

The Honorary Graduand: Jo Wright

Doctor of Design

Jo Wright was born in Hampshire and educated at Wykeham House, Fareham and Peter Symonds, Winchester. As a young woman with physics, chemistry and maths A levels she was encouraged to study Engineering, but a last minute change of direction, and an amenable Admissions Tutor willing to transfer her offer, led her to the Architecture Department at the University of Bath where she completed her RIBA Part 2 in 1989 with a First Class Degree and qualified as an Architect in 1992. Jo worked for Architecture PLB in Winchester and Hampshire County Architects Department, under Sir Colin Stansfield Smith. Later she spent a formative summer at Bartels und Schmidt Ott in West Berlin before joining Feilden Clegg Design in Bath as a Part 1 graduate.

In her 27 years at Feilden Clegg, the practice grew from 10 to 200 people and was recognised as a pioneer of sustainability in the built environment; Jo's many award winning projects include headquarters for Greenpeace UK, the National Trust and the Woodland Trust, projects for universities including Bath, Birmingham, Cambridge, Winchester and Worcester and masterplans and buildings for healthcare, communities and arts and culture in the UK and Europe. She became a Partner in 1994 and later served as Managing Partner.

In 2015 Jo joined Arup in London to lead their UKIMEA Architecture team – working with the global leadership, she was responsible for integrating Architecture alongside Arup's renowned engineering teams across the region. Her projects included a ground-breaking multi agency health and wellbeing centre in Llanelli and the masterplan for the future phases of Battersea Power Station.

In 2023 she was appointed by Perkins&Will as Managing Director of their London and Dublin studios and leads a team of 200 working in Architecture, Urban Design, Interiors and Branded Environments.

As Regional Director for Europe and the Middle East she also oversees teams in Denmark, France and

Saudi Arabia. Jo has been a passionate advocate for sustainability in the built environment and has been fortunate to work with some of the UK's most talented engineers and designers with an ambition to maximise the whole life value and minimise the impact of

every project. She learned from the late Richard Feilden that the design of businesses and team is as critical to their success as the talent of their people and has striven to build teams where people can grow and thrive.

In 2015 Jo was a founder member of the Equilibrium Network which aims to promote more women into leadership positions across the built environment. She has served as an external examiner at Cambridge and Bath. Jo is married with 3 adult children – where time permits, she is a cautious skier, a reluctant runner, an enthusiastic traveller, gardener, cook and oenophile. She's also planning on reverting to her first love of fine art and finally learning to paint!