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## UFRGS signs Memorandum of Understanding with University College London

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The UFRGS School of Engineering will collaborate with The Bartlett School of Sustainable Construction of the Faculty of the Built Environment at University College London (UCL) on research and projects aimed at improving the management of large infrastructure projects. The institutions signed a strategically designed Memorandum of Understanding which was based on UFRGS' leadership role and relevance in the Brazilian and South American context. The agreement aims to strengthen connections for the advancement of research and innovative solutions to pressing contemporary challenges, such as access to infrastructure and the impacts of climate change.

The partnership will enable knowledge exchange initiatives and collaborative projects to set an infrastructure agenda based on international climate change management strategies. The partnership between the institutions is coordinated by professors Juliano Denicol from UCL and Ricardo Cassel from UFRGS. They point out that Brazil's infrastructure project agenda is currently one of the most ambitious in the world, and suggest that the country could benefit from the British expertise in managing large-scale projects and their world-leading status in infrastructure.

According to [Juliano Denicol](#), professor of Project Management and director of the Megaproject Delivery Centre, the goal in forming this partnership with Brazil is to enhance the management of large infrastructure initiatives in South America. "Brazil is a natural force in renewable energy with multiple opportunities to support our decarbonization goals. Our approach to project development will adopt a systems vision, accelerating development by increasing infrastructure accessibility and facilitating the shift towards a zero-carbon future," he assesses.

Professor [Ricardo Cassel](#), coordinator of the Center for Advanced Studies in Supply Chain (CEASUP), announced the partnership with enthusiasm: "It gives me great pleasure to establish this relationship with UCL for the development of projects and research in the infrastructure field. Brazil offers numerous opportunities for the development of large infrastructure projects, ranging from the enhancement of its logistics systems (roads, ports, airports, railways, etc.) to the expansion of its energy matrix and development of its sanitation infrastructure. All these projects need to be addressed systemically, with attention paid to the synergy between them as well as a holistic understanding of all stages of each project, from conception to implementation and use. Therefore, it is essential that we develop research and seek innovative solutions for this area. And partnering with UCL, one of the most renowned universities in the world, is undoubtedly a great honor."

D'Maris [Coffman](#), director of the Bartlett School of Sustainable Construction, said the partnership is part of the school's strategic vision of connections with key institutions in the Southern Hemisphere and contributes to advancing UCL's internationalization strategy. "Brazil is strategically positioned to spur change across South America. As a School, we are interested in connecting with leaders around the world to improve diversity and develop innovative solutions to our society's global challenges. We hope that the collaboration will give Brazilian talents a platform to pursue entrance in postgraduate programs and participation in doctoral research at UCL in the near future," said the director.

The relationship with UCL has been highlighted as one of the UFRGS School of Engineering's top priorities in its strategic planning by [Carla ten Caten](#), director of the School of Engineering at UFRGS. "In addition to promoting an international partnership with a renowned British institution such as UCL, it is also an opportunity to put at work different researchers – from the School of Engineering and from other units of UFRGS, like the ones from the Institute for Hydraulic Research – for the creation of the Center for Research and Projects in Infrastructure to come up with solutions to complex and multidimensional problems or challenges associated with the management of infrastructure megaprojects addressed with a systemic and sustainable vision by UFRGS," says the director.

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