



Press release

The World Conference on Timber Engineering (WCTE)

WCTE 2023 opened on Monday 19 June. The conference was opened by Sandra Borch, Minister of Agriculture and Food, and Mayor Marianne Borgen welcomed the 900 participants to the city of Oslo in the main hall at The HUB hotel. The chairman of the conference, Professor Kjell Arne Malo, emphasized in his welcome speech the importance of this conference for Norway and the world.

The World Conference on Timber Engineering (WCTE) is the world's largest and most important scientific conference in engineering research on wood used as a building material.

The majority of the subject articles that were presented focused primarily on engineering, but all aspects of planning, design, construction, reuse and sustainability were well covered. The conference covers most topics within architecture, infrastructure and construction.

- I would like to emphasize that this is a scientific conference with high quality requirements, where only peer-reviewed scientific articles are presented, said Malo during the opening.

The long-term effect

- The long-term effect of the articles that are put forward extends from premises for the establishment of new building standards and future legislation to the development of new wood-based and sustainable building materials and building methods.

The basis for the improvement and development of our technical building legislation and regulations is the research into technical solutions, documentation, and experiences from existing buildings. This is the main content of the conference. We heard about a number of important topics that will mean a lot to the construction industry in the future, such as fire, acoustics and new constructions and architecture, says Malo.

Lectures

As part of the opening, four joint academic lectures were presented. First to present was civil engineer Åge Holmestad, who told the story of the development of large wooden structures in Norway and the significance of Norway winning the Olympics in Lillehammer in 1994.

In his lecture, Kjetil Trædal Thorsen from Snøhetta emphasized the emotional and human aspects of the use of wood in architecture, with reference to the conference's motto: Timber for a livable future. Jennifer Cover, president of WoodWorks - Wood Products Council in the USA, presented an overview of the use of wood in the construction industry in the USA. Professor Andrea Frangi at ETH Zurich gave a lecture on wood and fire, a topic in which he is a world leader.

As part of the closing, two joint academic lectures were presented. Uwe Kies, Secretary General of InnovaWood presented Europe's green transformation in policy, industry and society discovers wood science and innovation. Keith Crews, Professor & Director, WCTE 2025 Chair presented a perspective of the development and use of timber in the built Environment of Australia and New Zealand.

Participants from all continents, most from Norway

95 researchers from all over the world have peer-reviewed around 850 submitted articles. Of these, around 600 came through the eye of the needle, and were presented during the 4 days of the



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conference. The conference in Norway had participants from all continents. Not unexpectedly, Europe had the largest participation, with Norway at the top followed by Japan, Germany, Canada and the United States. During the opening, there were 900 people in the hall, which included researchers and invited guests. The conference attracted researchers, engineers, architects, consultants, contractors, project managers, suppliers, and manufacturers from all over the world.

WCTE is the only conference of its kind in the world. It is organized biannually and has been hosted on almost all the continents since 1984. This year it was Norway's turn. There is a high degree of prestige associated with hosting the WCTE. The nations interested in hosting the event must go through an application process assessed by a world council. Winning the WCTE host bid can be compared somewhat to winning the host city for the Olympics. Norway won this prestigious event in tough competition with Portugal, France, Russia, Switzerland and Slovenia.

Innovation Norway's financial support for the planning of the conference was decisive. Without it, Norway could not have hosted WCTE in Oslo.

- Norway was selected because we have a lot to show, both in terms of research and because we have built complicated wooden structures, and we also have great nature and culture. Norway has shown that we have the ability to hold such conferences, says Malo who is the conference's academic leader and a professor at NTNU.

The conference in Oslo has been conducted by a secretariat consisting of Kjell Arne Malo, Anders Q. Nyrud, Kristine Nore and Knut Werner Lindeberg Alsén. In addition, some individuals have had important key tasks in the planning and implementation of WCTE 2023. NMBU has taken the financial responsibility and risk for WCTE 2023. This part of the work is led by Professor Anders Q. Nyrud at NMBU.

The main organizer and host institutions for WCTE 2023 were NMBU, NTNU and AHO, with support from the host city of Oslo. In addition, Treteknisk, OsloMet, Sintef, Bergen Arkitektthøgskole, NIBIO and VisitOslo have supported the implementation of the event. Local businesses have supported the conference with various contributions and individual efforts.

Read more at www.wcte2023.org

WCTE also arranged several side events in the cityscape of Oslo during the conference week.

WCTE pavilion outside Østbanehallen

The organizers of WCTE 2023 took the initiative for a pavilion design. The pavilion stands outside Østbanehallen next to the Tiger. Through its form, it must also express themes that are relevant to our built environment in the future.

The pavilion is a gift from WCTE 2023 to the city of Oslo and the population. It will be a visual experience and hopefully a meeting place for everyone who travels in the area around Oslo S during the conference week.

The pavilion has been developed and realized in collaboration between the organizers of WCTE 2023, master's students and teachers at the School of Architecture and Design in Oslo (AHO), Norwegian engineering and architectural companies, and Norwegian material suppliers and manufacturers.



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WCTE pavilion opened by Minister of Agriculture and Food, Sandra Borch

The WCTE pavilion was officially opened by the Minister of Agriculture and Food, Sandra Borch. In addition, Mayor Marianne Borgen, Principal Irene Alma Lønne from AHO, Principal Siri Fjellheim from NMBU and Anders Q, Nyrud from NMBU participated in the inauguration, together with enthusiasts who have contributed to the realization of the pavilion. Read more: <https://wcte2023.org/wcte-pavilion-fletning/>

Making Norwegian design visible

The organizers of WCTE Norway placed an early emphasis on highlighting Norwegian design and the Norwegian design environment as part of WCTE 2023 in Norway. To create a strong profile, the agency Uniform was commissioned to develop the conference design and the website. The agency designed a very characteristic logo – a 3-dimensional piece of wood, which by turning one and the same piece, all four letters W - C - T - E become visible.

As a visual contribution to the city of Oslo, the WCTE 2023 logo is placed as an installation in the middle of the water mirror at Anne Cath. Vestlys Plass in front of Deichman Bjørvika, Oslo's main library. It is realized and built by local businesses.

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