

RIBA Commitment to the UN Global Compact - Communication on Engagement 2015/16

The RIBA supports the universal principles on human rights, labour, environment and anti-corruption that form the UN Global Compact. As a professional body and learned society for architects, with a global reach, we are committed to working in partnership with our Chartered Practices to contribute to the creation of a sustainable and inclusive global economy that delivers lasting benefits to all people, communities and markets.

To promote the goals of the UN Global Compact we will:

1. Provide a forum for the debate of the universal principles enshrined in the UN Global Compact as they apply to the practice of architecture, in particular in relation to health, safety and welfare, diversity and inclusion, and environmental sustainability;
2. Encourage and support RIBA Chartered Practices in addressing the universal principles of the UN Global Compact as a strategic issue at board/management level;
3. Facilitate access to tools and guidance that can assist architects in responding to ethical issues that are beyond the scope of legal and/or code of conduct definitions;
4. Encourage Chartered Practices to use their influence to promote the principles of the UN Global Compact throughout their construction project supply chains;
5. Collaborate with other professional organisations to review professional codes of conduct; and
6. Commit to continuously improve the social and environmental impacts of the RIBA.

“As our profession changes and becomes increasingly international, so must our approach to developing and reinforcing professional ethics. Architecture has a direct impact on societies and economies; it shapes and influences the world we live in. For this reason, we architects have a duty to uphold the highest standards wherever we practice. I am delighted that RIBA is showing leadership on ethics, has signed the UN Global Compact and is increasing its support for members.”

Jane Duncan
RIBA President

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HUMAN RIGHTS

Principle 1: Businesses should support and respect the protection of internationally proclaimed human rights

Principle 2: make sure that they are not complicit in human rights abuses

- The RIBA as an Institute is committed to supporting the International Declaration on Human Rights.

Code of Conduct (see Appendix A)

- Through the RIBA Code of Conduct our members are required to respect the relevant rights and interests of others, respect the beliefs and opinions of other people, recognise social diversity and treat everyone fairly.

LABOUR

- Principle 3: Businesses should uphold the freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining;
- Principle 4: the elimination of all forms of forced and compulsory labour;
- Principle 5: the effective abolition of child labour;
- Principle 6: the elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation.

- The RIBA works within the UK legal framework which recognises freedom of association, and outlaws forced and child labour. The RIBA is committed to diversity in its recruitment procedures.

Diversity and Inclusion

- In 2015 and 2016 the RIBA undertook the following initiatives to support and increase diversity in the profession:
 - A [Role Models](#) project highlighting architects from under-represented groups
 - [Guidance](#) for architects and aspiring architects with disabilities
 - [Guidance](#) for architects and practices on undertaking mentoring
 - Introduction of a requirement for Chartered Practices to operate an Equality, Diversity and Inclusivity policy.
- In 2016, the RIBA began work on a Best Practice Role Models campaign to identify alternative models of successful practice, with particular emphasis on diverse ways of working, sustainability, community engagement and social purpose.
- The RIBA recognises that a diverse and inclusive profession brings with it greater experience and creativity.



Fair Employment and Access to the Profession

- The RIBA recognises that the future of the architectural profession is dependent on ensuring that the best talent can be drawn from the widest possible pool. RIBA Chartered Practices are required to pay the 'Living Wage' to students working within their practices.
- In 2015 the RIBA gave a detailed response to a government consultation on closing the gender pay gap, providing evidence from the annual RIBA Business Benchmarking Survey which collects data from over 3000 practices, and outlining the various programmes and initiatives the RIBA has committed to.
- In October 2015 an Early Day Motion was tabled in Parliament by Steve Rotheram MP, congratulating the RIBA for its work on increasing diversity in the profession.
- The RIBA is committed to making architecture accessible to all. Through the RIBA Student Hardship Fund the Institute supports architecture students from all backgrounds and helps them through their studies. Since its launch in 1997 the Student Hardship Fund has helped hundreds of students, with grants of over £85,000 awarded in 2014 alone.



- The RIBA supports the principle that employment should be fairly rewarded and does not allow unpaid internships within the Institute.
- Supporting the wellbeing and health of our employees is important to the RIBA and recent initiatives in this field include on-site yoga sessions and on-site mindfulness sessions. The RIBA also offers staff members access to personal counselling. The RIBA supports flexible working and a good work-life balance.
- The RIBA operates an [Employment Policy](#) which promotes equality and fairness, and members are expected to comply with this as employers and employees.

ENVIRONMENT

Principle 7: Businesses should support a precautionary approach to environmental challenges

Principle 8: undertake initiatives to promote greater environmental responsibility;

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

- The RIBA takes its environmental responsibilities very seriously and takes all reasonable steps to reduce environmental impact and carbon emissions through recycling, sustainable sourcing and supply chains. The full principles that the Institute operates are outlined in Appendix B.

Urban Challenges

- The RIBA hosted a 2015 summit conference on Designing City Resilience which explored the environmental problems faced by cities in the face of huge urban growth and climate change (see Appendix C).

The event was developed and delivered in partnership between the RIBA and the Commonwealth Association of Architects, with the support of the Rockefeller Foundation [100 Resilient Cities Programme](#), to bring world-class thinking to the current and future challenges faced by cities around the world. Twenty-six countries were represented with groups from design and construction, development and infrastructure, city leadership and governance, insurance and finance and technology and communications.



- In 2016, the RIBA took part in Habitat III in Quito, where we announced the formation of the [UK Built Environment Advisory Group](#) in collaboration with the Royal Town Planning Institute and the Institution of Structural Engineers. It brings together the collective skills and expertise of over 100 000 built environment professionals in more than 150 countries to support a range of humanitarian and development partners to prepare for, and respond to, humanitarian crises.

Code of Conduct

- The RIBA Code of Conduct requires members to be aware of the environmental impact of their work, and to have a proper concern and due regard for the effect that their work may have on its users and the local community.
- RIBA Chartered Practices are required to operate an Environmental Policy.

Collaboration

- The RIBA is a member of the Zero Carbon Campaign, and our members are encouraged to reduce the impact of their work through the CIC Climate Change Campaign.
- The RIBA works with the disaster relief charity, Article 25, and in 2015 assisted the organisation in recruiting members with relevant expertise to assist in Nepal following the earthquakes there.

Education, Research and Lifelong Learning

- The Institute actively promotes professional development and the upskilling of our already highly expert membership to adopt and advance enhancements in sustainable development and technology. Through the CPD Providers Network, the RIBA works with a number of companies and organisations involved these areas.
- The construction industry is becoming increasingly aware of the 'performance gap' between designed energy and organisational performance, and the as-built measured performance of these areas. In 2015 the RIBA began developing a framework of activities to help built environment professionals to understand how a building is operating in full use, to find areas of poorer performance and to develop solutions to mitigate these with the general aim of reducing the performance gap.
- The revised RIBA Plan of Work (2013) integrates sustainability into the construction process using the '[Green Overlay](#)'.

Influencing

- RIBA campaigns such as '[Building a Better Britain](#)', and responses to UK government and EU consultations, help to promote knowledge and debate on the issues around environmental responsibility.
- The RIBA engages directly with members of parliament and senior industry stakeholders to influence agendas and to drive change.

Conservation

- Through our Conservation Register and associated training, the RIBA promotes responsible use, re-use and recycling in construction projects by utilising conservation skills.

The Institute

- Internally, the RIBA has undertaken a number of activities to reduce its environmental footprint including:
 - Introduction of LED lighting in our properties
 - Use of 100% renewable electricity
 - Introduction of a 'zero waste to landfill' policy
 - Introduction of extended recycling schemes, including recycling domestic goods for staff members

These activities led to a Carbon Smart 'Gold' Accreditation for outstanding efforts in reducing environmental impact.

ANTI-CORRUPTION

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

Code of Conduct

- The RIBA Code of Conduct requires members to act fairly and honestly with potential clients and competitors in all of their professional dealings. They must not allow themselves to be improperly influenced either by their own, or others', self-interest.
- The RIBA recognises that bribery and corruption have a severely detrimental effect on economies and individuals, promoting illegal activities and weakening labour rights. The UK Bribery Act applies to any practice incorporated in the UK and any UK practice wherever in the world it operates. The RIBA therefore complies, as must our members and practices. The law also applies to British citizens as well as to people ordinarily resident in the UK, and to anyone who commits an offence in the UK.

Business Ethics

- The RIBA is a member of the Institute of Business Ethics and is producing guidance on the business case for ethical practice.

OTHER ACTIVITIES

International Standards

- In 2014, the RIBA became a founding member of an international coalition, The International Ethics Standards Coalition ([IESC](#)), formed to develop and promote international ethics standards in property related organisations. The coalition has over 100 members from all around the globe and is growing continuously. A set of standards is due for publication by the end of 2016.

CPD

- From 2017, the RIBA mandatory [CPD Core Curriculum](#) will include sections relating to 'Architecture for Social Purpose' and 'Sustainable Architecture'.

Members are required to maintain their competence and employ effective knowledge management and research methodology across the ten topics, with at least two hours of CPD in each of the ten annually.

The architecture for social purpose competency will potentially cover areas such as:

- Architect's obligation to society and the protection of the environment
- The Equality Act 2010 and understanding the 12 protected characteristics
- The UN Global Compact and what it means to you and your work
- Ethical, social and environmental awareness
- Social justice in architecture
- Ethical sourcing, specification and supply chains
- Understanding how to calculate social value in your projects
- Disaster preparedness, relief and reconstruction, and how to work with communities
- International development
- Humanitarian shelter coordination
- Shelter and settlements
- Understanding community engagement
- Ethics of regeneration

Collaboration

- The RIBA is engaging actively with bodies such as the UNGC UK network, and groups such as Article 25 and Architecture sans Frontieres, collaborating with other professional bodies and engaging with the Department for International Development.

Member Engagement

- RIBA members have a vast array of skills which can help promote the UNGC principles and to improve environmental and social welfare both in the UK and worldwide. The RIBA is keen to help our members to recognise and develop those skills and to engage with organisations who can harness those skills for the maximum benefit.

Appendix A Code of Professional Conduct

Code of Professional Conduct for members of the Royal Institute of British Architects

Introduction

1. This Code and its accompanying Guidance Notes set out and explain the standards of professional conduct and practice that the Royal Institute requires of its members.
2. This Code comprises:
 - **three principles** of professional conduct
 - **professional values** that support those principles
 - **Guidance Notes** which explain how the principles can be upheld.

The Royal Institute's Values

Honesty, integrity and competency, as well as concern for others and for the environment, are the foundations of the Royal Institute's three principles of professional conduct set out below. All members of the Royal Institute are required to comply.

The Three Principles

Principle 1: Integrity

Members shall act with honesty and integrity at all times.

Principle 2: Competence

In the performance of their work Members shall act competently, conscientiously and responsibly. Members must be able to provide the knowledge, the ability and the financial and technical resources appropriate for their work.

Principle 3: Relationships

Members shall respect the relevant rights and interests of others.

Upholding the Principles

The notes below offer some brief guidance on how members can uphold the three principles. More detailed advice is set out in Guidance Notes to the Code, which are available separately from the Royal Institute.

1. Principle 1 – Honesty and Integrity

- 1.1 The Royal Institute expects its Members to act with impartiality, responsibility and truthfulness at all times in their professional and business activities.
- 1.2 Members should not allow themselves to be improperly influenced either by their own, or others', self-interest.
- 1.3 Members should not be a party to any statement which they know to be untrue, misleading, unfair to others or contrary to their own professional knowledge.
- 1.4 Members should avoid conflicts of interest. If a conflict arises, they should declare it to those parties affected and either remove its cause, or withdraw from that situation.
- 1.5 Members should respect confidentiality and the privacy of others.
- 1.6 Members should not offer or take bribes in connection with their professional work.

2. Principle 2 – Competence

- 2.1 Members are expected to apply high standards of skill, knowledge and care in all their work. They must also apply their informed and impartial judgment in reaching any decisions, which may require members to balance differing and sometimes opposing demands (for example, the stakeholders' interests with the community's and the project's capital costs with its overall performance).
- 2.2 Members should realistically appraise their ability to undertake and achieve any proposed work. They should also make their clients aware of the likelihood of achieving the client's requirements and aspirations. If members feel they are unable to comply, they should not quote for, or accept, the work.
- 2.3 Members should ensure that their terms of appointment, the scope of their work and the essential project requirements are clear and recorded in writing. They should explain to their clients the implications of any conditions of engagement and how their fees are to be calculated and charged. Members should maintain appropriate records throughout their engagement.
- 2.4 Members should keep their clients informed of the progress of a project and of the key decisions made on the client's behalf.

2.5 Members are expected to use their best endeavours to meet the client's agreed time, cost and quality requirements for the project.

3. Principle 3 – Relationships

3.1 Members should respect the beliefs and opinions of other people, recognise social diversity and treat everyone fairly. They should also have a proper concern and due regard for the effect that their work may have on its users and the local community.

3.2 Members should be aware of the environmental impact of their work.

3.3 Members are expected to comply with good employment practice and the RIBA Employment Policy, in their capacity as an employer or an employee.

3.4 Where members are engaged in any form of competition to win work or awards, they should act fairly and honestly with potential clients and competitors. Any competition process in which they are participating must be known to be reasonable, transparent and impartial. If members find this not to be the case, they should endeavour to rectify the competition process or withdraw.

3.5 Members are expected to have in place (or have access to) effective procedures for dealing promptly and appropriately with disputes or complaints.

Appendix B

RIBA Environmental policy principles

The RIBA is committed to continuous improvement in managing environmental issues, including the proper management and monitoring of waste, the reduction of pollution and emissions, compliance with environmental legislation and environmental codes of practice, training for staff, and the monitoring of environmental performance.

We are committed to continuous improvement in our environmental performance, minimising our environmental impact and making resource efficiency a core requirement of all our operations. We will expect similar environmental standards from all suppliers and contractors and assist members and staff to use products and services in an environmentally-sensitive way.

The RIBA will seek to promote good practice by our members, staff, visitors and partners.

Energy

The RIBA will monitor and manage its consumption and use of energy. We will work to reduce the consumption of energy and to reduce our contribution to emissions of gases and other pollutants which are believed to contribute to climate change.

Water

We will work to reduce the consumption of water within our buildings and reduce discharges.

Waste

The RIBA will work to reduce the volume of waste within its buildings, by wherever possible:

- reducing consumption of
- repairing
- re-using
- recycling

all materials used within its buildings in daily operations and in construction and other projects.

Transport

The RIBA will monitor and work to reduce its contribution to environmental emissions from travel undertaken for business purposes.

Procurement

The RIBA will purchase goods and services to minimise adverse environmental effects. The RIBA will seek to undertake sustainable procurement actions that comply with

relevant regulatory requirements and its requirement to provide best value. The RIBA will use local suppliers where possible and appropriate and will encourage its suppliers to commit to improving environmental performance.

Other

Where possible, The RIBA will monitor and manage its consumption and use of other resources and materials used within its estate, working to minimise our reliance on non-renewable resources and to avoid use of any hazardous substances.

Our staff

We recognise the responsibility of staff in contributing to good environmental management. The RIBA will seek to raise awareness, encourage participation and train employees in environmental matters. We aim to harness and channel the enthusiasm and interest shown by staff and will provide appropriate information and support to ensure that all staff exercise their environmental responsibility.

Our members

The RIBA will educate and assist our members to provide their services in an environmentally friendly manner. We will seek to raise awareness amongst our members of the impact of architecture and construction on the environment, work with Government and clients to ensure that the right conditions are there to ensure sustainable architecture can flourish, and will continue to provide our members with access to the guidance and training they need to develop low carbon, energy efficient solutions for clients and the users of buildings.

Our visitors

The RIBA will educate and encourage our visitors to cherish our environment. We will seek to raise awareness of the impact of architecture and construction on the environment and what our visitors can do to reduce their personal impact.

Our business partners

The RIBA will promote environmental good practice to its business partners, encouraging a shared responsibility to protecting the environment.

The RIBA will incorporate the principles set out in this environmental policy into its day to day operations developing appropriate:

- procedures for day-to-day operations
- action plans
- annual targets

Appendix C

Designing City Resilience Programme

16 sessions across 2 days in which attendees learnt, shared, collaborated and participated with resilience experts drawn from across the world to shape future thinking on city resilience

36 international speakers, drawn from the worlds of design & construction; development & infrastructure; city leadership & governance; insurance & finance; and technology & communications

6 Panel Sessions on key themes that make up City Resilience

[Defining urban resilience](#)

[Designing places for people](#)

[The role of technology in improving resilience](#)

[City Resilience: Vision, strategy, barriers and lessons so far](#)

[Creating long-term value through innovative city investment strategies](#)

[Climate Change and shocks to the system](#)

3 keynote case study presentations from the cities of New York City (on climate change and shocks), Bristol (on designing places for people) and Barcelona (on social and economic stresses)

6 City Resilience Challenge sessions

11 international cities fed into the City Resilience Challenge – *Austin, Barcelona, Bristol, Chennai, Glasgow, Manchester, Melbourne, New York, Rio de Janeiro, Rotterdam and Vejle*

- Based on the challenges faced by the cities above the Designing City Resilience team, in conjunction with Aecom, created 4 composite cities, *Emerging City, Mega City, City Region* and *Innovative City*
- The task for each of the four workshop groups was to create a vision for city resilience
- Each city was led by a Mayor, a well-known person from the industry. These were Peter Head (Mega City), Nancy Kete (Innovative City), Charles Ledward (Emerging City) and Rod MacDonald (City Region)
- At the end of the summit each Mayor presented their city vision including meaningful strategies which each should pursue which addressed the challenges set at the beginning of the summit and challenge
- Taken from the four city presentations, post event a set of key guiding principles will be devised. Creating a tool for all cities to reference and use

22 Supporters of Designing City Resilience

- 3 Headline Sponsors – Aecom, Grosvenor and Polypipe
- 3 Content Partners – Broadway Malyan, Lend Lease and Mott MacDonald
- 12 event partners encompassing global philanthropic organisations such as the Rockefeller Foundation through to government bodies such as the Government Office for Science
- 4 global media partners