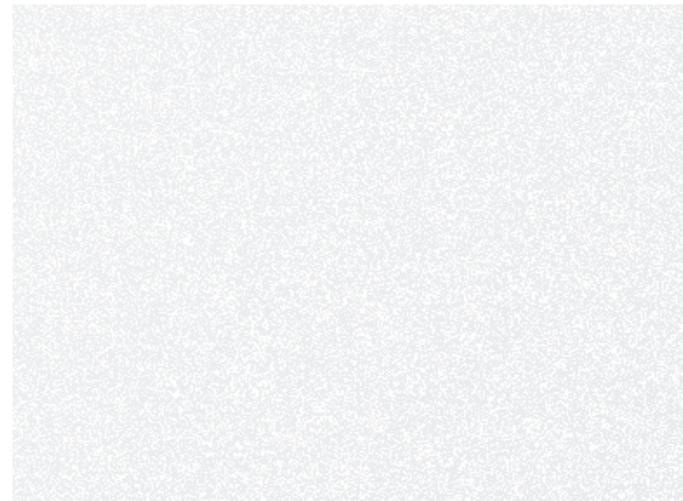


Inclusive Communities

Social Equity in the Built Environment



Contents



Social equity in the built environment



Social equity in the built environment

Social equity, at its simplest, can be understood as impartiality, fairness and justice for all people to participate, prosper and reach their full potential no matter their race, age, gender, culture, socio-economic status or disability.

In the context of the built environment, social equity encompasses investments to foster and create beneficial impacts in communities that have been negatively affected as a result of systemic prejudice, discriminatory policies or as a result of little consideration for the diverse user-needs of a community, often in favour of a 'one size fits all' approach.

Social equity is created when buildings, places and infrastructure support and enhance environmental, economic and social wellbeing – through this, improving quality of life with healthy environments, affordable housing, green spaces, access to transit options and healthcare, education and employment opportunities.

By recognising practices that have had adverse impacts on certain communities and actively working with people to create fairness for all, we can cultivate an equitable built environment which aims to eliminate experiences of exclusion and addresses disparities across our urban realm.



Why we must act now



There are few issues relating to human health, wellbeing and quality of life that are not impacted, directly or indirectly, by the attributes of our built environment.



– Cristina Gamboa, CEO, WorldGBC

Climate crisis

Urban centres produce more than 60% of greenhouse gas emissions

– United Nations

Pandemic impact

87% of people think that the pandemic will lead to an increase in income inequality in their country

– Oxfam COVID-19 Impact Survey

Demand for social justice

86% of investors say companies should work for the benefit of all stakeholders, not just shareholders

– Porter Novelli Purpose Premium Index

Social mobility

Growing inequality not only harms people living in poverty and other disadvantaged groups, it affects the wellbeing of society at large

– United Nations

Ageing population

Between 2015 and 2050, the proportion of the world's population over 60 years of age will nearly double from 12% to 22%

– World Health Organization

People with disabilities

15% of the world's population experience some form of disability

– World Bank

The rise of ESG

Environmental, social and governance (ESG) criteria are a set of standards for a company's operations that socially conscious investors use to screen potential investments.

Environmental criteria consider how a company performs as a steward of nature. Social criteria examine how it manages relationships with employees, suppliers, customers and the communities where it operates. Governance deals with a company's leadership, executive pay, audits, internal controls and shareholder rights.

ESG plays a significant role through the investment life-cycle of the built environment from development and acquisition, to operations and maintenance, and redevelopment or disposition.

It is now widely accepted that ESG investment significantly decreases downside risk and has become an important indicator of how the built environment performs in worst-case

scenarios, because of its resiliency to the global impacts of climate change, political, social, regulatory and reputation risks.

People now regard the ESG credentials of companies as a key factor in deciding who they work for and invest with.

This is evident from the increased participation in the investor-driven global ESG benchmark GRESB framework for listed property companies, private property funds, developers and investors who invest directly in the built environment.

Society is now demanding from organisations integrity and commitment in their approach to equity, diversity and inclusion.

“

More than 80% of companies in the S&P 500 stock market index now publicly report their performance on ESG standards

”

– Governance and Accountability Institute, New York

“

The expectations of building users and communities are changing. In the coming years, a focus on health and social equity will no longer be just 'nice to have' for real estate leaders – focusing on health and social equity will be essential

”

– Health and Social Equity in Real Estate State of the Market, ULI Americas

**What's
the value?**



What's the value?

Integrating a socially equitable approach to the design and development of the built environment can bring value to various stakeholder groups within the built environment.

Here we highlight some of the key benefits that can be realised through this approach.

Investors

- Protects assets by way of built-in resilience
- Increases land and asset ROI over the medium-long term
- Creates tenant satisfaction resulting in higher occupancy levels
- Helps organisations meet their ESG objectives and reporting
- Improves public perception and reputational value

Private sector

- Increases attractiveness of land and assets to investors
- Offers access to a larger pool of investors and equity partners
- Provides commercial access to broader consumer groups
- Can align with municipal policies to receive financial support/incentives
- Positively informs the planning process and averts road blocks
- Builds trust with local communities, leading to further opportunities
- Improves public perception and reputational value

Public sector

- Delivers social and economic contribution to local communities
- Creates an inclusive environment for all
- Improves public perception and reputational value
- Helps organisations meet their ESG objectives and reporting
- Can align with municipal policies to receive financial support/incentives
- Positively informs the planning process and averts road blocks

Communities

- Creates places that are equitable and inclusive for all
- Provides opportunities for all people to participate, prosper and reach their full potential
- Regenerates disadvantaged communities
- Contributes to a city's character and identity
- Local area benefits from the creation of new jobs, partnerships, training programs and local spend

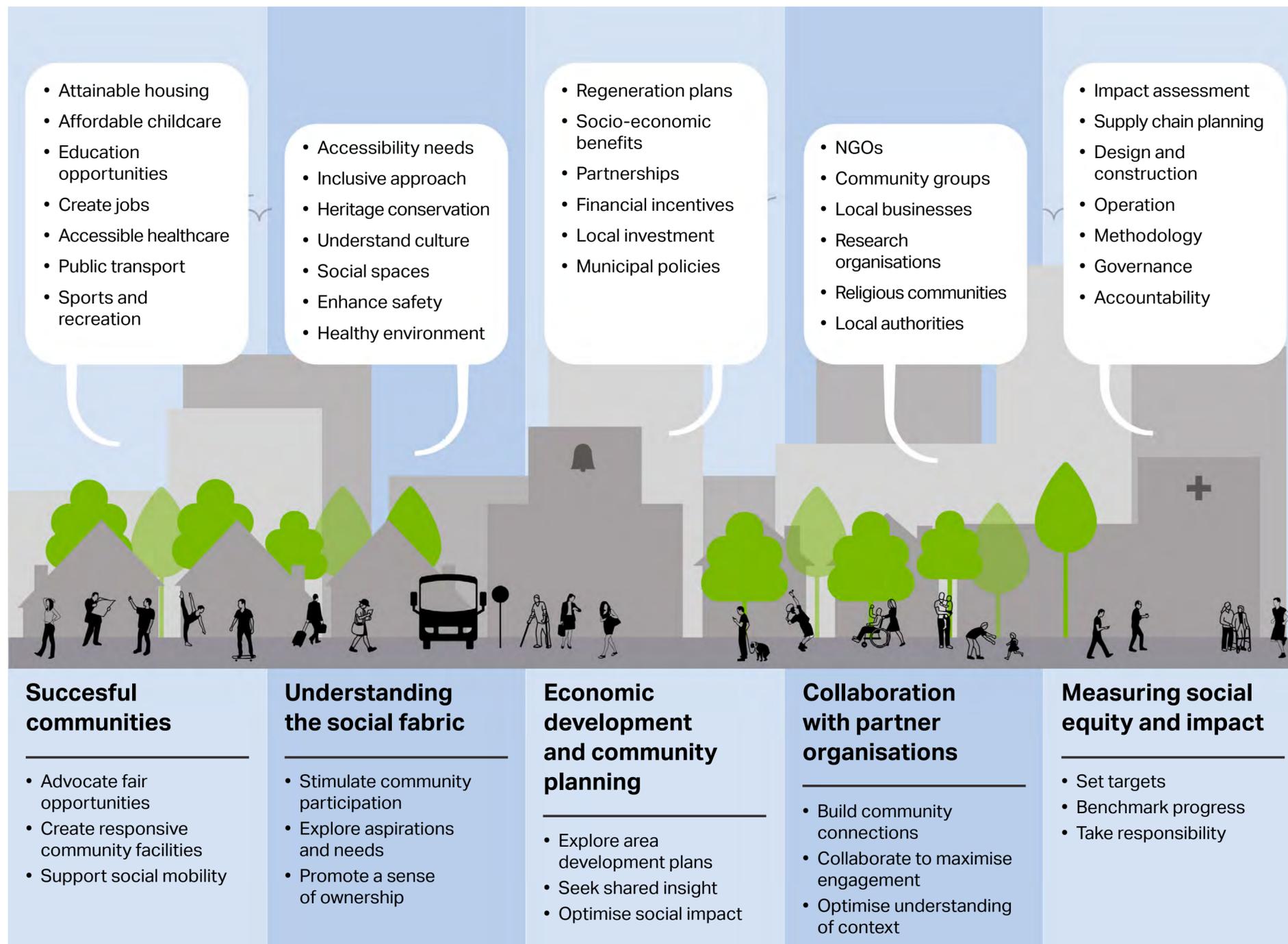
Guiding principles



Guiding principles

Equitable architecture and placemaking begins with learning about the people we are designing for.

Each community is unique and has its own challenges and needs. On the pages that follow, we set out some of the guiding principles we adopt to holistically approach these imperatives during the design process.



Successful communities



Projects which adopt a socially equitable approach lead to vibrant and resilient communities, which are good for business.

For a community to be truly successful it must enable everyone within it to thrive with fair opportunities to housing, education, employment, healthcare, recreation and safety.

Design and development teams have a pivotal role in shaping the built environment and so by taking a broader view in identifying what is needed, with a focus on user circumstances, it can enable a thorough assessment of the essential gaps and opportunities which can be addressed.

In a post pandemic environment, as social capital increases, so does the desire for attainable community-focused places that deliver multiple functions and offer more opportunities for inclusiveness and social mobility. Key to this is the proportional development of affordable housing, to actively ensure a fair mix of people can live within and contribute to the community.

By developing schemes which respond holistically to the fabric of the community, we can also enhance the quality and attractiveness of the locale. This can lead to fully occupied residential developments, which cultivate a healthy economy for both building owners and local businesses.

London Whitechapel, UK

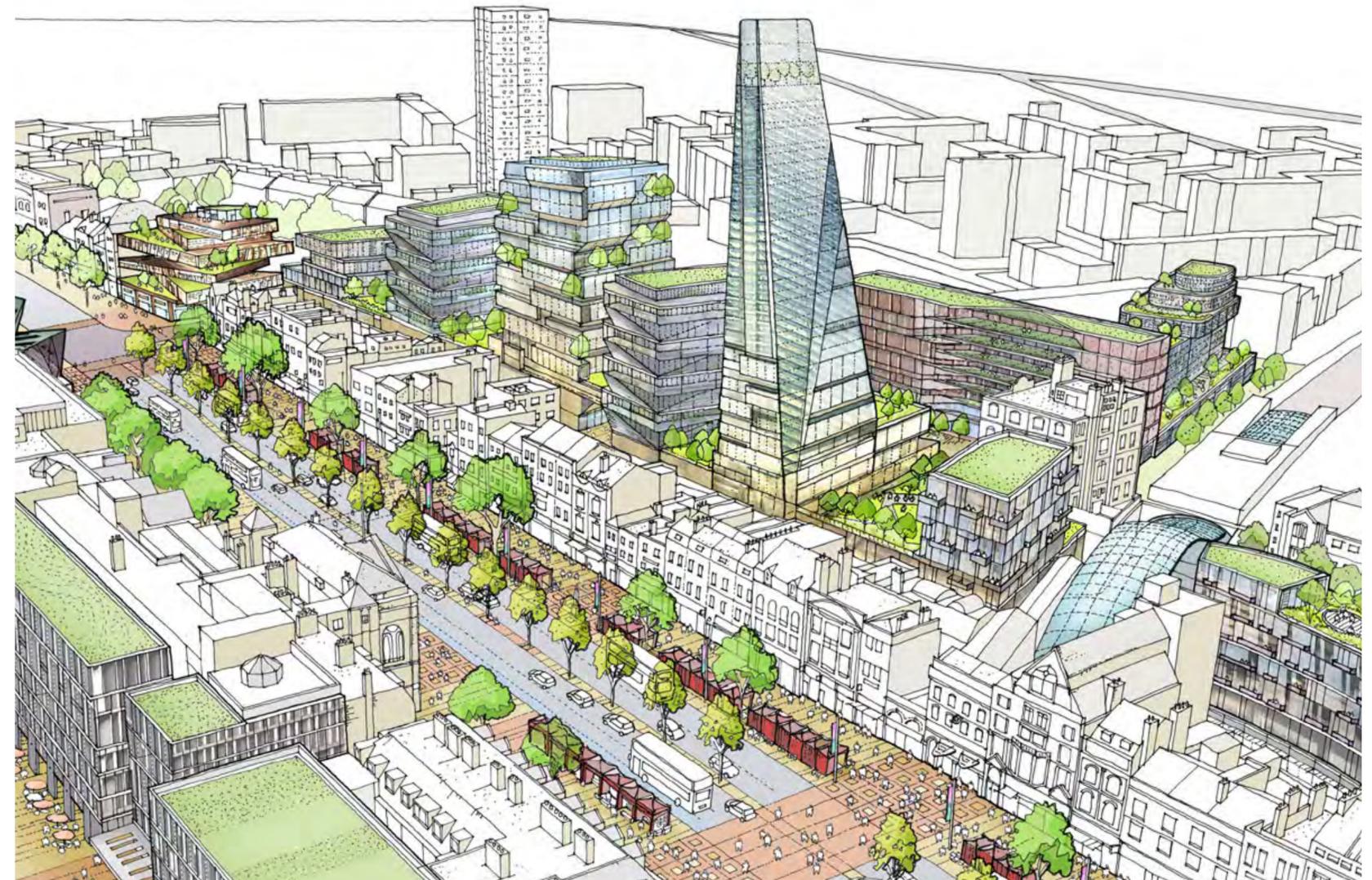
The masterplan vision reimagines a new and vibrant inclusive community in London.

Approach

- Socio-economic impact studies developed with local stakeholders including residents, businesses and landowners
- Engagement and facilitation initiatives captured issues and aspirations via meetings, workshops, events, project website, postcards and press releases

Social impact

- The community will benefit from 3,500 new homes (at least 35% affordable) and ~5,000 new local jobs
- The development includes seven new public squares and open spaces, a new civic hub, cultural centre, community facilities and a globally significant research campus
- A new destination shopping and leisure experience with a thriving evening time economy, seeks to attract new investors, community partnerships and reduce crime in the area



Axess Condominiums, Canada

A game-changing design proposal that sets new standards for inclusive design in the residential market, which capitalises on the growing need for accessible housing.

Approach

- Socio-economic impact studies alongside engagement and facilitation sessions undertaken to envision a vibrant new community, which integrates design strategies for people living with cognitive and physical disabilities, young families and those aging in place

Social impact

- A ground floor café teaches life and employment skills to young adults with cognitive disabilities, a sensory garden provides outdoor space for residents and visitors, and an Enhanced Day Program provides day-to-day support for families and young adults living with cognitive disabilities
- 100% of the suites are barrier-free at a minimum. An additional 15% of the suites have been designed to a higher standard for accessibility called Axess Plus



York Castle Gateway, UK

The mixed use masterplan transforms the area surrounding some of York's most important and sensitive landmarks.

Approach

- Every stage of the development process was supported by the My Castle Gateway public engagement strategy, which was led by City of York Council in collaboration with the University of Leeds. The initiative provides an platform for the community to shape and then oversee the proposals, from concept, delivery and beyond
- The wide-ranging engagement activities have included events, walks, talks, web pages, a post-it note initiative and interactive social media discussions

Social impact

- The ambitious masterplan successfully balances the diversity of views and interests from the public, celebrates the history and heritage of the area, and promotes commercial possibilities
- Includes a new world class public heritage space, new residential development with affordable homes, new public square and a pedestrian/cycle bridge to connect to the wider cycle and walking routes cross the city



Hammonds Farm, UK

Innovative vision for a new large scale community that delivers improved social mobility and meets the area's long term needs and placemaking goals.

Approach

- Detailed socio-economic research for the local area undertaken, to establish areas of potential need and propositions for how development can include social value for the community from the outset
- Valuable and detailed discussions with local councils, community and stakeholders have enabled us to understand their priorities and benchmark our findings

Social impact

- The vision for the site focuses on widening access to housing, community services including childcare, jobs and training, to promote family and community success
- Delivery of ~5,000 new homes, with infrastructure and services to care for the local community and its needs, including not just Hammonds Farm residents but wider neighbouring settlements



Image courtesy of Grosvenor

Understanding the social fabric



Understanding the social fabric of a community improves equity outcomes for building users and local residents, whilst improving return on investment.

Comprehensive, targeted and culturally sensitive stakeholder and public consultation is key to understanding how a project can positively contribute to those impacted by it.

By giving building users and local residents a platform to participate, we are able to generate a sense of ownership that can build engagement and support.

Capturing this invaluable insight can be facilitated by providing welcoming, user-friendly and interactive facilitation and engagement opportunities to bring people together from a diverse range of perspectives, promoting productive conversations to problem-solve and shape successful project outcomes for all.

This can comprise of public consultation and co-design workshops, user experience reviews and stakeholder engagement which combined with comprehensive research studies can offer an authentic alignment and understanding of the social context.

Consultation and engagement is most effective when a project's representatives are familiar with the community's culture (e.g. language, race, ethnicity, geography), as this can promote respect and constructive participation during the process.

This holistic approach brings both social and economic value, by minimising the risk of potential project delays due to the project being misaligned with the fabric of the existing area and causing opposition, which can have a negative impact on design and development team's reputation and future work.

Indigenous Hub, Canada

New mixed use scheme, developed in partnership with Anishnawbe Health Toronto.

Approach

- Designed in direct consultation with the local indigenous community
- Collaborative design process, where considered listening to and learning from the community has been key to understanding their needs, ideas and aspirations

Social impact

- The design of the five buildings sensitively articulates indigenous values and principles
- The new education, employment and training centre, which includes a municipally-operated child care facility, aims to help 700–1,000 indigenous people secure jobs annually
- The new community health centre incorporates indigenous healing practices and other traditions along with western medicine

Anishnawbe Health Toronto architects: Stantec

Canary Restaurant Building restoration: ERA Architects

Indigenous Design Consulting architect: Two Row Architect



Geylang Serai Cultural Belt, Singapore

Understanding the local Malay cultural heritage and social fabric of the popular Geylang Serai Cultural Belt, was pivotal in establishing the vision for its regeneration.

Approach

- Close consultation and engagement undertaken with stakeholders via a series of meetings and site visits, to identify the key issues, aspirations and context
- Palette of urban design apparatus and principles developed to connect neighbourhood nodes, heritage, current urban narrative, and the community's aspirations

Social impact

- The design creates a new cultural space where multiple cultures and generations can gather
- Rejuvenates the district so that visitors can make use of new cycling lanes, sheltered areas and green spaces, all with improved accessibility
- A vibrant open plaza offers spaces for play, communal interaction and rest



University of Birmingham Teaching and Learning Building, UK

The user experience was central to our inclusive design approach to the University of Birmingham's new Teaching and Learning Building.

Approach

- Engagement with disability groups, students, faculty and staff with a focus on neurodiversity, physical and sensory based-differences and mental health to establish a holistic approach towards inclusion
- Throughout the engagement process, disability groups were appraised of progress and given the opportunity to test scenarios and share observations to inform design development

Social impact

- Accessibility strategies include adjustable facilities for lecturers/students/visitors, increased door widths and lift sizes, and interior design features with appropriate colour palettes, lighting and furniture provision
- Inclusive design features include a parent-baby changing/feeding room, gender neutral and accessible toilets, and a guide dog pen facility



Reina Condos, Canada

Contemporary mid-rise residential building designed, developed, engineered and constructed by an all-woman driven team.

Approach

- Informed by an extensive year-long consultation process, to garner feedback from an array of users, including multigenerational families, parents with young or adolescent children and single adults
- Consultation and engagement activities included a public collaboration event, design session, Girl Guides of Canada ideas event and a university and college student design competition

Social impact

- Focus on inclusivity and community woven throughout the development, with live-work suites designed for multigenerational living
- Amenity space 25% larger than standard city requirements, with a range of thoughtful high quality community facilities
- Flexible floor plans and a forward-thinking amenity program geared towards fostering community and familiarity between residents



Economic development and community planning



Collaboration with local government and community planning organisations can optimise positive social equity outcomes.

Design and development teams who actively engage with local government organisations to examine the wider development plans for an area, are able to capture a more informed understanding of the community and urban fabric, the key issues and the plans to address them.

This, combined with the findings uncovered during comprehensive stakeholder and community consultations, and research studies, can be collated into an socio-economic impact study to ensure a holistic 360 degree approach to determine the most beneficial outcomes for an area and how a project can positively contribute to them.

Collaboration with local government organisations can also expose design and development teams to opportunities to build relationships with other local community organisations, who form part of the area's ongoing development plans and who could be considered potential partners in delivering social impact.

This collaborative approach can promote the sharing of valuable information and further engagement with the community, so that the most effective and positively impactful social outcomes can be achieved.

Sheffield Hallam University Masterplan, UK

The university's masterplan plays a key role in fulfilling its ambition to become the world's leading applied university, whilst playing a significant role in the regeneration of the Sheffield city region.

Approach

- Extensive in-depth consultation with a range of university and local council stakeholder groups
- Discussions allowed Sheffield City Council to understand the University's strategy, and for the University to understand the council's city-wide issues

Social impact

- The transformed estate supports the city's development and regeneration strategy for the neighbouring plots of land and public realm
- The project supports local skills and employability for residents, with a programme of work experience placements, apprenticeships events, career talks and initiatives



Pan American and Parapan American Games, Lima

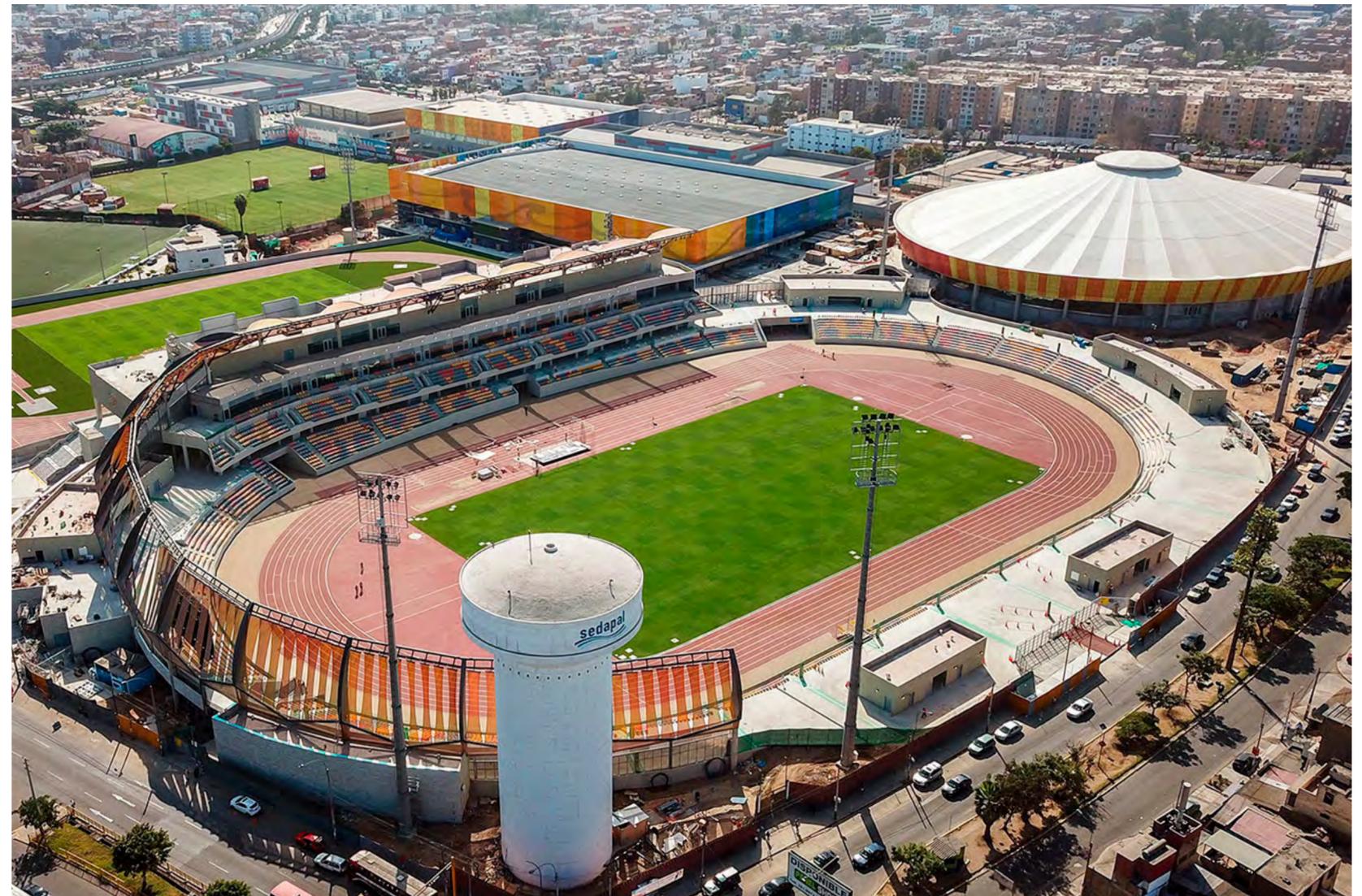
Olympic-grade football and athletic stadiums, velodrome and sports arenas were profoundly informed by the importance of social impact.

Approach

- **Legacy strategy** was determined by a comprehensive stakeholder and public consultation process and community impact evaluations
- Designs reflect the local community's cultural references using local materials and construction techniques where possible

Social impact

- Specialised sports facilities designed with legacy modes that respond to the needs of the community, in the deprived neighbourhoods in which they are located
- The venues are designed to be fully accessible and inclusive, with braille and multi-lingual signage
- The venues were used as community isolation and vaccination centres during the COVID-19 pandemic
- The facilities achieved 94% population approval. Studies on social return on investment undertaken by the legacy authority have concluded a positive economic impact



MiZa, UAE

Regeneration of one Abu Dhabi's warehouse districts into a connected, thriving innovation-focused neighbourhood, for diverse entrepreneurial communities.

Approach

- From microunits to full warehouses, spaces within the adaptive reuse and mixed use development have been designed for both the flexibility of their potential uses and the imagination of the people within them

Social impact

- The innovative creative district contributes to the wider masterplan vision to drive the regeneration of the area
- Builds on the late Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan's legacy and agenda for livelihood and stimulating the economy of Abu Dhabi and the UAE
- Supported by The Salama bint Hamdan Emerging Artists Fellowship, the project acts as a catalyst for the growth of entrepreneurial communities
- The initiative promotes creative cross-disciplinary connections, collaboration with established organisations and investment opportunities



Image of site before development

Westergouwe Community Centre, Netherlands

The community-focused design combines education, community facilities and social housing with nature as a catalyst for social inclusion.

Approach

- Extensive consultation process with all stakeholders and additional meetings with housing associations, an elderly home and residents of the surrounding neighbourhood were undertaken, to address the social impact of the design on the local community
- An integrated approach to architecture and landscape leads to a nature inclusive and climate adaptive design, in which both buildings and park play a connecting role in the social structure and wellbeing of the neighbourhood

Social impact

- A nursery, primary school, sports halls and community facilities are designed around a central heartspace, encouraging young and old to meet informally
- Nature-inclusive design and green views invite the discovery of wildlife and habitats whilst encouraging healthy activity, enabling social interaction



Collaboration with partner organisations



Design and development teams play a crucial role in determining how a project can bring positive social impact to a community. By collaborating with partner organisations and non-profits we can maximise this potential.

Facilitated collaboration with local organisations provides a deeper understanding of the local context and the influence a project can have on quality of life through various lenses including design, construction, building operations and social impact.

Their connections with the community can optimise research insight and increase engagement from a wider breadth of the public during consultation workshops, offering more people the opportunity to shape their physical environment.

Collaboration with local businesses and non-profits can drive local investment and promote positive support for a project. Which in turn, can build trust with the community and potentially expand a project team's footprint.

Heritage for All, Canada

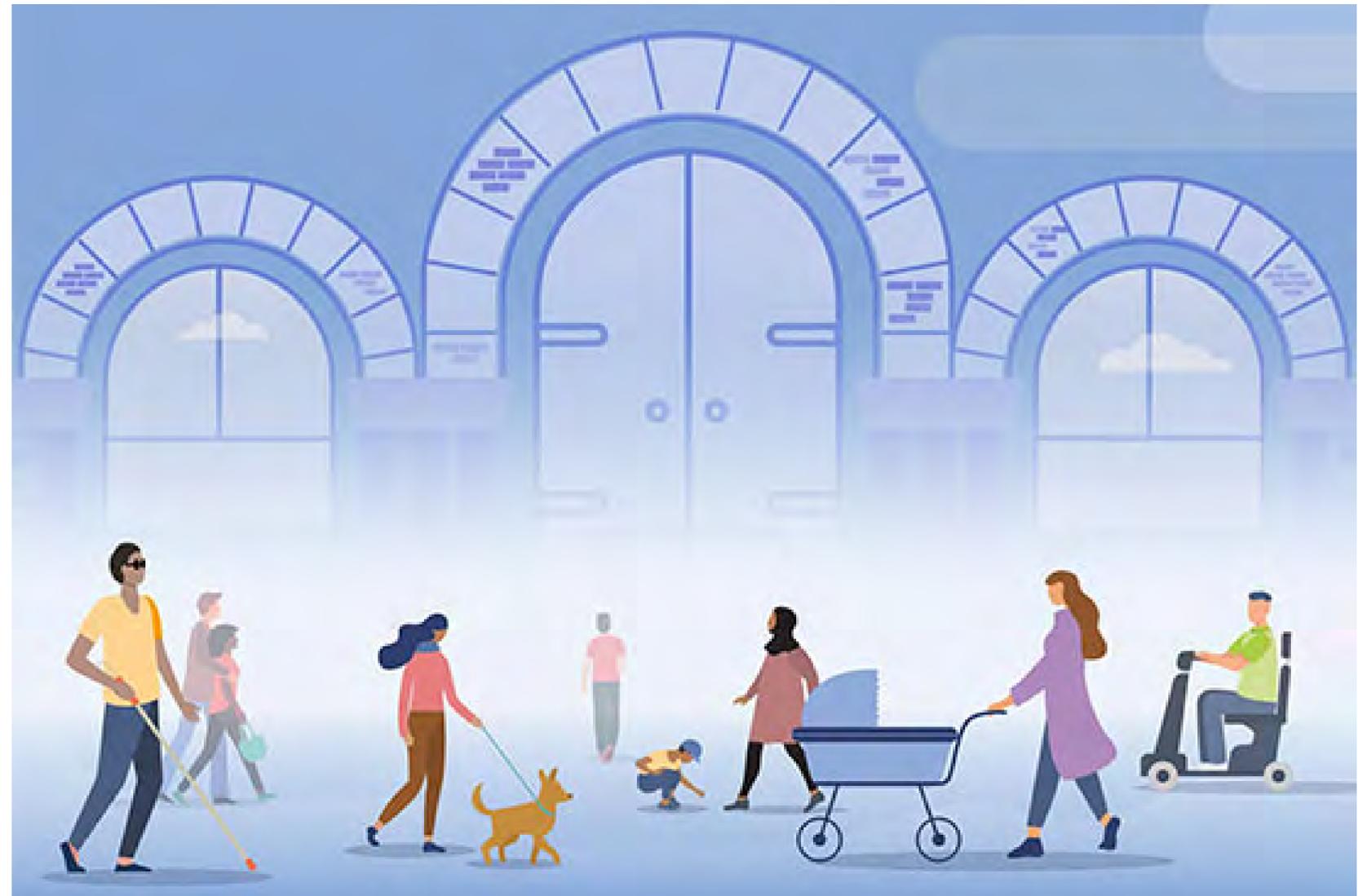
Research which aims to eliminate physical barriers to Canada's federally-owned heritage buildings.

Approach

- Collaboration with heritage professionals and participating organisations including the KITE Research Institute, Easter Seals Canada, the Canadian Association of Heritage Professionals, Canadian Disability Foundation, Phil Goldsmith Architect and National Trust for Canada
- To inform the study we will conduct a national outreach campaign to disability groups which will comprise of user experience reviews, community consultation and stakeholder facilitation
- Co-design workshops will be undertaken to test design solutions and receive further community consultation and input

Social impact

- The study aims to inform and advance future national accessibility standards for federally-owned heritage buildings, whilst preserving their historical integrity



Child Friendly Communities, India

Urban design guidelines for neighbourhoods across India, that support the health and wellbeing of children.

Approach

- To gain a thorough understanding of the issues facing children, we led a consultation workshop with the Bernard van Leer Foundation and the National Institute of Urban Affairs, in Mumbai. This brought public officials from four major cities in India together, along with their technical partners and other foundations working on improving the welfare of children and their caregivers in urban India

Social impact

- The approach included research, evaluation and monitoring to identify needs and opportunities
- Special emphasis given to the target group needs for creating safe and playful spaces for infants and toddlers, and accessible and inclusive areas for caregivers
- Overwhelming support was given for the package and a route map was developed to incorporate the urban measures within city policies and funding plans



Beckenham Place Park, UK

Reactivation of one of London's largest open green spaces into a fully accessible community destination.

Approach

- Collaboration with the Heritage Lottery Fund to ensure agreed objectives were achieved in relation to positive heritage, people and community focused outcomes
- Holistic approach to the restoration of the historic 96-hectare parkland and its heritage buildings adopted, to enable the introduction of indoor and outdoor community activities appropriate for a 21st century park

Social impact

- From a loss making golf course to a substantial revenue stream, the park's regeneration has provided apprenticeships, new employment, enhanced maintenance and future investments. Employment opportunities have increased from five to 150
- The parks transformation has led to a significant rise in both the diversity and number of visitors; ethnic minority visitors has risen from 5% to 18%, people under the age of 25 has risen from 7% to 25%, and the number of female visitors has risen by 10%



AllAccess, Canada

Partnership with the Canadian Urban Institute to deliver a research and education project dedicated to making public spaces more accessible.

Approach

- Workshops and on-site audits held with city builders across the region to explore how to implement the built environment design requirements of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, captured under the province's Design of Public Spaces Standard
- Throughout the workshops, participants were joined by advocates and professionals with lived experience of disability to get more insight into how design decisions impact people with disabilities and to push the conversation beyond the requirements as they are presented in the legislation

Social impact

- The programme promotes the creation of accessible public space. A tool kit of resources has been compiled and is now publicly available to all city builders
- The project has provided information to the province on what is needed to support practitioners in realising a more accessible built environment



Measuring social equity and impact

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



The United Nations (UN) Sustainable Development Goals

Measuring the impact of our design choices through post-occupancy evaluation is key to ensuring our ideas are successfully supporting a progressive society – socially, environmentally, technically and economically.

As ESG reporting becomes more robust, businesses will suffer if they do not consider the social repercussion of their decision-making. Setting targets, benchmarking progress, public disclosure and accountability is key to measuring the societal consequences.

Metrics, strategies and benchmarks are appearing across global markets to align with the UN Sustainable Development Goals, the

WorldGBC Health and Wellbeing Framework and other guidelines to measure success and reporting to investors and occupiers.

We measure success by evaluating against goals set out for each individual project. These goals are articulated via engagement with building occupants and the community through the design and post-occupancy phases, to identify potential improvements to community health and wellbeing.

There are a variety of professional accreditations and tools on offer to support organisations measure their social equity approach and impact, which we have outlined on the pages that follow.

Our global collective includes individuals with experience and certification to a number of these including Fitwel, RELi and WELL.

Measuring social equity and impact



Fitwel is a certification system and proptech platform that positively impacts health through an integrated approach to the design and operations of real estate assets.



The WELL Building Standard is a vehicle for buildings and organisations to deliver more thoughtful and intentional spaces that enhance human health and well-being.



G R E S B

The global ESG benchmark GRESB provides validated ESG performance data and peer benchmarks for investors and managers to improve business intelligence, industry engagement and decision-making.



The Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) standards enable any organisation – large or small, private or public – to understand and report on their impacts on the economy, environment and people in a comparable and credible way.



Future Fit provides open source tools to help companies, investors and advisors play their part in building a better world, with a free methodology, principles, goals, indicators and guides.



RELi is a rating system and leadership standard that takes a holistic approach to resilient design. It is used by companies to assess and plan for all of the acute hazards that buildings and communities can face.

Measuring social equity and impact

IMPACT MANAGEMENT PLATFORM

The Impact Management Project (IMP) supports practitioners on how to measure, assess and report impacts on people and the natural environment.



Loop is an expert social value company to help companies understand, create, and calculate their social value using a tried and tested social value measurement framework.



IRIS+ makes it easier for investors to translate impact intentions into impact results with metrics in sectors such as climate, diversity, agriculture, real estate and more.



B Lab is a non-profit network which provides companies with the programs and tools necessary to understand their environmental and social impact (whether or not they are Certified B Corporations).



Backed by the National TOMs Framework, the Social Value Portal helps organisations measure, report and enhance their social value.



HACT enables social housing organisations to drive value by unlocking the potential for lasting, transformational change – backed by research and data.

Our expertise



Social equity enablers

We help placemakers build credibility and trust within communities to realise the shared interests of business goals and positive social impact.

Our approach places the following services at the centre of our thinking, to ensure our solutions maximise the potential opportunity each unique and individual project can bring.

Socio-economic impact studies

Through offering socio-economic impact studies, during pre-design/feasibility phases we can identify existing equity issues, barriers and social needs and offer proposed strategies to clients to strengthen positive social impact within the surrounding community.

This can include an investigation of existing local amenities, access to public resources, neighbourhood socio-economic backgrounds, the local business environment, race and ethnicity, health and wellbeing concerns and/or other factors.

The findings from the analysis can include programmatic suggestions for the design and proposed strategies to strengthen positive social impact within the surrounding community.

Engagement and facilitation

Throughout the design process we can facilitate meaningful conversations to better inform the project's design intent, understand how the design can address local needs around a site's area, build necessary local relationships and define the ambitions towards social impact creation.

For example, this could be in the form of co-design, local pop-up activations, neighbourhood charrettes or other approaches at different stages to embed local knowledge and facilitate local activities in the design's long-term use.

Meanwhile use strategies

Informed by identified needs, we can support clients to design and develop meanwhile use strategies and options for empty buildings and vacant sites.

Meanwhile uses can also provide a way of bringing life, activity, employment and partnership opportunities to an area before permanent development.

The temporary use of a site can smooth the transition for local communities, and give them a platform and voice to shape emerging development proposals.

Social equity enablers



Local supply chain planning

Through the construction phases we can consider how to specify materials and solutions that can be provided locally or from the region to ensure that the local area benefits from the creation of new jobs, partnerships, training programs and local spend.

Socio-economic impact evaluations

We can measure the success of various design strategies implemented to track performance against social impact targets.

We can engage with building occupants, stakeholders and/or the surrounding community to measure the success of the project and lessons learned that can be applied to future projects, to drive continuous improvement and support ESG metrics.

Our specialist global expertise

BDP.

Our unique position as a multidisciplinary collective with experts spanning the spectrum of the built environment gives us a special status and capability in the design world.

We are placemakers who work at every scale; from bespoke light sculptures to entirely new cities. We are passionate about the role of design to improve everyday life.

We are committed to inclusion and wellbeing in the built environment and believe that inclusive design and its process is fundamental to creating spaces for everyone.

When we design, we do so with the full range of human diversity in mind, enabling a complete spectrum of participation in all aspects of society.



Our specialist global expertise

human space

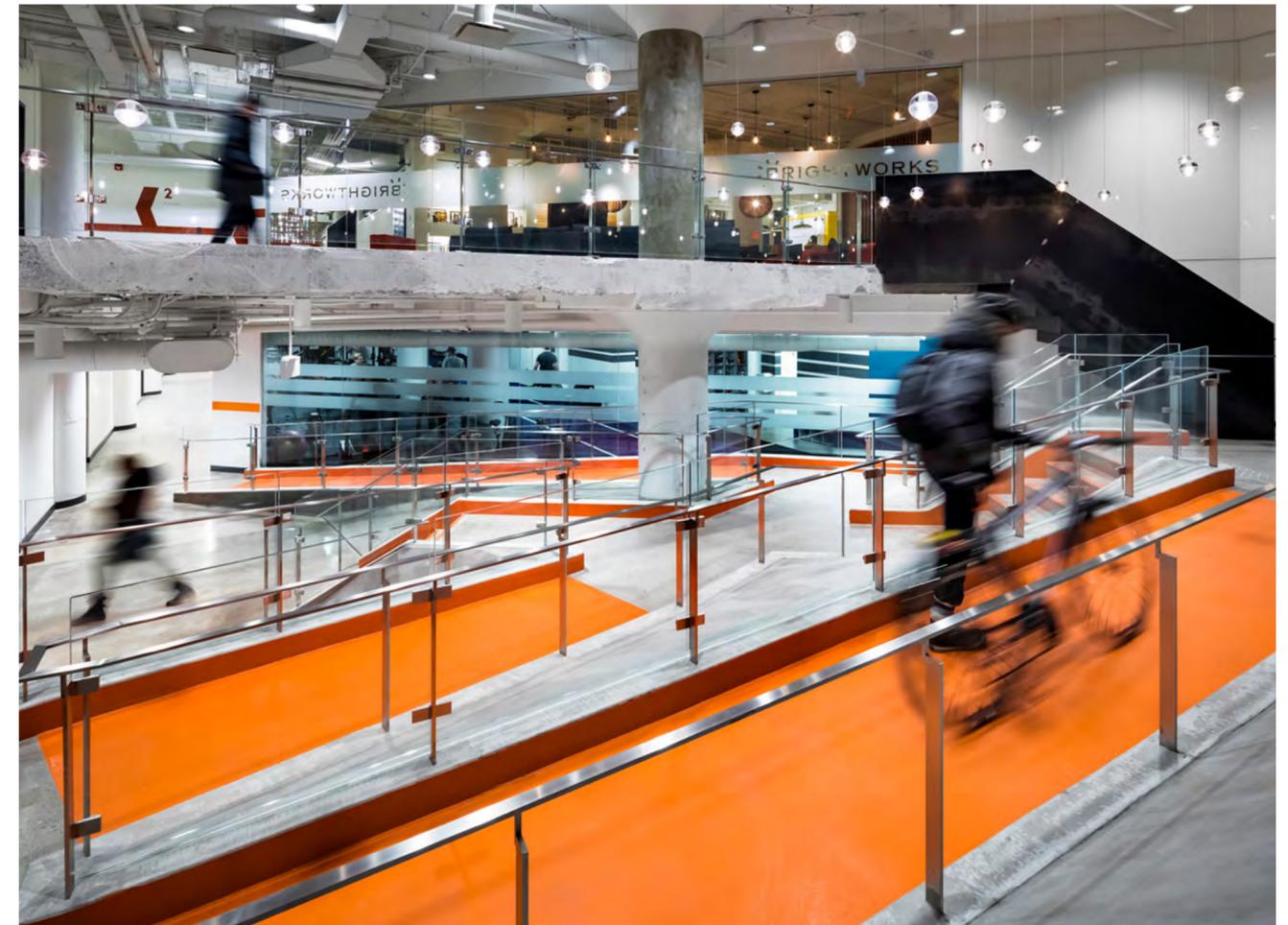
Our commitment to inclusion is demonstrated through our consultancy, Human Space, a global collaborative of experts dedicated to this cause.

Alongside our multidisciplinary architecture, design and urbanism practice, Human Space delivers spaces, buildings and communities that considers people first and incorporates broad perspectives to arrive at better solutions.

Grounded in over 30 years of experience, Human Space pursues a comprehensive approach to community building that includes accessibility, wellness and inclusion as essential components to creating safe, equitable and resilient built environments.

Service offerings

- Inclusive Design
- Building Audits & Feasibility
- Certification & Benchmarking
- Consulting
- Research
- Impact Assessments
- Engagement and facilitation
- Guidelines & Standards
- Occupancy Evaluations
- Training



Our commitment



Our commitment

When our founder, Professor Sir George Grenfell Baines, first coined the idea of building 'sustainable places for people', he spoke to the importance of creating spaces which enrich the communities and environments around them.

As an early nod to the emphasis on social values in today's industry, the idea of designing inclusive, responsible and resilient spaces has been part of our ethos since the inception of the practice in 1961.



Our commitment

People

We care about the wellbeing of our employees and those who experience the places and spaces that we design.

Through our human-centric approach to design, we focus on inclusion, wellbeing, accessibility and connectivity to ensure all our buildings and spaces generate a strong sense of belonging for all.

Employee engagement is also important to us, so we have a number of forums that ensure participation by colleagues in key strategic areas.

These include BDP Belonging that champions our equity and inclusion strategy, BDP Lab that promotes innovation and BDP Life where employee representatives are consulted on strategy and policy decisions.

Projects

As our industry rises to the urgent need to combat the climate emergency and address the social disparities within our communities, we draw on our unique multidisciplinary expertise to deliver environmentally and socially responsible design.

Working closely with our project teams and stakeholders, our specialist sustainability team and dedicated social value lead to implement and drive our environmental and social value strategies across the business.

Our own operational performance is also monitored against annual objectives and we have developed solutions like our carbon counter and social value tool kits to help reduce our environmental impact and enhance the quality of life for local communities.

Communities

By building strong, purpose-driven partnerships with the people we serve and collaborating with stakeholders throughout the design process, we ensure our projects create positive social impact for local communities that stand the test of time.

We work closely with local schools, charities and social enterprises to support community engagement initiatives related to education and training, career development, work experience and job creation.

Governance

Good governance is the cornerstone of good business. That's why, as a practice, we are committed to promoting transparency, ethical behaviour and accountability both within our own operations, and externally with our clients and strategic partners.

We continually review our policies and procedures to reflect changes in legislation, market conditions and best practice.

Key contacts

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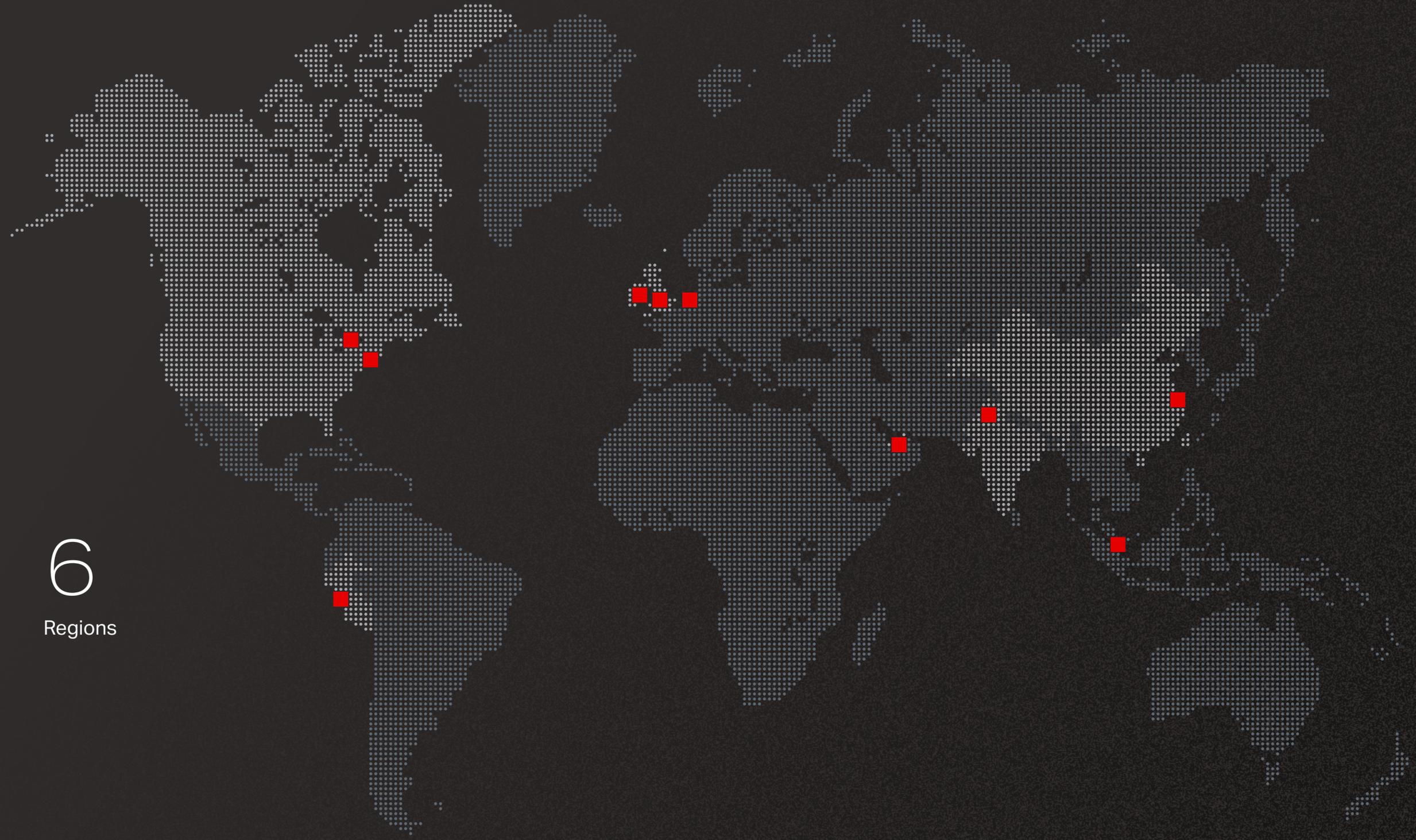
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Studios

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Countries

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Regions

North America
New York
Toronto

South America
Lima

UK
Birmingham
Bristol
Cardiff
Edinburgh
Glasgow
Leeds
Liverpool
London
Manchester
Sheffield

Europe
Dublin
Rotterdam

MENA
Abu Dhabi

Asia Pacific
New Delhi
Shanghai
Singapore

Our goal is to elevate the human experience through built environments that embody inclusivity, promote equity and wellbeing.

Professions

Architecture
Acoustics
Building Services Engineering
Civil & Structural Engineering
Graphic Design
Interior Design
Inclusive Design
Landscape Architecture
Lighting
Sustainability
Urban Design
Urban Planning
Wayfinding

Sectors

Education
Healthcare
Heritage
Housing
Leisure & Culture
Media Environments
Retail
Science, Research & Technology
Sport
Transport
Urbanism
Workplace