**SESSION 18 BIOS**

**MODERATOR/KEYNOTE**

Julia Townsend, Enviro-Strategy

Julia Townsend is an environmental policy consultant specializing in strategic communications, community mobilization, and behavior change. She is currently a consultant for the Institute at the Golden Gate in San Francisco where she is conducting a needs assessment for climate educators in Bay Area parks, as well as the principal and founder of Enviro-Strategy. Prior to launching Enviro-Strategy, Julia worked as a Policy Analyst for the U.S. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, congressional campaign staffer, and special education teacher. She received her Master’s Degree in International Environmental Policy from the Monterey Institute of International Studies, and has been a member of IUCN’s World Commission on Protected Areas since 2012.

**PANELISTS**

Julia Africa, Center for Health & the Global Environment, Harvard School of Public Health

Julia Kane Africa leads the ecological infrastructure, biophilic design and restorative landscape areas of the Nature, Health and the Built Environment (NHBE) program at Harvard’s Center for Health and the Global Environment. In this role, she researches the ways in which nature (parks and green spaces) and natural design cues (natural features in built environment settings) in urban settings support psychological and physiological health and resilience. She then translates these insights into design and planning practices that are site-sensitive, ecologically ethical, and health promoting. Ms. Africa has completed graduate coursework in environmental health, exposure assessment and sustainable design at the Harvard School of Public Health and the Harvard Graduate School of Design (MDesS). She also holds previous degrees in Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine (MAOM) and Cultural Anthropology (BA).

Jason McDermott, Dresden Optics

Jason is a designer turned entrepreneur. He has been working at the intersection of design & technology for the past half-decade exploring the application of innovative technologies in a range of contexts (from parks to pockets). A graduate of Architecture, he worked initially at the city scale, exploring the potential of interaction design in long term urban design projects, wresting almost constantly with the ROI of good design. In recent years, his focus has shifted from the city to the individual, working to create products that help establish healthy life habits.  He is a cofounder of Dresden Optics, a new eyewear venture seeking to change the way we feel about eye health, and a Director at Sensorium Health, a software startup building stress management apps for iOS.

Eileen McNeely, Center for Health & the Global Environment, Harvard School of Public Health

Eileen McNeely is a faculty member in Environmental Health. As an epidemiologist, she spent most of her career quantifying the impact to human health of harmful environmental exposures. In the past few years, she is enthusiastically pursuing the study of beneficial exposures for human health, such as exposure to “greenness”, parks, or nature. Her shift of focus to the positive attributes of environmental exposures has generated a seismic shift also in her thinking about health more positively, such that health is more than the avoidance of disease, risk, or stress, and rather a contextual or relational state of wellbeing, awareness, and focus.  As a primary care provider, trained in a medical care delivery system that is clinic-based, the idea and promise of client assessments insitu –where they live, work, and play-- using new mobile sensors opens a world of possibility for discovery and wellbeing. This is her new curiosity!

Tsung Xu, Vital Behaviour Consulting

Tsung Xu is a strategic consultant and socially minded entrepreneur. As a consultant, he has helped clients design campaigns, videos, album launches, mobile apps and workshops with the needs and behaviours of their audiences firmly in mind. As a socially minded entrepreneur, he is enabling those who feel tied to their smartphones, to put down their devices and replace that time with more rewarding activities (like nature time) through habit-changing programmes. When he is not consulting or working on his own projects, he is often busy reinforcing his own habit of enjoying more activities outdoors.