

## **The SDGs are a Design Brief for the 21st Century**

On 25 September 2015, when the 193 Member States of the United Nations approved the 2030 Agenda and the 17 Sustainable Development Goals, (SDGs) they also created the world's most demanding design brief.

/The SDGs are “universal”: this means they apply to every nation, every sector, every business, every profession, including design and architecture.

/The SDGs are about “integration”: this means they demand a new emphasis on a systemic approach that does not sacrifice environmental and social considerations to economic gain, but rather seeks for true synergies and solutions that benefit people, nature, and prosperity.

/Finally, the SDGs are about “transformation”: this means they challenge us to rethink the way we live, to rebuild all the systems that are degrading ecological and human health — and to make our world sustainable.

/In sum, the SDGs are the ultimate design and architecture challenge: how do we create, and recreate, a world that achieves all 17 of the visionary goals that have now been agreed to by all the world's nations?

And how do we achieve this by the year 2030?

The designers, architects, and creative professionals of the world have been handed a special and enormous responsibility, given to them by the 193 heads of state. They must imagine and bring to life the design elements of a new, sustainable world — quickly.

## **/The Oslo Manifesto**

Designers and architects are challenged to consider the following /17 questions, whenever they initiate a new project, design a new product, or accept a new commission:

**/01**

How can this design contribute to the goal of ending poverty in all its forms, everywhere?

**/02**

How can this design contribute to ending hunger and encouraging the transition to sustainable agriculture?

**/03**

How can this design help ensure healthy lives and well-being for all at all ages?

**/04**

How can this design support quality education and lifelong learning?

**/05**

How can this design advance gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls?

**/06**

How can this design help ensure the sustainable management of water and universal access to sanitation?

**/07**

How can this design contribute to a sustainable energy transition?

**/08**

How can this design promote decent work for all?

**/09**

How can this design advance sustainable industrialization and innovation, especially in those places that do not have access to modern industry?

**/10**

How can this design help to reduce inequality within and among countries?

**/11**

How can this design make our cities more inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable?

**/12**

How can this design transform production and consumption patterns, to make them more sustainable?

**/13**

How can this design be part of the urgent action that is needed to combat climate change and its impacts?

**/14**

How can this design be part of caring for our oceans and seas?

**/15**

How can this design help to protect and restore ecosystems and preserve biodiversity?

**/16**

How can this design contribute to the development peaceful, inclusive, and just societies?

**/17**

How can this design advance the global partnership needed to achieve all of these goals?

### **A Call to Action ... for a Sustainable Century**

Everyone in the global design and architecture community has a role to play. This new, universal design brief is going to be with us for a long, long time. The SDGs have the year 2030 as their target. But the ideas, solutions, buildings and surroundings envisioned by designers and architects will last far longer. And it will not always be possible to evaluate the success of a design — in terms of the degree to which it meets these new global criteria,

and answers these 17 questions — at its inception.

Designers and architects will need to continuously review and evaluate the impact of their designs, sometimes decades after they were first conceived.

Designers and architects who accept this new responsibility are essentially making a life-long commitment to bring a sense of care for the whole world to every design project they undertake, and to a process of life-long learning about what designs do, or do not, contribute to “Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.”

### **Making the Commitment**

By signing this document, we who work as designers and architects, employ designers and/or architects, or in any way use, have connection with or organize the professions of design and architecture, are declaring that we accept this “commission” from the global community. We adopt the 2030 Agenda as a new design brief for the creation of a sustainable world. We commit to considering all 17 of the Sustainable Development Goals in every project or review or commission we undertake. We commit to promoting the universal adoption of the SDGs by others in our profession, by our clients — and by the generation of designers and architects coming after us.

[SIGNATORIES]

