 - Fiona Short (Warren and Mahony)
 - Carsten Auer (Architectus)
 - Tim Shannon (Lewis Bradford Engineers)
 - Shawn Cunningham (Southbase Construction)
 - Russell Devlin (Solarchitect)
 - Casimir MacGregor (BRANZ)

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Photo Caption:



Left to right: Hon Megan Woods, Minister of Research, Science and Innovation (and Energy and Resources; Housing; and Greater Christchurch Regeneration), the winning team of architectural designer Ziyi (Jacky) Zheng (University of Auckland), engineer Jiahui (Tony) Wang (University of Auckland) and construction manager Luke Thompson (Unitec) and Chelydra Percy, BRANZ CEO.



The winning design “Urban Garden – Otakaro Community Centre”

Additional information:

The three-day competition was held at the Christchurch Art Gallery from 2-4 July 2019.

Teams were encouraged to consider all aspects for the fictional concept including:

- Collaboration – an inspired and constructive team environment
- Research – being well informed of environmental issues and existing research
- Professionalism – understanding which information is essential to make their idea understood and stand out
- Design and construction – functional, beneficial, innovative, durable, appealing, use of private and public space, location, access, health and safety, consent issues
- Affordability and costs
- Usability and community acceptance
- Impact of their design concept on the local environment.