

HENNING **LARSEN** ARCHITECTS

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# UNITED NATIONS GLOBAL COMPACT COMMUNICATION ON PROGRESS DECEMBER 2013



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Henning Larsen Architects is an international architecture company. Our goal is to create vibrant, sustainable projects that reach beyond themselves and become of durable value to the user and to the society and culture into which they are built. The company was founded by Henning Larsen in 1959 and today has offices in Denmark, The Faroe Islands, Norway, Germany, Turkey and Saudi Arabia. Henning Larsen Architects employs 237 people (as of 1 December 2013) across the six offices.

The projects are characterised by a high degree of social responsibility – not only in relation to materials and production but also as regards good, social spaces which encourage intimacy and community. We shape, challenge and change the physical environment with the overall objective of providing the user with a strong, visionary and thoroughly framed design adapted to the specific context.

Henning Larsen Architects attaches great importance to designing environmentally friendly and integrated, energy-efficient solutions. Our ideas are developed in close collaboration with the client, users and partners in order to achieve long-lasting buildings and a beneficial life-cycle economy. This value-based approach is the key to our design of numerous building projects around the world – from complex masterplans to successful architectural landmarks.



*The employees at Henning Larsen Architects are a diverse group. As of 1 December 2013, the staff represents 32 different nationalities of which 52 % are men and 48 % are women. To promote a better understanding across cultures, Henning Larsen Architects seeks to attract interns and employees from different countries. To ensure knowledge- sharing and share work and cultural experience, the international offices arrange exchange programs.*

*Henning Larsen Architects' office in Munich, Germany.*

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**The European Union Prize for Contemporary Architecture – Mies van der Rohe Award 2013**

Harpa - Reykjavík Concert Hall and Conference Centre, designed by Henning Larsen Architects in collaboration with Batterið Architects and Studio Olafur Eliasson, won one of the most prestigious architecture awards worldwide in 2013.

In addition to the architectural qualities the project was acclaimed for its significance to the Icelandic society.

Androulla Vassiliou, European Commissioner for Education, Culture, Multilingualism and Youth, said that “The ‘story’ behind the Harpa building is inspiring. Started shortly before the economic crisis engulfed Iceland and Europe, the building could easily have become a symbol of collapse. Instead, the government and city of Reykjavík were determined to finish the job. Harpa has become a symbol of hope and renewal, receiving nearly two million visitors since its opening in 2011. It is a great example of how investment in the cultural and creative sectors can create jobs and wider economic, social and cultural benefits. I hope the Harpa story will encourage more public and private investors to support the immense talent that we have in European contemporary architecture.”



*The foyer of Harpa in Reykjavik, Iceland.*

*More information at  
[www.henninglarsen.com](http://www.henninglarsen.com),  
[www.harpa.is](http://www.harpa.is) and  
[www.miesbcn.com](http://www.miesbcn.com)*

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Henning Larsen Architects continues to support the United Nations Global Compact and encourages our network to participate and implement its principles.

When we joined the United Nations Global Compact more than five years ago, we put our efforts into promoting sustainability in the planning, design and operation of our building projects.

We addressed the environmental principles of the UN Global Compact by focusing on three aspects: how we operate our business, how we approach the design process, and by initiating or supporting various outreach programs. This priority reflects the building sector's environmental impact - and hence its significant influence in this field and opportunity to contribute to finding solutions.

We have been engaged in the establishment of Green Building Council in Denmark and the introduction of a national certification system for sustainable building. To support the initiative's growth and success we have encouraged our employees to become certified.

To promote a construction sector which understands how sustainability can create long-term societal and economic value, we continue to invest in research and development projects on sustainable building. We are involved in several cross-disciplinary projects and we actively support the Nordic Built Charter initiated by the Nordic Ministers for Trade and Industry.

In collaboration with the Technical University of Denmark, we are currently involved in a three-year-long research project, 'Urban Environment: Development of comfort criteria for urban planning'. The project will examine the microclimate created by urban structures of various forms and scales.

While maintaining our focus on sustainability, we are aware of other aspects in our global projects that can be challenging due to different ethical standards, cultural values, spiritual concepts or political systems. In collaboration with the organisation of employers and two other architectural companies, we have developed tools to better assess these global challenges.

We will continue to work globally with projects in countries where architecture is significant to the development of society.



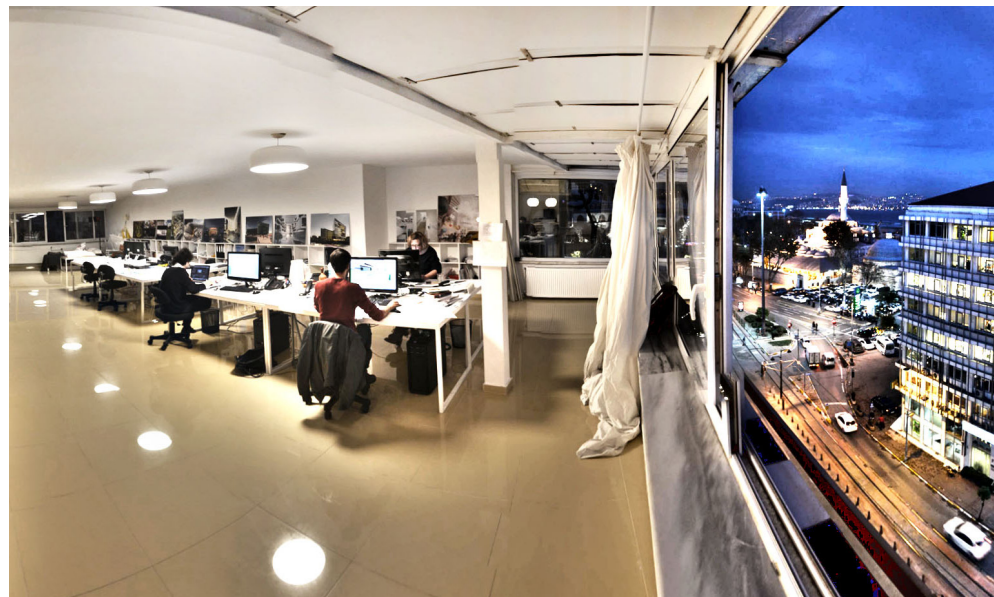
Mette Kynne Frandsen  
CEO and Partner,  
Henning Larsen Architects

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Henning Larsen Architects joined the United Nations Global Compact in 2008, to be a part of the partnership between the UN and the international corporate world with the objective of promoting the social commitment of businesses. This report is our fourth Communication on Progress (CoP) in which we address and renew our commitment to all four areas of the Global Compact: Human Rights, Labour, Environment and Anti-Corruption.

Our Communication on Progress is uploaded to the website of the United Nations Global Compact and will also be available on our website, intranet and be an integral part of how we present our company internally as well as in the media. By this approach, we transparently communicate our ethical standards and values, and we hope that our efforts and results will be inspirational and raise awareness among employees, colleagues, partners and clients.

In architecture, the environment is the field where companies within the industry can make the greatest difference. Henning Larsen Architects' projects reflect this premise; they are based on a holistic approach to sustainability and – to a high degree – on the knowledge built by Henning Larsen Architects and our collaboration partners.



*Henning Larsen Architects' office in  
Istanbul, Turkey.*



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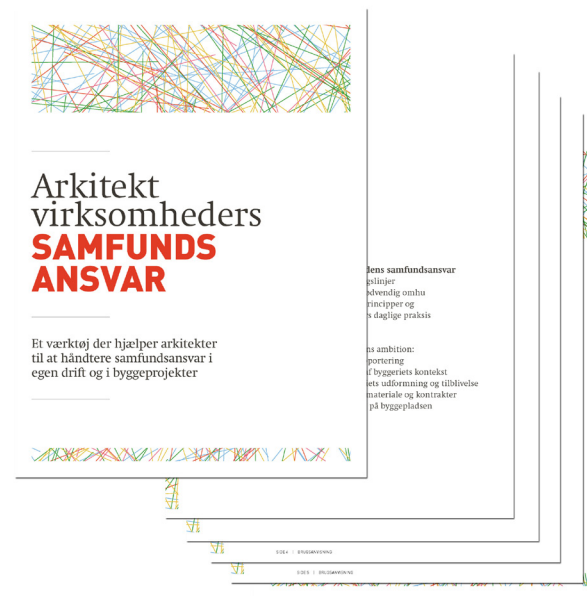
### New methodological tool tailored to architecture companies

In collaboration with the Danish Association of Architectural Firms (DANSKE ARK), the Danish Business Authority, Responsible Assets and two other architecture companies, Henning Larsen Architects has developed a methodological tool to help architects manage issues regarding corporate responsibility in day-to-day operations and in building projects.

The tool translates the overall guidelines that apply to corporate responsibility into an architectural vocabulary and systematises the guidelines to match architects' work fields. The tool is simple to use and scalable so that even smaller architecture studios can easily implement it in their existing work procedures.

The tool was presented to the architectural industry in June 2013, and Henning Larsen Architects will implement parts of the methodology in 2014 and will continue to develop other parts.

The Dreyer Foundation, the Danish Business Authority and the three participating architecture companies have provided the funding to develop the tool.



More information at  
<http://goo.gl/06fqOc>

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**Principle 1**

Businesses should support and respect the protection of internationally proclaimed human rights.

**Principle 2**

Businesses should make sure that they are not complicit in human rights abuses.

**Our commitment**

Henning Larsen Architects supports the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the United Nations Millennium Development Goals.

**Actions taken**

Henning Larsen Architects complies with the provisions of national Danish legislation, which are aligned with international conventions on human rights.

In addition to our commitment to prevent a negative impact on human rights, we actively support and promote the enjoyment of human rights – by the projects in which we choose to engage, by the way we design projects and by our recruitment and employment policy, including internship programs.

A widespread issue when operating an international organisation in today's globalised economy, is the lack of legislation and cultural traditions that do not have the same standards as – or even contradict – Danish legislation. We strive to support the local improvement of human rights.

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### Responsible design

One of our main business activities is the design of cultural and educational buildings. By their very nature, these buildings are necessarily supportive of human rights and development. Our designs embody a high degree of social responsibility – not only in relation to sustainability, the selection of materials and production but also as regards inclusive social spaces which encourage equality and community.

### New primary school in Aarhus

The school in the city centre will replace an existing school and also comprise afterschool programmes and daycare facilities. The project will create a unique learning and leisure environment for children in Aarhus.

Daylight, human scale and dynamic spaces are key elements in the building's design. The school is organised in four clusters, each featuring a small common square with niches, reading hammocks, mobile workshops and multi-purpose furniture. The clusters open up to the three atriums. Here, large, dynamic stairs serve as common gathering points and create a sense of light, openness and activity.



More information at  
[www.henninglarsen.com](http://www.henninglarsen.com)



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### **In dialogue with the world**

In 2013, Henning Larsen Architects' exhibition 'What if ...?' was shown at the Danish Architecture Centre in Copenhagen as a part of the exhibition 'In dialogue with the world'. The exhibition explored the ways in which architecture adapts to a given urban or societal context and showed the creation process where empathy, openness and curiosity compose an important part of the work method.

Part of the exhibition was a workshop featuring a large group of architecture students from the Royal Academy of Fine Arts. The students worked in the exhibition hall, where lectures, mentoring and teaching took place.

The workshops focused on Copenhagen and the city's potential. The exhibition functioned as a test laboratory where visitors could follow the students' investigations and proposals for Copenhagen's future development. The exhibition encouraged the audience to explore and ask questions.

During the six weeks of the exhibition, specialists and partners from Henning Larsen Architects as well as selected invited specialists served as workshop lecturers to the architecture students.



*Architecture students from the Royal Academy of Fine Arts working in the exhibition hall.*

*More information at  
[www.henninglarsen.com](http://www.henninglarsen.com)*

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**Multidisciplinary exchange programme**

Henning Larsen Architects is engaging in an Multidisciplinary Australian-Danish Exchange (MADE) programme. Over the next ten years, five Danish students per year will undertake a one-month internship at an Australian firm, as five Australian students are given the opportunity to work on a project in a Danish architecture, engineering or design firm.

In the programme's inaugural year, the five participating Australian students will be interning at Henning Larsen Architects in January-February 2014.

MADE is a cooperation between Sydney Opera House Trust and The Royal Danish Academy Schools of Architecture, Design and Conservation and in Denmark is funded by Bikubenfonden, Dreyers Fond and Det Obelske Familiefond. In Australia the programme is funded by Arup Pty Limited, Steensen Varming (Australia) Pty Limited and The NSW Architects Registration Board.



*Five Australian students will intern at Henning Larsen Architects in 2014: Laura Craft, Robert Martin, Jennifer McMaster, Olivia Savio-Matev, and Matthew Wells.*

*More information at  
[www.henninglarsen.com](http://www.henninglarsen.com) and  
[www.sydneyoperahouse.com](http://www.sydneyoperahouse.com)*

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**INDEX: Award 2013**

In collaboration with Sælan Production Design, Henning Larsen Architects designed the set for the award show. This year the theme of the show was 'Good News' and an old factory was transformed into a large newsroom with three stages.

Henning Larsen Architects worked pro bono to support the organisation and promote the innovative ideas and design solutions it presented.

INDEX: Design to improve life is a Danish non-profit organisation, where the purpose is to inspire, educate, and encourage designs that respond to the world's biggest challenges. Every second year the INDEX organisation arranges the award show. This year it was held at Kulturværftet in Helsingør, Denmark.



*Director and Partner Louis Becker, Henning Larsen Architects, joined the show in conveying the good news when he went on stage to talk about sustainable design.*

*More information at  
[www.henninglarsen.com](http://www.henninglarsen.com) and  
[www.designtoimprovelife.dk](http://www.designtoimprovelife.dk)*

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**Principle 3**

Businesses should uphold the freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining.

**Principle 4**

Businesses should uphold the elimination of all forms of forced and compulsory labour.

**Principle 5**

Businesses should uphold the effective abolition of child labour.

**Principle 6**

Businesses should uphold the elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation.

**Our commitment**

Henning Larsen Architects supports the International Labour Organisation's Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work and the United Nations Millennium Development Goals.

**Actions taken**

The Danish labour market is largely self-regulated by collective agreements concluded between trade unions and employers' organisations and to a lesser degree statutorily regulated by the state and EU bodies.

Henning Larsen Architects participates in, respects and supports this system through our membership in the Danish Association of Architectural Firms, which collaborates with The Danish Union of Salaried Architects and the Danish Architects' Association.

These organisations safeguard and balance individual and commercial interests as regards collective bargaining, legislation concerning salaried employees, labour market, industrial and educational policies etc. Through collaborative efforts, Henning Larsen Architects upholds the freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining.



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### **Collective bargaining in Denmark**

The Danish self-regulated system of collective bargaining is based on a negotiation between employers and trade unions. At the negotiation, representatives from both employers and employees are present.

Every third year, the Danish Architects' Association negotiates a collective agreement with the employers of the industry. The collective agreement includes any employed architect in Denmark who is educated in Europe. At Henning Larsen Architects, employees educated outside of Europe are engaged on terms that to a large extent match the terms covered by the collective agreement.

As of 2013, a new collective agreement on the salary of architects is being implemented. It is planned to be fully implemented by 2018. What is new in this collective agreement is that salary increases will be dependent on performance rather than seniority. At the same time, the individual employee is guaranteed not to get a lower salary than what was agreed in the former collective agreement.

All employees are offered the opportunity for further training. This is a requirement according to the Danish collective agreement, but also Henning Larsen Architects' staff outside Denmark are offered further training. For instance, the offices in Munich and Istanbul have held internal further training courses.



*Henning Larsen Architects' office in  
Copenhagen, Denmark.*

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**Principle 7**

Businesses should support a precautionary approach to environmental challenges.

**Principle 8**

Businesses should undertake initiatives to promote greater environmental responsibility.

**Principle 9**

Businesses should encourage the development and diffusion of environmentally friendly technologies.

**Our commitment**

Henning Larsen Architects is committed to protecting the environment through adoption of voluntary charters as well as through sectoral and international initiatives, including Sustainia, Nordic Built, Gate 21, The Energy Renovation Network of the Danish Ministry for Climate, Energy and Building, and Concito, the green think-tank of Denmark.

**Actions taken**

Henning Larsen Architects supports scientific research. The environmental impact of existing building stock as well as that of new buildings must be reduced. Incorporating scientific knowledge on climate and energy into the design process adds a new quality to architectural design.

Cross-disciplinary collaborations within Henning Larsen Architects have dealt with both existing knowledge and new research – with the primary objective of promoting a holistic appreciation of the environmental and energy-related aspects of building. An important step has been taken in terms of bringing together professions that usually work separately.

Knowledge of and access to state-of-the-art knowledge and developments are decisive factors in relation to architecture. Therefore, Henning Larsen Architects takes part in building, collecting and sharing new knowledge about sustainability.

Henning Larsen Architects has collaborated with the Technical University of Denmark since 2008 and currently employs one industrial PhD student who conducts research on urban environments and the development of measurable and quantifiable comfort criteria for urban planning.



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### Scientific research to improve urban spaces

Henning Larsen Architects is collaborating on a research project with the Department of Civil Engineering at DTU, the Technical University of Denmark. The project focuses on environmental comfort in urban spaces, and studies how sunlight, noise, air quality and wind patterns created by the cityscape can change the usability and comfort of an urban space.

Civil Engineer Alf Nielsen is working on an Industrial PhD with the purpose of developing methods and standards for measuring the environmental quality and comfort of urban spaces. The result will be a helpful tool in early urban design phases, where architects need to consider how building masses affect the surrounding environment.

The project is a pioneering work within the field of architecture and urban planning.

Henning Larsen Architects has previously been involved in research projects concerning improvement of urban spaces. Past projects have, for example, investigated the use of daylight as a valuable feature in urban development.



*Civil Engineer Alf Nielsen and Chief Engineer Jakob Strømmand-Andersen in Henning Larsen Architects' Copenhagen office.*

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[www.henninglarsen.com](http://www.henninglarsen.com)

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### Taking advantage of daylight

With support from the Realdania Foundation, Henning Larsen Architects has published the book "Hvad med dagslys?" ("What about daylight?"). The book provides suggestions for how to incorporate daylight as a key parameter in building renovations. Currently it is only available in Danish.

Incorporating daylight in the renovation of housing developments has a wide range of advantages. For instance, new windows both reduce energy consumption and benefit our health. "What about daylight?" is based on specific research results that document the positive effects of daylight. The book also offers advice on how we get more and better daylight into our dwellings.

Private homeowners, consultants and urban planners in municipalities and ministries will benefit from reading the book.



*The conclusions of the book are based on a specific analysis of the dense city districts of Copenhagen and other European cities. The ubiquitous residential blocks shown at left are commonplace throughout Scandinavia and Europe. These formations inhibit daylight access, leaving a majority of the cityscape in darkness during the day. Many such buildings are facing renovation in the near future; Henning Larsen Architects is investigating strategies to improve rather than simply replace them.*

More information at  
[www.henninglarsen.com](http://www.henninglarsen.com) and  
[www.dagslysrenovering.dk](http://www.dagslysrenovering.dk)

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### **DGNB Certification**

Henning Larsen Architects has been actively engaged in establishing Green Building Council Denmark and introducing a Danish sustainable building certification system. Green Building Council Denmark chose the German certification solution DGNB as a foundation for the future Danish system. It represents recent European building standards for sustainable evaluations and equally weighs the social, environmental, and economic aspects of sustainability. The DGNB City Districts analysis places special focus on the life cycle approach to the environmental and economic aspects of urban areas.

A sustainable certification scheme provides the necessary framework and an opportunity to disseminate the available knowledge in the construction and building sector. It promotes a holistic understanding of sustainability.

In 2013, six employees of Henning Larsen Architects have been certified DGNB International Consultant and two employees have been certified DGNB Auditor of City Districts.



*More information at  
[www.henninglarsen.com](http://www.henninglarsen.com) and  
[www.dk-gbc.dk](http://www.dk-gbc.dk)*

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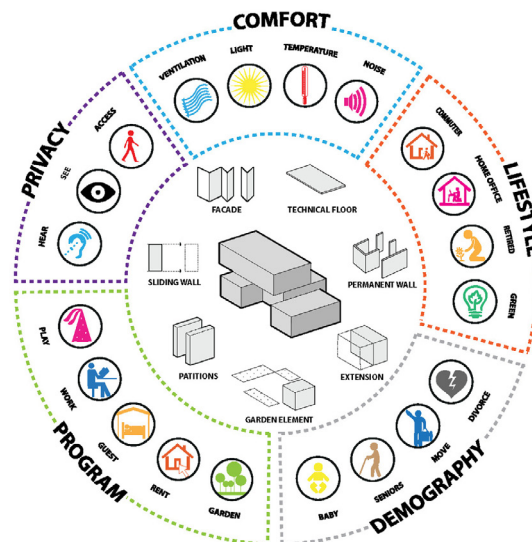
### The Adaptable House

The Adaptable House prioritises flexibility and identifies how the flexible design of a single-family house can save time, resources and CO2 in connection with conversions and extensions. It forms part of a development project financed by Realdania Byg.

The house is designed as a single-family home of 146 m<sup>2</sup> and focuses on the changing needs and requirements for our homes with the demands of different life stages. Couples get together, some get divorced; children grow up and move away from home. And eventually, our mobility and ability to take care of ourselves in our own homes are gradually weakened.

The Adaptable House offers a number of specific solutions which address these changing needs. In the adaptation process, the need for new materials is minimised – and in many cases, large conversions or extensions can be avoided – providing an option to simply change the spatial and functional layout.

A family can save 26 tons CO<sub>2</sub> by choosing The Adaptable House instead of a standard house (based on a 170 m<sup>2</sup> house with an energy consumption of 60 kWh/m<sup>2</sup>/year). After completion, the annual CO<sub>2</sub> savings for heating and operation will be reduced by 33 tons compared with a standard house.



More information at  
[www.henninglarsen.com](http://www.henninglarsen.com) and  
[www.realdaniabyg.dk](http://www.realdaniabyg.dk)



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### **The self-sufficient street lamp**

In collaboration with a number of partners, Henning Larsen Architects has developed a new self-powered street lamp. The street lamp implements a modular system whereby the LED light source is powered by solar cells on the post and an integrated battery and control system.

The challenge has been to create an aesthetically-pleasing street lamp suitable for the Danish urban space, while at the same time fulfilling technical requirements. The result is a slim design with a wind generator finished in black to prevent glare from sunlight reflection. The modular lamp is adjustable to fit with the scale and needs of various cities and the different types of urban space.

The project is run by the Danish partnership organisation Gate 21, and involves the Technical University of Denmark, Henning Larsen Architects and several municipalities, as well as the companies Philips, Priess and Faktor 3. The project is funded by the Danish Energy Research and Development Program Elforsk.



*Visualisation of the self-sufficient street lamp in an urban context in Copenhagen.*

*More information at  
[www.henninglarsen.com](http://www.henninglarsen.com)*

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**Principle 10**

Businesses should work against corruption in all its forms, including extortion and bribery.

**Our commitment**

Henning Larsen Architects supports The United Nations Convention Against Corruption. We fully comply with Danish and international legislation. A respectful and open relationship with our clients, employees and the societies in which we work is essential in all our projects.

**Actions taken**

We have not – directly or indirectly – been involved in any form of corruption.



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Henning Larsen Architects supports the Nordic Built Charter. The charter is an initiative aimed at accelerating the development of sustainable building concepts. The programme combines key Nordic strengths, provides attractive and effective arenas for collaboration and realises concrete projects that demonstrate world-class scalable solutions.

The ten principles of the Nordic Built Charter include a focus on aesthetically appealing design while maintaining the highest possible standards of sustainability, which is central to all Henning Larsen Architects projects.

Architect Louis Becker, Partner and Director at Henning Larsen Architects is one of the top leaders from the Nordic building sector committed to implementing the ten principles in their strategies and work, and taking the necessary steps to deliver competitive solutions for sustainable construction.

**The ten principles:**

We will create a built environment that:

1. is made for people and promotes quality of life;
2. pushes the limits of sustainable performance, as a result of an innovative mind-set and high level of knowledge;
3. merges urban living with the qualities of nature;
4. achieves zero emissions over its life cycle;
5. is functional, smart and aesthetically appealing, building on the best of the Nordic design tradition;
6. is robust, durable, flexible and timeless - built to last;
7. utilises local resources and is adapted to local conditions;
8. is produced and maintained through partnerships founded on transparent collaboration across borders and disciplines;
9. employs concepts that are scalable and used globally;
10. profits people, business and the environment.



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Henning Larsen Architects supports the eight Millennium Development Goals for 2015.

Henning Larsen Architects contributes to promoting the UN Millenium Development Goals through support of the national Danish campaign, "World's Best News":

**Goal 1**

Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger.

**Goal 2**

Achieve universal primary education.

**Goal 3**

Promote gender equality and empower women.

**Goal 4**

Reduce child mortality.

**Goal 5**

Improve maternal health.

**Goal 6**

Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases.

**Goal 7**

Ensure environmental sustainability.

**Goal 8**

Develop a global partnership for development.

**MORE INFORMATION**

[www.un.org/millenniumgoals](http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals)

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