

NEIL CHRISTOPHER

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PROFILE

Global workplace, design and experience leader with 20+ years connecting business and people strategy with space. Former Gensler Design Director and APME Technology Firms Practice Area Leader, with extensive experience developing workplace strategies and design standards, implementing global workplace frameworks, and leading major portfolio projects for organisations including Meta, Microsoft, Adobe, Johnson & Johnson and the Asian Development Bank. My work increasingly brings together people, place and program, from global workplaces and organisational transformation to large-scale entertainment environments, with a consistent focus on how strategy becomes experience.

CORE EXPERTISE

Global Workplace | Organisational Strategy | Global Portfolio Leadership | People, Place & Experience | Leadership & Collaboration

PROFESSIONAL SKILLS & RELEVANT EXPERIENCE

Global Workplace Strategy & Design Standards

I have more than 20 years' experience translating business and people strategies into workplace. This includes developing workplace strategies and design standards for organisations including Johnson & Johnson and Cochlear, as well as interpreting and implementing established global standards for Meta, Microsoft, Adobe, Citrix, Xero, Accenture and Philips. I understand both sides of the equation: how to create a useful global framework, and how to make it work in different locations, cultures and businesses.

Organisational Strategy, Change & Visioning

My work often begins before there is a design solution. I work with leadership to understand where an organisation is going, how its people and ways of working are changing, and what that means for workplace. At ADB, this meant working directly with senior leadership and HR through significant organisational change; at Zeidler, it meant applying design thinking to the organisation itself and, importantly, turning strategy into something that could actually be implemented.

Global Portfolio, Program & Design Leadership

I have led multiple projects, teams and client relationships simultaneously across countries and time zones, from individual workplaces to major portfolios and a 150,000 sqm workplace campus. My roles have typically sat across the whole journey, connecting strategy and vision with design teams, consultants, vendors, project delivery and senior client leadership. I know how to keep the original idea intact while still getting it built.

People, Place, Brand & Experience

I think about places through the people who use them: how they move, meet, work, connect and experience an organisation's culture and brand. My recent work at Calgary Stampede in entertainment and festival experience has added programming to that thinking, bringing together people, place and program. For me, the best environments don't just function well or look good. They create connection, engagement, productivity and, importantly, a bit of joy.

Leadership, Collaboration & Stakeholder Engagement

I have spent much of my career bringing together people with very different expertise and priorities, from executive leadership and HR to real estate, operations, designers, consultants and delivery teams. I am comfortable leading multidisciplinary teams, building consensus around a clear direction and presenting ideas at senior level, while giving talented people enough space to do their best work.

SELECT LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE

Manager, Entertainment & Festival Experience | 2024 - Present

Calgary Stampede | Calgary, Canada

- Leads programming, venue design and experience planning within major festival environments, bringing together people, place and program across entertainment, brand, operations and guest experience.
- Plans environments spatially, considering venue design, infrastructure, circulation, capacity, programming and how people move through and experience the park.

Director, Firmwide Strategy | 2024

Zeidler Architecture | Calgary, Canada

- Led firmwide strategy, taking the thinking and problem-solving inherent in design and applying it to organisational design.
- Worked across leadership, practice and operations to turn inherent design knowledge into practical organisational strategy - with a particular focus on how ideas are understood, adopted and implemented.

Design & Strategy Director | 2023

Asian Development Bank (contract) | Florence, Italy / Manila, Philippines

- Led design and workplace strategy for the transformation of ADB's 150,000 sqm Manila headquarters campus, including approximately 100,000 sqm of traditional working floors alongside cafés, gardens, galleries, sports facilities and social and collaborative spaces.
- Worked directly with senior leadership and HR through significant organisational change to understand new workflows and delivery processes and realign the workplace around how the organisation needed to work next.
- Translated organisational strategy into workplace design across a complex international campus, considering both traditional workplace and the broader places where people meet, collaborate and connect.

Design Director | Regional Practice Area Leader - Technology Firms, APME | 2018 - 2023

Gensler | Sydney, Australia / APME

- Led workplace strategy, design and senior client relationships for major technology and global organisations across APME.
- Interpreted and implemented global workplace standards for Meta, Microsoft, Adobe, Citrix, Xero, Accenture and Philips, adapting global principles to different projects, cultures and locations.
- Developed workplace strategies and design standards for firms such as Johnson & Johnson and major government clients, translating business and workplace objectives into practical frameworks.
- As APME Technology Firms Practice Area Leader, connected sector knowledge, emerging workplace thinking, client development and design leadership across markets.
- Led projects from visioning and stakeholder engagement through concept, design development and implementation, coordinating multidisciplinary teams, consultants, vendors and specialist expertise.

EARLIER EMPLOYMENT

2016 - 2018 | Principal & Partner, NZ and Australia | Warren and Mahoney | Wellington & Sydney

2014 - 2016 | National Principal | GroupGSA | Sydney

2011 - 2012 | Lecturer & Course Convenor (contract) | UNSW Interior Architecture

2011 - 2014 | National Interior Design Leader | peckvonhartel | Canberra

2008 - 2010 | Regional Leader (Studio Principal) | Geyer New Zealand

2007 - 2008 | Designer - Workplace Strategy, Project Leader; appointed Geyer Associate 2008 | Geyer New Zealand

2006 - 2007 | Designer - Workplace Strategy | Geyer Sydney

2006 | Senior Interior Designer | Noel Bell Ridley Smith & Partners Architects | Sydney

2003 - 2005 | Interior Designer | Geyer Sydney

QUALIFICATIONS & TECHNOLOGY

Bachelor Interior Architecture, Hons 1 | University of NSW, Australia | 2003

A+ registration | Australian Royal Institute of Architects (not current as required to be employed in Australia)

AutoCAD User | Working familiarity with Revit | Skilled in Adobe Creative Suite, Google Workspace and Microsoft | Working understanding of Momentus Accounting Software

SELECTED CLIENT & PROJECT SNAPSHOT

- 555 Collins Street, Building Interiors, Melbourne, Australia - 3,000 sqm
- Accenture Workplace Interiors, Perth, Australia - 1,000 sqm
- ACT Government Accommodation Strategy, Australia - 85,000 sqm
- Asian Development Bank, Manila, Philippines - 150,000 sqm
- Australian Department of Customs & Border Protection, Canberra - 28,000 sqm
- Australian Department of Human Services, Canberra - 2,500 sqm
- BAS, Sweden - 8,000 sqm
- Camden Council, Sydney, Australia - 8,000 sqm
- Chevron, Perth, Australia - 44,000 sqm
- Cisco, Workplace Interiors, Canberra, Australia - 1,000 sqm
- Cochlear, Sydney, Australia - 24,000 sqm
- Deloitte, Auckland - 11,000 sqm
- Ebsworth & Ebsworth, Sydney, Australia - 3,500 sqm
- EY, Multiple Locations, Australia - 65,000 sqm
- First Data Corp, Workplace Interiors, North Sydney, Australia - 2,600 sqm
- FM Global, Workplace Interiors, Sydney, Australia - 2,500 sqm
- HP Cyber Security Centre (SCIF), Sydney, Australia - 1,000 sqm
- HP SSEC (SCIF) Environment, Canberra - 800 sqm
- HP, Multiple Locations - 18,000 sqm
- Intercontinental Hotel (IHG), Adelaide - 370 keys
- JLL, Canberra, Australia - 1,450 sqm
- Johnson & Johnson HQ, Sydney, Australia - 7,000 sqm
- Meta (Facebook), Sydney, Australia & Seoul, Korea - 11,000 sqm

- Ministry of Primary Industries, Wellington - 16,300 sqm
- Mizuho Bank, Workplace Interiors, Sydney, Australia - 2,000 sqm
- New Zealand Department of Treasury & Finance, New Zealand - 12,000 sqm
- New Zealand Ministry for the Environment, New Zealand - 18,000 sqm
- New Zealand Parliament, Ministerial Offices - 7,500 sqm
- NSW Fire & Rescue, Sydney, Australia - 3,500 sqm
- NZ Department of Defence (SCIF), New Zealand - 1,200 sqm
- Philips Innovation Campus, Bengaluru, India - 60,500 sqm
- Shell, Workplace Interiors, Brisbane, Australia - 8,500 sqm
- Trenchant (SCIF), Sydney, Australia - 1,200 sqm
- Two24 Bunda Street Co-working Hub, Canberra, Australia - 1,000 sqm
- University of Adelaide, Barr Smith Library, Adelaide, Australia - 23,000 sqm
- UTAS Urban Precinct Master Planning, Hobart, Australia
- Xero, Sydney - 800 sqm