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Bridging the Play Gap

Helping architects and engineers donate their time to worthwhile community projects is Australia's Bridge forte, and it is putting its expertise to good work for the All Abilities Play Space project in Dalkeith.

Australia's Bridge began operating in Perth in 2014, and the All Abilities Play Space is one of their first major projects.

The idea of Australia's Bridge was inspired by the work of Engineers without Borders Australia which offers pro-bono services nationally and internationally. With limited avenues for pro-bono work domestically, Australia's Bridge was established.

Australia's Bridge introduced Wood & Grieve Engineers to the All Abilities Play Space project in April 2015, and they have been donating their services to the project since then, offering an opportunity for engineers to be a part of something special.

The Play Space will be an inclusive, state-of-the-art play facility for the whole Perth community to enjoy, regardless of their age or ability.

Australia's Bridge Chief Executive Officer, Margot Matthews, said she was excited for the project and the prospect of catering to the already-existing diversity of the City of Nedlands and WA as a whole.

"Diversity needs to be embraced by the wider community and the more exposure, the better," she said.

The All Abilities Play Space will be built on the iconic location of Beaton Park on the picturesque Nedlands foreshore and construction is scheduled to commence in late 2016.

Ms Matthews, who is also an engineer, said the location was "gorgeous" and not being used to its full potential.

"There is so much potential for the space and it can be likened to Synergy Parklands in Kings Park," she said.

"We need to think beyond Nedlands and this kind of space will pull people from all areas."

Wood & Grieve Sustainability Engineer, Rebecca Dracup said she was passionate about the All Abilities Play Space project as it had the power to promote inclusion in the community.

"By integrating play equipment for a range of abilities, we can improve inclusivity and understanding of others. I think inclusivity from an early age is an important part of a child's education as it develops empathy, and helps everyone feel like they belong," she said.

"We can help to promote an understanding that everyone has the right to play and it is something that everyone can enjoy together."

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For more information, visit <http://www.australiasbridge.org.au/>, <http://www.nedlands.wa.gov.au/all-abilities-play-space> or contact margot.matthews@australiasbridge.org.au.



Caption: For Margot Matthews, working on the All Abilities Play Space project, reaps its own rewards.

About the All Abilities Play Space

The All Abilities Play Space is an inclusive, inter-generational play space for use by all in the Perth metropolitan area. It will be a large scale, innovative, state-of-the-art play facility that is purpose designed to meet the play needs of all, regardless of their age or ability.

It will be built at Beaton Park on the Nedlands foreshore of the Swan River in Dalkeith.

Research shows the importance of play for everyone, throughout life's stages. It's important for physical, psychological and social health – play makes us healthy!

Initiated by Rotary, this project has brought together a unique community partnership. Our community partners are: Rotary, Lotterywest, Inclusion WA, Australia's Bridge, Wood & Grieve Engineers, and the City of Nedlands.

About the City of Nedlands

The City of Nedlands is situated 7km from Perth and stretches from the banks of the Swan River to the edge of the Indian Ocean. A population of over 21,000 live in the suburbs of Nedlands, Dalkeith, Mt Claremont, Swanbourne, Karrakatta, and parts of Floreat and Shenton Park.

For further information please contact communications@nedlands.wa.gov.au or 9273 3500

