

COP 2017

GLOBAL COMPACT

BIG - BJARKE INGELS GROUP

BIG



OUR COMMITMENT

At BIG, architecture is the art and science of continually refurbishing the surface of our planet so it better fits the way we want to live.

We are pleased to reaffirm our unwavering support of the Ten Principles of the United Nations Global Compact in the areas of Human Rights, Labour, Environment, and Anti-Corruption. In this our seventh annual Communication on Progress, we describe our continued actions to integrate the Global Compact and its principles into our business strategy, culture, and daily operations. We hold ourselves to the high standards set by the Global Compact and remain committed to sharing this information with our stakeholders.

In 2017, we, the Partners of BIG, sign this document to assure the United Nations that we are committed to the continuous respect for the human race and to the integrity of its environment.

Bjarke Ingels
Founding Partner

Sheela Maini Sogaard
CEO, Partner

Thomas Christoffersen
Partner

Jakob Lange
Partner

David Zahle
Partner

Andreas Klok Pedersen
Partner

Finn Nørkjær
Partner

Kai-Uwe Bergmann
Partner

Daniel Sundlin
Partner

Beat Schenk
Partner

Brian Yang
Partner

Jakob Sand
Partner



INTRODUCTION

Historically, the field of architecture has been dominated by two opposing extremes: on one side, the avant-garde of wild ideas, often so detached from reality that they fail to become something other than eccentric curiosities; on the other side, well-organized corporate consultants that build predictable and boring boxes of high standard. Architecture seems entrenched between two equally unfertile fronts: either naively utopian or petrifyingly pragmatic.

Rather than choosing one over the other, BIG operates in the fertile overlap between the two opposites. A pragmatic utopian architecture that takes on the creation of socially, economically and environmentally perfect places as a practical objective. Buildings are never stand-alone entities. Instead, they are part of a larger network, a campus tied together by rich public spaces and the complex urban context. The majority of BIG's projects have a large public space component, which has meant that they play a transformative role in the cities where they are located. In the big picture, architecture is the art and science of ensuring that our cities and buildings fit with the way we want to live our lives.

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OUR HUMAN RIGHTS POLICY

BIG firmly believes that human rights are indisputable universal truths. We are unwavering in our determination to, as far as we are able, provide all humans the rights and freedoms they wish to enjoy. BIG will never knowingly be complicit in human rights abuses, and instead always seek to uphold the rights and freedoms of all, contributing where we are able.

Our ongoing goal has not changed from previous years – we continue to ensure that human rights are developed and supported in the designs of our projects and the way we run our business. As part of our global-diversity, BIG employs aspiring students from countries around the world to enable people from various cultures, backgrounds and experiences to work together, learn from each other, and respect the universal rights we strive to uphold. As we select our clients, our projects, and the regions in which we do work, we carefully consider the positions prospective clients take relative to human rights.



OUR LABOR RIGHTS POLICY

The Global Compact's principles relating to labor rights are interpreted literally and so followed. BIG opposes any form of forced and compulsory labor, condemns child labor practices, effectively recognizes the right to collective bargaining, and does not practice discrimination. BIG upholds labor rights principals and respects the rights of employees in the many countries where we work.

BIG's greatest asset is its employees. At BIG, we take employee well-being, development, and engagement as seriously as we do architectural design. The larger we grow as a company, the more we strive to create a workplace that encourages input, dialog, interaction, and collaboration across the network of relations of BIG's flat hierarchy. We believe it is a prerequisite for both our creative processes as well as our project delivery methodology that everybody knows that they can speak their mind and that their opinion counts. All BIG employees, regardless of position held or field of expertise, are given a voice – a voice that will be heard and valued. Employees are more aware of their importance to the company by being encouraged to communicate with the management regarding all areas of the growing company.

As a company headquartered in Copenhagen, BIG follows Danish labor laws, which are known for their labor-friendly employment terms on salary, working hours, overtime pay, holidays, pension, notice periods, and maternity/paternity leave (e.g. every full-time employee is entitled to 30 days' annual leave on the basis of 2.5 days for each month worked the previous year). A pregnant employee is entitled to absence from work from 4 weeks before the expected birth, and each childbirth gives the parents a legal right to 52 weeks maternity pay from the government.

The unions which exist in the Danish architecture industry are extremely strong, and, should employees choose to join any of these, this choice is respected. However, it is not actually necessary for employees to become members of any such unions to benefit from collective bargaining.



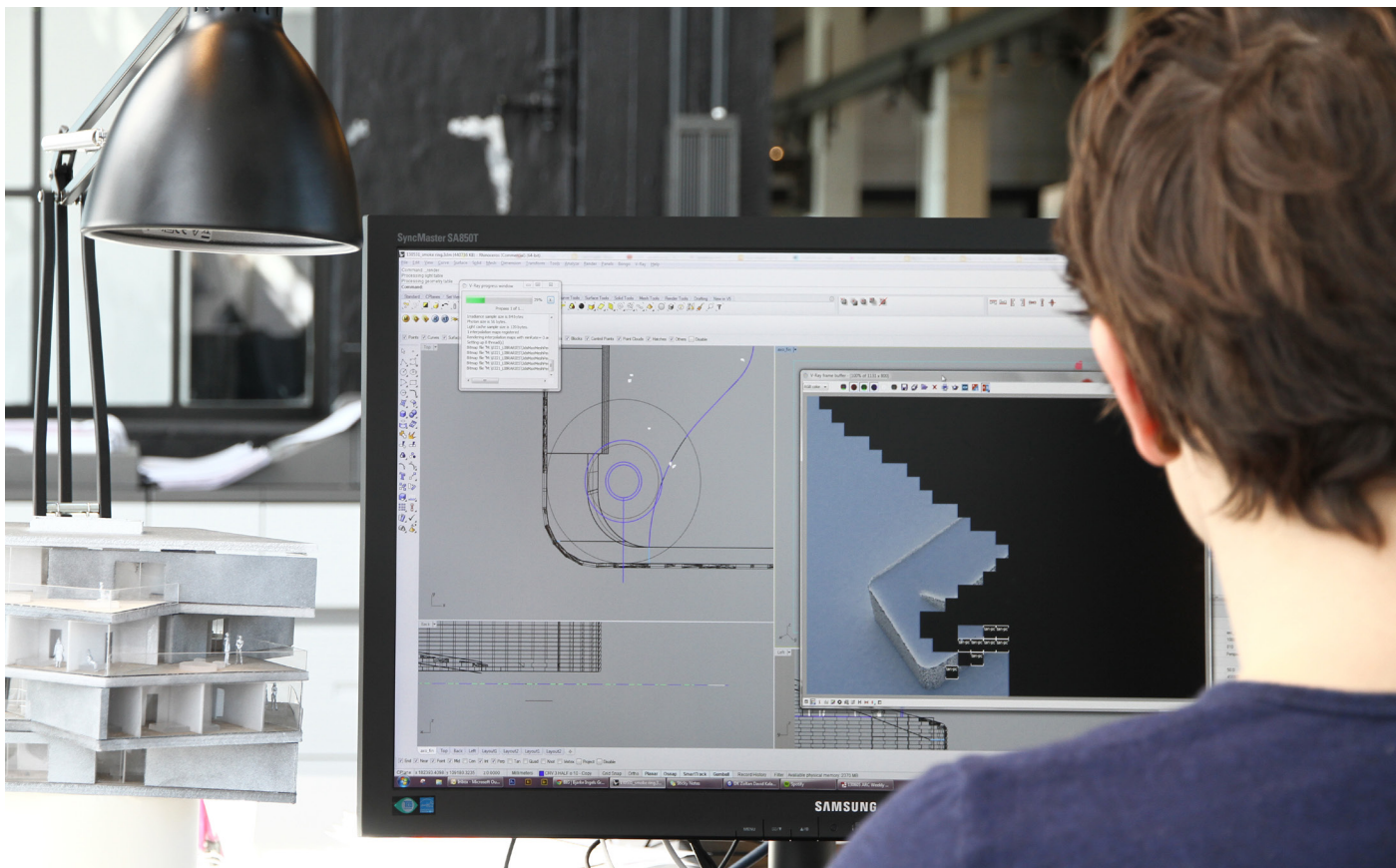
OUR LABOR RIGHTS POLICY (CONTINUED)

BIG is a member of Danske Arkitekt Virksomheder, the Union of Danish Architect Companies and is therefore bound to implement the benefits negotiated by the architects' unions for architects. There are union representatives for the two biggest employee groups (architects and construction architects) at the office in Copenhagen, and meetings between these and management representatives happen on a regular basis and at least four times a year. BIG also has employee representatives in the well-established Health and Safety Committee and in a Training Committee that reviews the need for continued education for our employees. In addition, there are numerous groups and formalized networks at the office that meet during working hours – with or without management participation.

Our ongoing goal is to ensure the health, well-being, and development of our employees, and we also continue to encourage feedback from and to all employees and aim to better integrate employees into the countries in which they are working as we branch out from our home base in Copenhagen into the rest of the world.

There are several feedback mechanisms installed to ensure we capture feedback from employees on their engagement and well-being – ranging from quantitative surveys, onboarding evaluation conversations with each individual two and a half months after startup, and exit interviews. They allow us to constantly evaluate if there are any employee engagement issues we need to address. Also, in 2017 we have an additional, voluntary opportunity for employees to have focused input on how to strengthen skills.

An important part of the workforce at BIG are students (interns), as it is common practice to spend six to eighteen months during the training to become an architect or construction architect. We ensure a fair pay for all, and they are considered an integrated part of the workplace during their stay. This group has a formalized forum where it can meet during working hours. We have also established an intern evaluation system, which allows interns to discover their strengths and weaknesses following the completion of projects as part of their architectural education.



OUR LABOR RIGHTS POLICY (CONTINUED)

NO FORCED LABOR

There is neither forced nor compulsory labor at BIG, and we do not condone or tolerate this within our own office or in the offices of our collaborators. Should any managing partner be informed that employees are forced to work, the situation will be swiftly resolved. We do not accept policies of companies, clients, colleagues, or collaborators that employ forced labor. In countries where this could be an issue, and where we are able to influence the construction process, forced labor of any kind will not be tolerated whether the collaborators are from the private or public sector.

ABOLITION OF CHILD LABOR

BIG is not involved in any projects that make use of child labor, nor will we ever be. The epitome of BIG's philosophy of hedonistic sustainability is the opposite of children forced into a situation of labor. Hedonistic sustainability is about creating tolerable situations in which all peoples may live happily; BIG will never tolerate child labor and will always support all efforts to abolish this practice.

WORKPLACE SAFETY

As an architecture studio, BIG maintains workshops fully equipped with the most advanced laser cutters, wood cutters, and tools and materials necessary to produce architectural models, in addition to the facilities of an average office. Thus, we have strict guidelines for use of the model workshops and take extreme precautions to ensure the safety of anyone handling said tools and machinery. All employees are given a workshop orientation with the workshop manager, covering basic safety guidelines and proper workshop protocol to ensure the workshop is a safe place to work for all. Proper ventilation is provided for the spray painting and foam cutting areas. The office first aid supplies are kept on an easily accessible and clearly visible shelf, and are regularly checked and restocked.



OUR LABOR RIGHTS POLICY (CONTINUED)

EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT

As mentioned above, BIG has a well-established Health and Safety Committee that oversees the safety and health of all employees. BIG also conducts work place assessments regularly and in 2017 the focus on the psycho-social and engagement-related matters has been expanded.

In addition, BIG has instituted a number of activities to support the health of our employees, such as a healthy company-subsidized lunch, discount deals for employees at gyms and fitness-centers, and company subsidized participation in sporting events.



On Tuesday, September 19 BIG participated in the Global Goals World Cup, a sports and advocacy game geared towards forwarding the UN Sustainable Development Goals by 2030. With past games having been conducted in Copenhagen & Nairobi, representatives of BIG NYC were excited to take part in the finals in New York. The game was opened by her Royal Highness the Crown princess Mary of Denmark and was refereed by UNDP Goodwill ambassador Nikolaj Coster-Waldau & Nobel Peace Prize nominee Victor Ochen.



Finally, in 2017, BIG installed profit sharing as a means to ensure that when the company is doing well, all employees – from kitchen and reception to executive's office – are recognized for their contribution and receive their share. There is no discriminatory risk in the program as employees in the same job family receive the same percentage of their salary.



OUR LABOR RIGHTS POLICY (CONTINUED)

ELIMINATION OF DISCRIMINATION

BIGsters come from 30 home countries to help forge a truly international office that applies lessons from our work around the world to each project.

BIG upholds this principle by choosing to not practice discrimination of any kind. All employees are chosen on their talents and skills alone, as well as the requirements for the project. We follow the employment and labor laws of the countries in which our employees are working. BIG has a zero-tolerance policy with regard to discrimination in or outside of the workplace. BIG is committed to providing a work environment that is free of discrimination. In furtherance of this commitment, BIG strictly prohibits all forms of unlawful discrimination, including on the basis of race, religion, color, sex, sexual orientation, national origin, ancestry, age, disability or any other category protected by applicable state or federal law.

Beyond discrimination, we do not take bullying and harassment of colleagues lightly. The BIG personnel handbook states that bullying and harassment are not tolerated in or outside of the workplace.

As BIG employs nearly 30 nationalities, we have a particular focus on ensuring that all feel treated with respect and are included at the work place. This comes naturally due to the diversity of the workforce. English is installed at the official language at work, ensuring all work on equal terms. The above-mentioned employee representatives come from all parts of the world (India, Hawaii, Denmark, Sweden, etc.). We have national diversity in all managerial levels and report on this internally on an annual basis.

We treat gender equality with the same focus. As a company led by a female CEO and where three out of five members of the Group Management (C-suite) are female, BIG strives to have a gender distribution at all managerial levels that mirror the organization. By mid-2017, 44% of the total workforce in BIG Copenhagen were women: 31% of architects/designers; 43% of Associates, and 37% of all in a managerial position are women. While this is a satisfactory reflection, we continue to strive for a better balance and in particular to see more women in the Partner group.





AMAGER RESOURCE CENTER IN COPENHAGEN DENMARK

ENVIRONMENTAL GOALS FOR OUR PROJECTS

We see our projects as opportunities to increase the quality of life, and we approach the question of sustainability not as a moral dilemma but as a design challenge.

We have always incorporated sustainable initiatives into our projects by thinking outside the box. The general perception of sustainability is an idea of a moral code: How much of our existing quality of life are we prepared to sacrifice to afford being sustainable? It is the perception that it has to hurt to be good and that a sustainable life means doing less than a normal life. But we are looking at how sustainable cities, or sustainable buildings, can increase the quality of life; we look for ways of designing cities and buildings as double ecosystems that are both ecologically and economically profitable, and where the outcome doesn't force people to alter their lifestyles to have a better conscience. People can live exactly the way they want, or even better, because the world and the city are designed in such a way. We continue to strive for what we call "hedonistic sustainability," which is sustainability that improves quality of life for everyone while minimizing the impact on the surrounding environment.

BIG's approach to sustainability is rooted in the Danish tradition of energy conservation which goes back decades as the country had to provide for many with only limited resources. We currently are building projects seeking certification in LEED, Green Mark, Minergie, German Sustainable Building Council (DGNB), and Passive House Standards. Current projects that are seeking LEED certification include the Telus Sky Tower in Calgary (Platinum), the Vancouver House tower in Vancouver (Platinum), and an office building in Philadelphia (Gold). Our designs have received sustainability awards including the Scandinavian Green Roof Award for our 8 House residential development in Copenhagen. At the urban-scale, we are working on a post-Hurricane Sandy resiliency strategy for Lower Manhattan, a 10-mile protective ribbon that will provide social infrastructure for residents of adjacent neighborhoods.

In 2017 the celebrated BIG-designed Amager Bakke Waste to Energy Plant in Copenhagen began operating for the first time. The plant is the first of its kind -- economically, environmentally, and socially profitable. When completed in 2018, the recycling plant will include a "green" rooftop ski slope and climbing wall, emitting rings of steam to symbolize the conversion of waste to clean energy.



OUR OFFICE ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY

On the smallest of scales and on a daily basis, BIG follows the “reduce, reuse and recycle” principles in the office. When making architecture models, we save material by optimizing the space on a block of foam or wood and reuse leftover material whenever possible. Leftover material that cannot be reused is systematically recycled according to type—wood, paper, foam, plexi and other plastics.

Due to the global nature of the company, having projects in every part of the world, we are conscious of the environmental impact of travels. We have set up web-conference facilities in all offices and laptops, allowing for on-line meetings to replace flights when possible. As of 2017, Hotels are booked via a social-impact hotel platform, Goodwings, that ensures that approx. 5% of the hotel spend is allocated to NGOs whose work supports one or more of UN's 17 Sustainable Development Goals.



TIRPITZ MUSEUM IN BLAVAND, DENMARK

***Our goal is
unwavering:
BIG neither
subscribes to
nor encourages
any form of
corruption.***

ANTI-CORRUPTION

BIG values transparency and does not tolerate any form of corruption. We are determined to maintain the highest standards of integrity and work ethics among our staff and across all areas of activity. We therefore maintain a zero-tolerance policy towards corruption in all its forms.

Externally, when submitting to Requests for Qualifications (RFQs) or Requests for Proposals (RFPs), we always inform the client if there is any potential conflict of interest and make sure that the collaborators on our team do so as well. When choosing projects to pursue, BIG also makes sure that our collaborators and clients are not involved in any activities that suggest corruption. We will not give or accept bribery in any form, and we will not use deception, trickery or breach of confidence to gain an unfair or dishonest advantage.

BIG will not participate in corruption; BIG will not contribute to corruption; BIG will not support corruption.

BIG

BIG CPH
KLØVERBLADSGADE 56
2500 VALBY
DANMARK
T: +45 7221 7227
F: +45 3512 7227

BIG NYC
61 BROADWAY
SUITE 3300
NEW YORK NY 10006
USA
T: +1 347 549 4141

BIG LON
BIGGER ROOM
16-21 STABLE STREET
LONDON N1C 4AB
UNITED KINGDOM