

HAEL KOBAYASHI

Hael Kobayashi is a well-regarded executive with global expertise in the creative industries and innovation, specializing in film, media, design, and emerging technologies. Most recently, Hael was the inaugural Executive Director of Creative Intelligence at University of Technology Sydney, leading the pan-university creative industries strategy across research, education, and industry engagement. He was a key advocate for design-led innovation and technology initiatives, including the UTS Data Arena where he was an executive producer and board member, and the UTS Design Innovation Research Centre. Hael was subsequently appointed Adjunct Professor by the Vice-Chancellor, and directed the development of the UTS Animal Logic Academy, an industry-led initiative with a focus on visualization and virtualization. The Academy will offer post graduate courses and collaborative research opportunities in visual technologies and animation as part of the new UTS Faculty of Transdisciplinary Innovation.

Hael has held roles as senior executive and producer for several of the world's leading film and entertainment studios. He was the Executive for Production Strategy at Omnilab Media Group, Australia and New Zealand's largest, independently owned, vertically integrated media company. Prior to this, Hael was the Group Head of Production and Associate Producer on the Oscar and BAFTA winning, digitally animated feature film, "Happy Feet" for Australia's Animal Logic. He was also a key member of the industry advisory board for Vivid Sydney, recognized as the largest festival in the world featuring cutting edge light installations, music and idea forums.

Previously, Hael was the Director of Digital Production for Lucasfilm's Industrial Light + Magic. He was responsible for the management of digital artists and operations in creature development, animation, visual effects, and research and development for numerous, Academy Award nominated, films. Hael held several production management roles at PDI DreamWorks Animation, and was the Entertainment and Science senior producer for MSNBC/ZDTV's "The Site", which pioneered integrated online communication with simultaneous broadcast, during their startup phase.

A dedicated champion for education, Hael co-founded the Presidential Scholars in the Arts' Cinematic Arts program for the Young Arts Foundation, USA. He has lectured widely on innovation, digital visual effects and animation for conferences and universities in the USA, Australia, Canada, Asia and the UK. He has served on the industry advisory boards for the Savannah College of Art and Design, Vancouver Film School, Sheridan College, Bournemouth University and the Australian Film, Television and Radio School (AFTRS). Hael was previously appointed as an Associated Fellow of the United Nations Institute for Training and Research.

Since 2003, Hael has been a key member of core teams working with economic development leadership, regional planners, and leaders in education to create and implement innovation strategies for sustainable economic growth in several countries, including the USA, Australia, and Singapore. He was a member of Australia's national Digital Content Industry Action Agenda task force, and was appointed Creative Director by the Singapore government for the ICSID 2009 World Congress, which focused on designing a better world by 2050. Hael was subsequently appointed to the DesignSingapore International Advisory board, where he co-developed leadership scenarios for next-generation, emerging technologies to benefit the public and private sectors.

In the innovation space, Hael convened the creative industries group for the New South Wales Premier's Business, University and Government Forum, and he was the inaugural Chair of the Digital Sydney initiative for the NSW Department of Trade, Investment, Regional Infrastructure and Services. Hael is a former awards juror and senior advisor for INDEX: Design to Improve Life, the government sponsored non-profit organization in Copenhagen, Denmark.

Hael has given keynotes at the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD XIII) in Doha, Qatar; the UN sponsored World Summit on Internet and Multimedia in Fuzhou and Chongqing, China; and the International Creative Economy Forum in Thailand.

In 2013, Hael joined Sir Tim Berners-Lee, founder of the World Wide Web, for Sydney City Talks, and in 2014 was a keynote speaker at Netexplo, the UNESCO forum on global digital futures held in Paris where he is now a key adviser. Previously, Hael moderated the emerging multimedia track for the Hong Kong Business of Design Week.

Early in his career, Hael held leadership roles for the Canadian Government's Secretary of State, with a focus on the arts and cultural affairs both nationally and for Canada House in London, England.