Themed Session Call for Papers

Sport, recreation, fitness and leisure facility management

Chairs: Dr John Tower (Victoria University) & Associate Professor Gary Howat (University of South Australia)

Theme focus: Sport, recreation, fitness and leisure venues such as local pools, courts, fitness centres and multi-purpose leisure centres provide settings where many people experience leisure. The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) indicates that these facilities are where 65% of sport participants engage in their organised sport activities and 38% of sport and physical recreation participants engage in their non-organised sport activities. Within Victoria more than 1.5 million people over the age of 15 use recreation facilities to pursue leisure activities. Although SRF&L facilities are important in the delivery of physical and community activities there is limited scholarly investigation of how these centres operate and meet their communities' needs. This session provides an opportunity for scholars and practitioners interested in SRF&L facility management to share current research findings and best practice program delivery. There will also be the opportunity for the session participants to engage in discussion to explore ideas and develop strategies to help the SRF&L industry to better meet the needs of all their communities.

Past research, e.g., Tower, McDonald & Stewart (2014) and Tower & Harrison (1991), have identified that many sectors of the community, especially lower SES groups and disadvantaged sectors of the community, are not often included in the SRF&L users. Leisure as a human right may not be practiced in the SRF&L facilities. An understanding of why these groups do not participate in SRF&L facilities will assist in the development of strategies to cater for all members of the community.

Session format: This session will explore all aspects of sport, recreation, fitness and leisure (SRF&L) facility management. The overall purpose is to draw together complementary scholars and practitioners to share and discuss research and best practice programs that address issues of SRF&L facility management. The session will have an underlying theme seeking insights about how SRF&L facilities cater for all members of the community and contribute to local community building. The program will provide opportunity for formal presentations as well as opportunities to workshop issues related to community inclusion and community development in SRF&L facilities.

Abstracts should be 250-350 words clearly indicating the following information:

- Author name(s) indicating position and affiliation as well as full details of correspondence author.
- Full paper title as it will appear in the conference programme.
- Abstract including Background (outline of the context/literature informing the study or issue), Approach/methodology (indication of the broad theoretical orientation and/or methodological approach) and Significance/Key learnings (description/application of findings or key learnings).
- Full references for any research cited in the abstract (no tables, figures or footnotes).

Abstracts using Word format are to be submitted to Dr John Tower (john.tower@vu.edu.au)

Deadline for abstracts is Friday 29th May 2015