

# AART

# Communication on Progress

UN Global Compact 2021

COMMUNICATION  
ON PROGRESS







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This is our **Communication on Progress** in implementing the Ten Principles of the **United Nations Global Compact** and supporting broader UN goals.

We welcome feedback on its contents.

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**For us, architecture is about impact. A deep commitment to make a positive difference for organisations and communities, which has driven our work in architecture for more than 20 years.**

Torben Skovbjerg Larsen  
Partner and CEO of AART architects



CEO Torben Skovbjerg Larsen talks about our redefining work with architecture.



# Purpose

Cities and buildings are powerful catalysts. This is where the key to changing and improving the most fundamental environment of our lives lies – how we live, play, learn and work. Therefore, our purpose reaches far beyond the aestheticization of architecture. It is first and foremost about fulfilling the visions that we meet every day in our dialogue with clients and in the debate that characterizes societies on a local and global scale.

Our desire to create is, therefore, never without the will to follow up. As the first architecture firm in Scandinavia, we have thus established an impact team, where we re-visit our completed buildings and document how they contribute to developing organisations and communities – socially, economically and environmentally. Because this enables us to not only convey the impact of our architectural advice, but also to create buildings on an impact-based foundation of evidence and experience.



Our profile

# Roots and reach

We are an architecture firm with Scandinavian roots and international reach. Based in Aarhus, Copenhagen, Oslo and Stockholm, we thus help clients all over Scandinavia – and beyond – develop organisations and communities with architecture as a catalyst.



AART Office / We are the first architecture firm in Scandinavia to establish a dedicated documentation team





In 2016, Musholm in Korsør was named the world's most socially inclusive building at the IAUD Awards in Japan.

## **We are ambitious by nature**

We are ambitious by nature – not only in relation to materials and constructions, but also in exploring and challenging our client's visions. Over the years, it has led to a long list of award-winning projects – recently manifested in the new children and youth hospice in Rønne, which was awarded the best Danish healthcare building in 2021.

## **We are a cross-disciplinary team of 150 architects, constructing architects, urban planners, designers and anthropologists.**

## **We work across scale and sector**

As a full-service architectural firm, we provide consulting across scale and sector. We do this based on a holistic focus, where we include the right skills at the right times in the process. At the same time, we make a virtue of engaging in dialogue with our customers and listening to their visions, so that together we can challenge the framework for the given project – with the aim to create the greatest possible impact on both the social, economic and environmental bottom line.



# Commitment to support

In our desire to convey the catalysing powers of architecture, we have joined the UN Global Compact, which is the largest voluntary corporate social responsibility initiative in the world.

As a member, we are proud to commit our strategies and operations with the UN principles in the areas of human rights, labour rights, environment and anti-corruption. By doing this and promoting the principles within our sphere of influence, we take part in improving the quality of life and the health of the environment.

In our 2021 Communication on Progress report, we express our continuing commitment to supporting advances in the building industry in ways that benefit everyday life, the economy and the environment. The purpose of this report is thus to give our stakeholders and the wider community an insight into how we promote and have implemented corporate social responsibility in our core business.



Torben Skovbjerg Larsen  
Founding partner and CEO







AART Office / Copenhagen, Denmark

## Social commitment

We joined the UN Global Compact in 2008 to be part of the partnership between the UN with the objective of promoting transparency and social commitment in the global business community. This is our eighth Communication on Progress report in which we commit ourselves to all four areas of the Global Compact: Human Rights, Labour Rights, Environment and Anti-Corruption.



AART Office / Oslo, Norway

## Communicating our commitment

Our 2021 Communication on Progress report is uploaded to the website of the UN Global Compact. It will also be available on our own website, just like it will be a natural part of how we present our company. We attach great importance to communicate our sustainable ambitions to all our stakeholders – employees, clients, business partners and the wider building industry.

AART Office / Aarhus, Denmark



# People, planet and profit

We support all four areas of the UN Global Compact: Human Rights, Labour Rights, Environment and Anti-Corruption. However, we have interpreted these four areas and combined them into the triple bottom line: People, Planet and Profit.

The first (People) includes Human Rights and Labour Rights and focuses on our socially responsible approach to developing buildings and public spaces. The second (Planet) includes Environment and focuses on our environmentally approach, while the third (Profit) includes Anti-Corruption and focuses on our aim to lead the development of a more transparent and economically sustainable building industry.

## People

### 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.

### 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.

## Planet

### 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.

## Profit

### Principle 10

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



## People

We believe that buildings and public spaces should empower people to live healthier, smarter and more connected lives. Therefore, we support the UN universal principles concerning human and labour rights.

The House in the Square, Aarhus, DK / It is vital to create a healthy house – both for the environment and its people. Therefore, the building is constructed in wood from the inside to the outside, while the trees and plants are integrated into the house to enhance well-being and reduce sick leave.



Frogner Townhouse, Oslo, NO / After an extensive upgrade and conversion, the building has re-emerged as a significant public building – Frogner Townhouse

## Planet

We believe that buildings and public spaces should have a positive impact on the environment. The environment is the field where we as architects can make the greatest difference, since the energy consumption of buildings is responsible for 40 percent of global energy consumption. Therefore, we support the UN universal principles concerning the environment.

## Profit

We take pride in sharing our knowledge on the social and economic potential of architecture, as we believe that the exchange of knowledge makes us stronger as a company, industry and society. We therefore frequently speak at conferences and regularly publish articles on the impact of architecture. Among many other networks, we are members of the world's biggest for socially responsible companies, the UN Global Compact, which commits us to publish an annual report (Communication on Progress) on our impactful work with architecture.

South Harbour District, Aarhus, DK / The district's current and future actors are involved from the start of the urban development process before a master development plan or a single building has been drawn up.





Impact

# Architecture for impact

For us, architecture is not about form. It's about impact. A deep commitment to make a positive difference for organisations and societies, which has driven our work in architecture for 20 years.







Documentation manager Johanne Mose Entwistle revisits Birkublen Kollegiet in Copenhagen.

## Dedicated documentation

We are the first architecture firm in Scandinavia to establish a dedicated documentation team, where we collect the latest knowledge about how architecture makes a difference in practice. We do so by revisiting our completed projects and studying their social and economic impact. Impactful studies that give us a robust foundation of knowledge to develop organisations and communities with architecture serving as a catalyst.

**We collaborate with universities and research institutes so that we can offer the latest knowledge and research.**

## The value of sharing knowledge

We take pride in sharing our knowledge on the social and economic potential of architecture, as we believe that the exchange of knowledge makes us stronger as a company, industry and society. We therefore frequently speak at conferences and regularly publish articles on the impact of architecture. Among many other networks, we are members of the world's biggest for socially responsible companies, the UN Global Compact, which commits us to publish an annual report (Communication on Progress) on our impactful work with architecture.

With The Culture Yard, we have created Elsinore's most visited cultural destination with 750,000 visitors a year.



Impact

**As the first  
architecture firm  
in Scandinavia, we  
have established  
an impact team  
dedicated to  
documenting the  
impact of our  
completed buildings.**



## Meet our impact team

Our impact team works across disciplines to gain research-based insights into the impact of our work – and architecture in general. They share these insights with our project teams across Scandinavia, so we continue to deliver on our promise to create the greatest possible impact through our architecture – both socially, economically, and environmentally.



**Johanne Mose Entwistle**  
Head of Impact / Anthropologist



**Stephanie Carr**  
Sustainability Manager  
DGNB Auditor / BREEAM-NOR AP /  
Master of Engineering



**Mia Kruse Rasmussen**  
PhD Researcher / Anthropologist



**Stina Rask Jensen**  
PhD Researcher / Architect



**Eszter Sántha**  
PhD Researcher / Cand.silv.



**Kristian Knorr Jensen**  
WELL AP / Architect



**Nicolaj Thunbo**  
Architect

Impact

# Impact cases

We make a virtue of revisiting our completed building and documenting their impact - socially, economically and environmentally. On this page, we have gathered some of our many impact cases, and you can visit our website to learn more.



## Boosting the quality of life

Impact case / NYE



## Counteracting loneliness

Impact case / The Bikuben Student Residence



## Proving the impact of sharing

Impact case / Pakhusene



Musholm has been designed as a place that motivates everyone – regardless of their disability – to lead an active life.

## Improving the quality of life

Impact case / Musholm

Musholm has been designed as a multifunctional powerhouse, where holiday homes and a variety of shared facilities give people with disabilities the opportunity to lead an active life. In that way, Musholm becomes a place that gets people moving, no matter their disabilities, and gives them the opportunity to play, have experiences and form new social bonds.





## Shows the effect of behavior

Impact case / Home for Life



## Transforming the reputation of a city

Impact case / The Culture Yard



## Provides space for quality of life

Impact case / Children and youth hospice

## A healthy and socially stimulating place to live and work

Impact case / The House in the Square

And now, as a wooden building with the environment and the individual in mind, the new office and community centre is created to give the district a sustainability boost that will turn it into a healthier and more socially stimulating place to live, work, and to live everyday life.



## Putting Aarhus on the world map

Impact case / Pop-up trains carriages



## Helping young people back into education

Impact case / VUC Syd



## Promoting an active senior life

Impact case / Havtorn



# Certified consultancy

We offer certified sustainable consultancy in the design and development of buildings and urban spaces. Over the years, we have thus designed a wide range of sustainable projects based on our certifications in DGNB, BREEAM and WELL.



## Nicolinehus

DGNB Gold certification  
(In process)



## Pakhusene

DGNB Gold certification



## The House in the Square

DGNB Gold certification.  
(In process)



Pakhusene / A sustainable building based on community, benefiting businesses, locals and the city in general.

## Pakhusene

Pakhusene is a striking and innovative construction project in eastern Aarhus; striking by virtue of its stringent lines, tactile brick facades and 40,000 square metres, and innovative by virtue of its focus on harnessing the many possibilities of the sharing economy, making it a sustainable powerhouse focused on community. It is a powerhouse that is teeming with life from early morning to late into the evening, and it is also the first building of the new harbour district to be awarded DGNB Gold certification.





## Vrå Public School

DGNB Gold certification  
(In process)



## REGAN Vest

DGNB Gold certification  
(In process)



## INCUBA Next

DGNB Gold certification  
(In process)

## The School on Duevej

The School on Duevej is the first school in Denmark to receive not just DGNB Gold certification, but DGNB Diamond - a standard that honours architectural aesthetics and quality. The expansion of the school thus realises the vision of Frederiksberg Municipality to create a school that is an asset for its students as well as the local community.

The School on Duevej / Denmark's first DGNB-certified school



## Amedia House

BREEAM



## The Paper House

BREEAM  
(In process)



## Ski Station

BREEAM  
(In process)







Want to know more?

**Learn more about  
our impact-  
based approach  
to architecture at  
[www.aart.dk](http://www.aart.dk)**

# AART

Redefining  
architecture™