

Press Release

Grimshaw Chairman reveals ambitious approach to environmental strategy

4 December 2019

Andrew Whalley, Grimshaw Chairman, laid out an ambitious approach to the firm's environmental strategy in his opening keynote at the World Architecture Festival in Amsterdam today. His lecture, titled 'Zero,' outlined Grimshaw's commitment to an ambitious start of the new decade in which all of Grimshaw's international operations and studios will operate on a net zero carbon basis, and all of its design work will be net zero carbon ready within the decade.

Whalley stated "The United Nations has delivered increasingly dire warnings about our fragile planet. A performative design approach that searches for optimised building solutions is the critical and only way forward. This must be our generation's 'moonshot' moment. Starting ambitiously and promptly in our own studios is the right thing to do.'

In order to accomplish these far-reaching goals, Grimshaw has appointed a Global Practice Leader of Sustainability, Dr. Paul Toyne.

Whalley states, "We recognise the issues of climate change are too large, too significant and too urgent and require immediate, dedicated leadership. Paul's appointment is a decisive step to address the challenge at every level and every location of our practice across the globe."

The appointment of Dr. Toyne represents Grimshaw's desire to be a leader among leaders, working together to achieve ambitious goals and drive positive change. Collaborating across sectors including science, technology, policy and innovation ensures Grimshaw will build the capacity and skills needed to fully understand the challenges humanity faces in mitigating and adapting to climate change.

Dr. Toyne said: "We are diving right in, not only taking stock but making commitments we intend to deliver on as soon as possible. Grimshaw has to be part of a solution that, together with others, is going to lead to a transformation, that takes us into a better state. We will work with clients that can see and want to move into that same state."

Dr. Toyne will oversee Grimshaw's transition to operational carbon neutrality as well as advise and lead on best practices for each studio. Examples of operational objectives include offsetting business travel and energy use associated with each studio, as well as setting reduction targets for the future.

Along with these objectives Grimshaw has signed up to the World Green Building Council's Net Zero Carbon Buildings Commitment challenging businesses, organisations, cities, states and regions to reach net zero operating emissions in their portfolios by 2030, and to advocate for all buildings to be net zero carbon in operation by 2050. Grimshaw recognises that there are several existing commitments to which organisations can sign-up to demonstrate action,

however this commitment provides a market accepted means for assuring this is achieved. Because of Grimshaw's accelerated actions, the practice will meet the target for carbon neutral operations by the end of 2020, ten years ahead of schedule. Based on recent calculations, the practice anticipates offsetting approximately 3000 tonnes of carbon for the fiscal year 2020.

Grimshaw's mission has always been to deliver lasting, meaningful design that brings value and joy to clients and users. With each project Grimshaw delivers there is an innate respect of the fragility of the planet and its depleting resources. Building on this history, the practice's future global aspiration is to design net zero carbon ready buildings and infrastructure by 2025 and to deliver socially and environmentally regenerative buildings by 2030. Dr. Toyne's oversight, rigor and expertise ensures that Grimshaw meets this goal.

Dr. Toyne said: "By setting these ambitious targets we are making a statement of how important the issue of the climate emergency really is, and our commitment to collaborate with others to urgently improve the situation."

Andrew Whalley states, "Creating a lasting impact, now and on future generations, is at the heart of our business. We face a tough challenge to continue to create a built environment that uses the planet's resources carefully, but we must act with urgency and Paul's appointment will address the challenges at every level of our practice."

-ENDS-

Notes to Editors:

Images can be downloaded via: <https://we.tl/t-DtyFba60dU>

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About Grimshaw

Grimshaw was founded by Sir Nicholas Grimshaw in 1980. The practice operates worldwide, across all major sectors, with offices in London, Paris, New York, Los Angeles, Dubai, Melbourne and Sydney, employing over 650 staff.

Grimshaw has been honoured with over 200 awards for its commitment to excellence and innovation, including 'Practice of the Year' and 'Building of the Year' at the 2019 AJ100. In 2019, Founder Sir Nicholas Grimshaw was awarded the Royal Gold Medal for Architecture by the Royal Institute of British Architects.

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