

Communication on Progress 2010

UN Global Compact



Continued support for the UN Global Compact

PLH Arkitekter A/S is a multi-disciplinary architectural practice focused on stimulating an interactive and productive working environment for our talented and creative people, partly architects, but also interior designers and industrial designers, together with specialists within construction, process planning and communication.

PLH works with a broad spectrum of commissions from architecture, urban planning and workplace design to client advisory and industrial design. The company is often involved in complex, large-scale multi-disciplinary projects that evolve over long timeframes and are often associated with a high degree of confidentiality and proper due process. Regardless of the project type, PLH's commitment to responsible business practices and highest standards of professional integrity are the foundation of all interactions with clients, collaborators and fellow colleagues.

PLH's business ethics and code of conduct is grounded in around 30 years of professional industry experience and the commitment of the leadership team to follow responsible business practices in an ever changing global marketplace. In the summer of 2009 PLH decided to adopt the UN Global Compact initiative as part of maintaining and developing our social and environmental responsibility.

PLH embraces, supports and enacts, within its sphere of influence, the Global Compact set of core values in the areas of human rights, labour standards, the environment, and anti-corruption. PLH wishes to continue participation in Global Compact and seeks to support the principles as an integral part of our day-to-day operation and organizational culture, and where possible align leadership strategies to the ten principles. The principles covering the environment are a focus area for PLH and where we can have a measurable, positive impact.



Lene Nepper Larsen, Partner, Architect MAA RIBA

Business integrity and responsibility

As a member of the Danish Association of Architectural Firms (DANSKE ARK), PLH's operational procedures are based on Danish Legislation and DANSKE ARK'S instructions, guidelines and contractual standards, aimed at strengthening the quality level and professionalism of practicing architectural firms, and covering -

- Level of professional liability insurance and standard contracting agreements - General Conditions for Consultancy and Assistance 1989 (ABR 89).
- Collective bargaining process whereby DANSKE ARK negotiates the general agreements on pay and working conditions etc. of the technical staff that are in the employment of the member firms.
- Fees and standards for architectural work with individual clients, private client organizations and public authorities.
- DANSKE ARK also participates in negotiations with public authorities on tax aspects, prices and profit legislation, regulations on competitive tendering, liability and insurance matters as well as building assignment procedures, quality assurance and other terms relating to the professional activities of the member firms.

Based on national and international legislation on human rights, the Danish Consolidation Act no. 68, of January 2005, and our membership of the Danish Association of Architectural Firms, PLH is obliged to respect the basic conventions.

Engagement in business associations

Several of PLH's 11 partners are leading representatives at DANSKE ARK, acting as members or heads of committees such as the Board, the Contracts Committee, the Committee for Professional Indemnity Insurance, and the Committee for Professional Agreements and the International Committee.

Several partners are also active members of the Architect's Association of Denmark (Akademisk Arkitektforening), represented in the Legal Committee and as the organisation's appointed jury members in architectural competitions.



Leadership responsibility

The PLH leadership team members are individually and collectively responsible for ensuring the firm's adherence to responsible business practices and our Code of Ethics. To that end, the following nominated partners, directors and professional staff have been assigned specific areas of responsibility -

BIMS & UN Global Compact

Lene Nepper Larsen - Partner and Paulette Christophersen - Partner

Financial accountability

Torben Hjortsø - Partner

Financial reporting

Susanne Knudsen - Head of accounts, supported by PWC consulting auditors

Legal accountability and risk management

Jan Sander Fredriksen - Partner, supported by Philip & Partnere lawyers

Quality Assurance

Holger Bak - Partner

Digital knowledge management

Jan Sander Fredriksen - Partner and Claus Johannessen - Senior Architect

Sustainability (PLH Green Team)

Søren Mølbak - Partner, Paulette Christophersen - Partner and Steen Enrico Andersen - Partner

Staff representatives

Henning Solfeldt - Industrial Design Leader, Rikke Haugaard Sejersén - Architect, Kim Ringvei - Architect and Anders Mortensen - Constructing Architect

Work environment and Policy

PLH has a clear and balanced gender policy where some of our key values are to embrace diversity of competencies, experiences and viewpoints and to support a humanistic and collegial work style to add real value to our business.

Actions

We recruit solely on proven competencies and experiences not sex, nationality, religion nor age. Staff members are selected for project teams on the basis of relevant qualifications and experience corresponding with the project demands and our overall strategies and goals for meeting the clients' needs.

In order to promote well being at work, PLH has in recent years focussed on prevention of stress. Two of our employees have undergone specialised training through the Psychiatry Fund to be able to advice and guide colleagues on issues of stress. The PLH leadership, together with the stress counsellors have prepared an anti-stress policy guideline that covers both preventative actions (behaviours and organisation of work), detection of early warning signs and management of stress effected staff. Any stress affected employees will be offered psychological consultation as needed.

Benefits

PLH is recognized as a stable and attractive workplace, with many employees being a part of the practice for 10-25 years.

We follow the Danish Working Environment Act and according to our latest annual Work Assessment carried out in 2009 our staff is very satisfied with the working environment also in relation to the split of sex, nationality and age. We foster an open and inclusive culture where racism or bullying is not tolerated.

Our procedures have proven effective and PLH wishes to continue this engagement and investment in the working environment in order to remain an attractive, healthy and productive office - retaining and attracting the best. The priority of a responsible work environment and recognition of human diversity is a significant value for the office's capability to evolve in tune with the changing demands, challenges and tendencies of our industry.

Holistic approach to environmentally sustainable design

PLH's main focus in connection to the principles of UN Global Compact is directed towards environmental challenges and possibilities. PLH has a responsibility to create holistic sustainable and humanistic solutions to the greatest extent that it can influence project outcomes.

We are committed to reviewing how our activities can contribute to the reduction of CO² emissions and minimize the planet's consumption of fossil resources. However, sustainability is not only a question of energy – social well being and cultural behaviour are aspects that we consider as a central part of designing sustainable buildings.

PLH supports a considered approach to environmental challenges by promoting our own and others awareness of our impacts on the environment and surroundings. We expect our staff to be conscious of the consequences of their actions concerning the environment, whether it is "locally" at the office or "globally" with a client.

Sustainability is an integrated element in our projects from the initial thoughts about form and function. We strive to inform our clients throughout the decision making process to optimize the outcomes within the parameters of each project. We see workshops and exchange of knowledge with the project's stakeholders as the optimal foundation for the development of sustainable projects that are also aesthetically, functionally and economically successful.

Promotion and goals

Buildings are more than "passive" users of energy. They are also "active" environments, where human needs are an integral part of the creation of environmentally sustainable solutions where people can thrive.

Our office is focusing on holistically working across disciplines to create informed, inventive and sustainable solutions. PLH is taking several initiatives to promote our responsibility towards the environment and is including environmental aspects in all phases of our project and construction processes.

By focusing attention and knowledge sharing on environmentally sustainable design (ESD) parameters, the practice has been able to inform clients of possibilities and advantages, and advise them about ESD options and systems, that can become an investment in operational savings.

Our significant competencies within the area have also enabled the office to respond to and challenge the expectations of our increasingly environmentally conscious investors and clients.

PLH will include sustainability screening as a goal in every project. The PLH environmental policy is under constant evolution and the next official version will be available by the end of 2010.

Local initiatives - global impact

Central to sustainable design is using local resources and adapting the building complex to the local climate conditions, inspired by the local tradition.

Local resources must be explored - wind for electricity, sun for energy, sea water for cooling, rainwater for recycling and underground geothermal potential. Sun screening, lighting control, natural ventilation as well as local and natural materials are important factors in obtaining a comfortable indoor climate and optimized energy sufficiency.

The selection or exclusion of green initiatives needs to be seen from a lifecycle perspective. Many solutions will have an appealing pay-back time when considered over a 5, 10 or 15 year horizon for running costs.

The office has established an internal task-force working with initiatives and approaches for internal development, training, debate and knowledge sharing, study trips, lectures, workshops a.o. This Green Team consists of Søren Mølbak, Paulette Christophersen and Steen Enrico Andersen - all partners together with architects Line Marie Nisted and Benny E. Uhlmann.

An essential approach in all our work is the integration of hard factors such as geometries, orientation, location of windows, choice of materials, engineering systems and lighting, with soft factors related to workplace comfort and staff welfare.

PLH is working on a targeted effort to minimize the environmental load of the daily running of



our own office and to create a healthy and safe workplace. Energy consumption (power, HVAC, water) as well as the waste of office supplies and paper is continually being reduced.

We are conscious of the environment impact of transportation to/from meetings, and have implemented the use of office bikes for meetings held within a 5km radius of the office. Our other initiatives in this area include widespread use of tele conferences and tele meetings, together with purchasing carbon quotas on air travel.

It is our aim to be considered as an environmentally conscious office with expertise in the planning and execution of high quality sustainable buildings.

Sustainable design at PLH

In 2008 PLH won 1. prize in the competition for a new sustainable ice skating rink in Ryparken's Sports Centre in Copenhagen. Teaming up with MT Højgaard contractors and Esbensen Consulting Engineers, PLH delivered the most convincing green concept. The declared aspirations of The Municipality of Copenhagen is that the project should be a "front runner" for green buildings in the city and consequently, the Municipality stipulated that the building should meet the requirements of energy class 2, which corresponds to an energy consumption that is 25 % less than that for traditional skating rinks. Energy optimization thus became a design launch pad for the concept of a building in a simple and distinctive profile with a sloping facade that has an optimum angle for integrated solar installations.

The project's vision was to achieve a design where energy, construction and architecture worked together in a unified and integrated concept.

PLH's knowledge about sustainable solutions and initiatives, seen in a broader perspective, is developed significantly by implementing specific projects with defined goals from the client's viewpoint, and by participating in competitions. All projects play an important role as "case studies" which reinforce the practice's competencies, skills and profile.

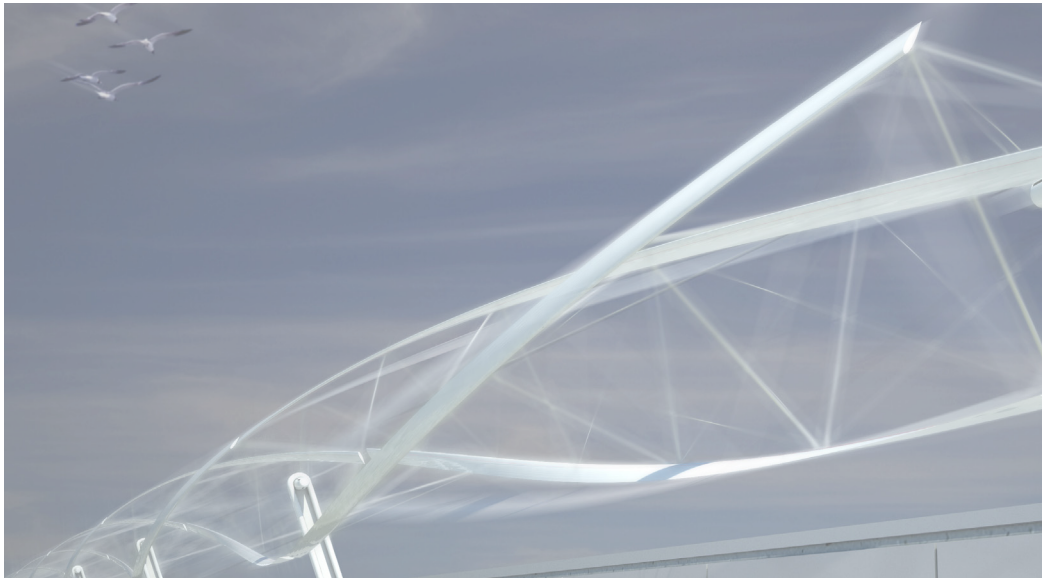
Over the past year, PLH qualified to participate in many competitions, most of which included sustainability as criteria in the weighted scoring system. Some of the projects are the "zero energy" building for Aarhus Municipality, new childcare centre in Frederiksberg and a passive energy building in Glostrup. The challenge in the project for the institution in Frederiksberg, was to combine pre-cast elements with optimized construction methods to achieve the very stringent energy Class 1. The development of the passive energy building in Glostrup was based on the principle of Integrated Energy Design, which follows a design process where the factors affecting the building's indoor environment and energy usage are integrated into the earliest design stages.



In the spring of 2010 PLH received an award for the Aller Building, a multimedia office in Copenhagen. The award acknowledged the building's energy saving planning and sound indoor environment, amongst other aspects. This building is one of PLH's "flagships" in demonstrating a holistic sustainable building, where the workplace design is integrated in a compelling architectural form.

The practice also undertakes a wide range of client advisory commissions, where sustainability goals are a focus for our clients, and an integral component of our approach. Of note is our commission as Tenant Advisor to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for the implementation of UN City in Copenhagen. PLH has a key role in the development of what will be a new benchmark Energy Class 1 office campus for Denmark. PLH has focussed on ensuring a holistic vision incorporating sustainable workplace thinking, such that UN City will not only be an energy efficient building, but also a healthy and productive workplace.

Apart from specific project examples, it is important to note that on a daily basis, the staff at PLH is making informed and conscious decisions impacting on the environment when they select and specify materials, finishes, furniture and fixtures. Through one-on-one or group activities, our staff is continually updated on new and emerging products, techniques or manufacturers that can strengthen our ESD approach.



New technologies and designs

PLH will put effort into the specification, use and development of new products and techniques that reduce impact on the environment. As stated earlier it is a question of using local resources and adapt the construction methods and technologies to the local climate conditions, inspired by local traditions. PLH integrates this in developing projects with the central aim - to improve the environment, generating energy and add value to the human everyday life (!).

As a result of one of PLH's industrial design group's "green" initiatives, PLH established the company EdgeFlow ApS on July 1st. 2009. The company is a venture between PLH and the venture capital company SEED Capital. The long term goal of EdgeFlow is to commercialize a new, environmentally and economically feasible wind turbine.

There is a need to produce far greater wind energy in response to both climatic considerations and the future security of energy supply. It is with this viewpoint that EdgeFlow wants to explore the potential of wind energy production in urban areas. EdgeFlow's first project involves the development of a windmill for application to primarily larger buildings in the industrial areas.

Besides this great initiative on urban wind energy, PLH's industrial design team is designing and developing new series of light fittings for energy saving lighting. These innovative light fixtures are being produced in collaboration with and for major international light manufacturing companies.

The products are being planned according to demands for long life cycling, simple separation of materials for end life cycling and materials selected for reuse.

PLH Global Compact Ambition 2010/2011

PLH is proud to be a member of Global Compact. In the year ahead, the practice will continue to seek opportunities to support and enact the principles. In particular, we aim to report more extensive and measurable outcomes in the area of environment.

Arkitekter