



PLOUGMANN VINGTOFT®

October 2019

# Sustainability Report



# Statement from our CEO

At Plougmann Vingtoft, we wish to contribute to a sustainable global development. We are aware that the impact of initiatives taken in-house in an office like ours is limited.

However, we are convinced that our line of work makes an actual difference in the world, as we help our clients move innovative solutions forward.

We are part of the process of turning good, sustainable initiatives into profitable, long-lasting businesses. Thus, our social responsibility is embedded in our brand and in our daily work with three types of clients.

## We are part of the process of turning good, sustainable initiatives into profitable, long-lasting businesses.

First of all, we work with industry leaders within the fields of renewable energy, new technologies, pharma and healthcare that all work with products and solutions that have an impact on the planet we inhabit. Second, we assist SMEs and universities in pursuing potentially groundbreaking ideas. Third, we are committed to helping start-ups to be successful with their sustainable

ideas. In connection to the latter, we have introduced an initiative called IP Matters, which is an annual donation of expert consulting for a start-up with an idea that has the potential of affecting one or several of the global goals. More about this on page 3.

In this year's Communication on Progress, we aim to show that IP does in fact matter when firms are turning their bright ideas in to viable solutions that affect society as well as the environment. We will describe our actions to improve the integration of the Global Compact and its principles into our business strategy, culture, and daily operations.

I hereby reaffirm Plougmann Vingtoft's support for the United Nations Global Compact in the areas of Human Rights, Labour, Environment, and Anti-Corruption.

Further, and on behalf of the firm, I commit to promoting the initiative and sharing this information with different stakeholders.

Enjoy the read!



**Finn Strøm Madsen**  
CEO

# Pro bono initiatives

## IP Matters

We make our living by assisting firms with their business development and guiding them in all aspects of IPR (intellectual property rights). We help clients make sure that their rights to an idea are protected and they can enter the market without hesitation.

We are part of the team when entrepreneurs develop ideas into completed solutions. Quite often, we witness that this can change and improve the world.

Baring this in mind, we have come to a conclusion that the best way for us to contribute to a sustainable global development is to continue to do more of what we do best – build the future of bright ideas.

Therefore, we have introduced IP Matters – Plougmann Vingtoft's annual donation of expert IP consulting worth of 50.000 DKK.

IP Matters is a pro bono initiative in which we pick a Danish start-up that we consider able to influence one or several of the 17 Global Goals. The chosen start-up will have access to a team of handpicked IP-experts with specialized academic knowledge within the relevant business area. This way, we can help them move forward and closer to the market with their idea.

By 2030, we hope to have enabled 12 start-up firms to make a difference for our planet.

## Winner of IP Matters 2019: CELLUGY

In September 2019, CELLUGY won the first IP Matters donation. CELLUGY has made a breakthrough in solving the problem of extensive use of plastic in food packaging. Their product 'EcoFLEXY' is a type of biomaterial packaging made from fruit and vegetable waste. EcoFLEXY is home compostable and 100% bio-based. CELLUGY's vision is aspiring and widely recognized – they aim to replace plastic packaging used in all kinds of food products with a bio-based alternative.



*Isabel Álvarez-Martos (Co-founder) & Serena Leka  
(Key Account Manager)*

CELLUGY's product has an impact on several of the global goals, including responsible consumption and production, life on land, life below water and climate action. We look forward to working with CELLUGY and we encourage readers of this report to go visit the CELLUGY [website](#) and be inspired.



# Involvement

We are involved in several events that back the innovative environment and the sustainable development locally as well as globally.



## Danish IP Fair

Danish IP Fair assembles all Danish Research Institutions and their new technologies. The fair is a place for companies, investors, and entrepreneurs to meet and network about business opportunities. We support this annual event and use it as a platform for exchanging knowledge with students, researchers, and entrepreneurs.



## TechBBQ

With over 6,500 participants, TechBBQ is the biggest start-up and innovation summit in Scandinavia. We want to direct our attention to start-ups who can benefit massively from protecting their ideas. Therefore, we collaborate with TechBBQ.



## Danish Food Cluster

Our life science experts within food and agriculture have dedicated themselves to participating in groups, which are working to improve practices within food technologies. One of them is the Danish Food Cluster in which the work is aimed at bringing Danish Research Solutions in to the Global Sustainable Food Production ([link](#)).



## Medicon Valley Alliance

Medicon Valley Alliance (MVA) is a non-profit membership organisation in the Danish-Swedish life science cluster Medicon Valley. The activities in MVA focus on strengthening conditions for a vibrant life science ecosystem in Medicon Valley through networking events, increased collaboration, analysis, and communication activities. Plougmann Vingtoft employees participate and sometimes also host events.



## Dansk Biotek

Dansk Biotek continuously takes steps to increase the public knowledge about modern biotechnology. The organization publishes books and articles, participates in the public debate, and teaches in biotech research conditions, genetic modification, and ethical matters.



## High Tech Summit

High Tech Summit is part conference and part exhibition powered by DTU (Technical University of Denmark). Their vision is to create the largest research-based meeting place in Denmark within the field of digitization. We are present as speakers and exhibitors.

## Knowledge sharing & education

Several of our IP attorneys work as lecturers or examiners at educational institutions such as the University of Copenhagen, the University of Aarhus, the University of Aalborg, and the University of Southern Denmark.

Others provide lectures and presentations at institutions such as Copenhagen School of Design and Technology (KEA) and the innovation programme at Copenhagen Business Hub (Iværksætterhuset). Most recently and in line with our increased focus on helping start-ups, two of our employees taught workshops about the business of IPR at Copenhagen Business Hub.

Aside from sharing knowledge with educational institutions, Plougmann Vingtoft takes on the responsibility of educating young professionals in the IP industry. We have an extensive trainee program that provides new employees with all necessary knowledge to pass the exams that are required to achieve a career within IPR. Currently, we have five IP attorney trainees and one IP administration trainee receiving training at our firm.

# Employee satisfaction

As should be expected, we commit to high ethical and professional standards, and we take good care of our employees and their bright minds.

Put simply and yet sincerely: we want to be the preferred employer and the best place to work. This includes our efforts in three different aspects that all end with improved employee satisfaction: physical environment, psychosocial environment, and the experience of personal development.

## Physical environment

We dedicate resources to monitor, remedy, and eliminate environmental and safety risks through our work environment committee. The members are elected by and among the employees for a three-year period during which they receive mandatory work environment courses. Part of the committee's work is to carry out regular workplace assessments and make sure to follow up on expressed needs from employees.



Further, employee insurance is a priority and a mandatory part of the Plougmann Vingtoft employment contract. All contracts entail a personal accident insurance as well as an extra health insurance, which provides all employees with quick and competent treatment in case of physical or mental illness.

Additionally, we offer employees a vaccination against the flu. This initiative is free of charge and of course optional.

## Psychosocial environment

Our employees are with us because each and every one creates value to our company regardless of their function or title.

Consequently, we value the opinion of all employees and encourage everybody to speak up with ideas that can improve the work processes as well as any matters of concern.

To make this easier, we have established a worklife committee, which consists of employees from different departments, who work to improve the job satisfaction in direct dialogue with the top management.

Besides, we apply a situational management principle in order to keep a close dialogue whenever needed, for example we have an ongoing dialogue concerning workload, which is part of our efforts to enhance job satisfaction and prevent stress.

Additionally, we stage planned sessions between the employee and his/her manager. These sessions deal with employee performance, development, need for training as well as a discussion of what the individual can do to take responsibility for his/her contribution to the team and the company. Some of these topics lead to the final branch of employee satisfaction.

## Personal development

At Plougmann Vingtoft, we have a strong focus on further developing our employees. In addition to the European Qualifying Examination (EQE), all IP attorneys receive internal training tailored to their individual function and level. In this way, they are introduced to processes, which secure a consistent high level of quality in each assignment.

Several of our attorneys have completed the European Qualifying Examination (EQE) and many of our IP co-ordinators are Qualified Intellectual Property Administrators (QIPA's). We encourage our employees to look for further education and to keep themselves updated on the most current trends in the IPR world.

In other words, it is a priority to keep investing in our employees and make sure that they experience a personal career development and feel ready to meet the demands of constantly changing industries.

# Plougmann Vingtoft in facts & figures

## Diversity is one of our strengths

As an internationally oriented company, we believe a diverse team of employees helps nourish a creative and innovative dialogue with colleagues as well as with clients. Consequently, we set our team of experts regardless of age/seniority, ethnicity, nationality, and gender.

As an example, we have ten different languages represented as we employ patent attorneys that hold many different nationalities such as European, Japanese, and American. Therefore, our staff consists of people with different cultural backgrounds, and this enables us to understand and communicate even better with our stakeholders and communities all over the world.

## Relevant job experience for students

We invite students to work at our firm, and we have experienced that this is a great way of preparing young people for their work life after graduation. Our student positions are limited to part-time employment, which ensures that student workers also have time for their academic studies.

## Numbers

- We have 66 full time employees (58 FTE)
- 9 student workers are employed part-time
- In total, 43 % of all employees are male and 57 % female
- In management roles, 56 % are men and 44 % are female
- The average age at Plougmann Vingtoft is 46
- 44% of our employees have been at the company for more than 10 years



# The impact of IPR

In a knowledge-based society, new ideas and inventions are the backbone when creating and maintaining a successful business, and therefore it is often essential for companies to ensure their intellectual property rights.

Plougmann Vingtoft is able to contribute with great value when guiding companies in the global IPR system, helping them to make the right decisions in order to protect their business the best way possible.

As mentioned earlier, we believe this is crucial in order for good, creative and sustainable ideas to win territory and market shares globally.

Below is a short look into how our line of work makes an actual difference in the world.

The **Life Science** industry is one of our top strategic priorities since we acknowledge the fact that food is rapidly becoming a scarce resource globally, and mankind needs to find new ways of preventing widespread famine. We strive to assist the R&D within foods for which Denmark is renowned throughout the world by introducing the world of IPR to the industry and helping companies gain from their innovations.

Further, we work with world leaders of the health-care industry, as well as first-movers within industrial biotech and medical technology. Each of them have innovative and sustainable solutions for life on land, life below water, and good health and well-being on the agenda.

The industry of **clean technology** is also worth mentioning. Clean technology relates to products and services that improve operational performance, productivity or efficiency while reducing costs, inputs, energy consumption, waste or pollution.

We assist global corporations in protecting their breakthroughs in renewable energy transition. Further, we have experts who consult on matters concerning energy efficiency and water conservation.

Creators of clean technology need patent protection for their inventions and investments, as it secures their business and stimulates further innovation on climate action - for the common benefit of our society.

## Communication on Sustainable Inventions

Working with frontier technologies and solutions demands attention to secrecy. However, we are eager to promote the stories behind the different inventions as soon as this is appropriate.

Previously, we have published stories about using ozone for efficient water purification, a microchip that can revolutionize the biogas industry, and the story behind the birth control pill.

Most recently, we published a story about the patenting of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in collaboration with our client, Cercare Medical. See below.

## Case story: Cercare Medical

It is said that a person who is afflicted with cerebral thrombosis ages four years each hour that passes before treatment is initiated. Therefore, **Cercare Medical** has invested considerable resources in developing a program that, based on artificial intelligence, can help doctors with quick analyses of brain scan images, and provide an indication of the most likely development in the affected brain.

Cercare Medical's breakthrough is likely to affect many people around the world, which makes it all the more relevant to talk about IPR.

With help from Plougmann Vingtoft, Cercare Medical has succeeded in patenting the program under the name Cercare Medical Neurosuite. The patent was a crucial premise in the development of the program.



# Matching the UNGC principles

## Human Rights

**PRINCIPLE 1:** Businesses should support and respect the protection of internationally proclaimed human rights; and

**PRINCIPLE 2:** make sure that they are not complicit in human rights abuses.

In Denmark, the labour market is governed by many laws ensuring human rights to a very high degree, and we experience very few violations of the laws.

We are devoted to monitoring our foreign business partners with a view to assessing their compliance with human rights.

## Labour

**PRINCIPLE 3:** Businesses should uphold the freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining;

We offer employments regardless of age/seniority, ethnicity, nationality, and gender.

**PRINCIPLE 4:** the elimination of all forms of forced and compulsory labour;

We provide employee representatives with appropriate facilities to assist in the development of effective collective agreement. This is obvious in our work life- & work environment committees.

**PRINCIPLE 5:** the effective abolition of child labour; and

We offer regular dialogue sessions to monitor job satisfaction as well as the employee's individual workload and stress level.

**PRINCIPLE 6:** the elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation.

## Environment

**PRINCIPLE 7:** Businesses should support a precautionary approach to environmental challenges;

We offer pro bono work that supports solutions to environmental challenges (see page 3).

**PRINCIPLE 8:** undertake initiatives to promote greater environmental responsibility; and

We focus strategically on industries such as cleantech and life-science (see page 7).

**PRINCIPLE 9:** encourage the development and diffusion of environmentally friendly technologies.

## Anti-Corruption

**PRINCIPLE 10:** Businesses should work against corruption in all its forms, including extortion and bribery.

In a [global study](#) performed by the World Justice Project in 2018, Denmark was ranked as the least corrupt country in the world for the fourth year in a row (no data for 2019 has yet been published).

Further, Transparency International ranks Denmark as the least corrupt country in [their latest report](#).

# Concluding remarks

As an office-based consultancy company, the nature of our operations makes our direct environmental impact relatively small as compared to e.g. production plants.

However, we are constantly on the outlook for ways to act environmentally sound. In 2019 we have continued our focus on developing digital tools that can ease our procedures and decrease our consumption of resources.

We are proud to continue our full support for the UNGC initiative.





**WWW.PV.EU**

COPENHAGEN // AARHUS // MADRID // MUNICH // OSLO