Report on the learnings from

UIA World Congress of Architects 2023

Copenhagen

Sustainable Futures - Leave No One Behind
July 2-7, 2023
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The mission of the UIA World Congress for Architects 2023 in Copenhagen was to unite the whole value chain of the built environment to innovate and discover regenerative and inclusive solutions, and to generate a big leap forward towards the realization of the 17 UN Sustainable Development Goals by 2030.

“There is no beauty in exclusion!”
- Natalie Mossin, President of Congress

The first day of the World Congress, July 3rd 2023, was the hottest day on the planet ever recorded – a record that has been broken again already. This is the context for assembling at the halfway mark to 2030, addressing architecture’s crucial contributions to the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

Coming together for the congress was a moment of change. Hopefully it will prove a forceful one. The dialogues at the congress were both urgent, tough, and optimistic. Demonstrating that those that came together in Copenhagen are already deeply connected to human rights and to the health of our planet.

I am grateful for having been part of the synergy between delegates; students, practitioners, and scientists from 135 different countries. Everyone sharing their knowledge openly, so that we learn from each other, scale up solutions and each take concrete action in our own practice.

To act and act fast, it is key that we share knowledge and experience. Between research and practice, between the difference scales and fields of architecture, between generations and between different geographies and climates.

This is what happened at the congress. There is no one answer as to how we can implement sustainable solutions – localization is key in architecture –, rather there is a multitude of knowledge and many local build practices that contribute to the Goals and this diversity shaped every single conversation at the congress.

I hope the delegates all shared their insights and went home with inspiration and courage to move further. Personally, I will continue to draw from what I learned as I move forward, confident that the relationships and inspirations gained, have helped me reach for the goals in my own practice.

I thank all partners, all the committed contributors and delegates for that generous gift. Thank you for your participation and your dedication to a sustainable future on this planet, and to the values that must imbue our practise: to ‘Leave No One Behind’.

Natalie Mossin,
President of Congress
December 2023
The 28th UIA World Congress of Architects took place in Copenhagen July 2-6, 2023. Under the overarching title “Sustainable Futures – Leave No One Behind” around 6,000 dedicated stakeholders from all corners of the built environment participated in turning the event into a vibrant platform for exchange of ideas, bold looks into the future and a rallying ground for decisive action.

Architects from 135 countries and from both public and private sectors met in Copenhagen to discuss and create feasible and consistent means to achieving equitable, inclusive and sustainable futures for everybody within the framework of the UN 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The congress guests could dive into a diverse and varied programme with more than 150 parallel sessions at the main congress venue Bella Center, 250 scientific paper presentations, 75 Side Events hosted by creative collaborators, Tours and site visits to e.g. the 15 SDG Pavilions along the harbour and in newly developed urban areas of Copenhagen.

More than 400 knowledgable and inspiring keynotes and speakers contributed to the high caliber input and 135 enthusiastic and generous partners brought all kinds of resources to make the congress come true.

The impactful results stand on the shoulders of every single body who paid attention to or participated in the congress.

“Having these types of events are great. It connects us to the other professionals, to meet, to share experiences and to transfer knowledge. I hope the audience is inspired to keep pushing in their profession and not to give up.”

- Diébédo Francis Kéré, Founder and Principal, Kéré Architecture, 2022 Pritzker Prize winner
The programme

Voices from architecture, science, business and politics shared their solutions to the challenges our planet and its population are facing due to inequality and climate change. The overall conclusion was that the built environment is one of the key drivers of radical change if its actors dare to make radical choices.

A huge and diverse programme

The programme was designed around six congress themes based on the UN 17 SDGs. The themes guided the development of sessions and provided a framework for participants to navigate the programme. An important measure of success was to create an inclusive and diverse programme with a strong focus on diversity, and with a special emphasis on including voices from the Global South.

Students and young professionals were given their own platform with sessions and exhibitions developed by Next Gen-representatives from around the world. The global scientific community designed a more inclusive approach to both the call for papers and in the reviewing of the submitted papers.

DESIGN FOR

CLIMATE ADAPTATION
RETHINKING RESOURCES
RESILIENT COMMUNITIES
HEALTH
INCLUSIVITY
PARTNERSHIPS FOR CHANGE

The six congress themes

With the tagline “Sustainable Futures - Leave No One Behind”, the overall programme had a dual commitment to environmental and social sustainability, as the green transition must be inclusive and provide sustainable solutions for all. If we neglect the disadvantaged, mainly in the Global South, we will not succeed in realizing the Sustainable Development Goals.

Keynote dialogues format

Keynote speakers are an substantial strength and major selling point for any congress, but when digital media are overflowing with video presentations from the world’s top architects, a traditional keynote lecture becomes less attractive. Also, the challenges facing the built environment are so complex that it is necessary to draw upon knowledge and insights from other professions to perpetivate the issues at stake.

Hence we turned the keynotes into dialogues where architects were matched with experts from science, business and politics. Keynote dialogues included introductions from the speakers followed by a conversation moderated by Connie Hedegaard, former MP and European Commissioner for Climate Change 2010-2014, who now holds several key positions in support of a low-carbon and green economy.

“The built environment is the biggest sector that has the power to limit the heat - it has the potential and responsibility to transform from being climate negative to become climate positive.”

- Hans Joakim Schellnhuber, Founder and Managing Director, Bauhaus Earth
The keynote dialogues

The EU goes green - a new bauhaus will turn vision into reality
Bjarke Ingels, Founder, BIG & Margrethe Vestager, Executive Vice President, A Europe Fit for the Digital Age and Competition, EU Commission

NEXT GEN: Architecture and Activism – How to Make an Impact

Health - How Architects Must Tackle (Climate Related) Health
Christian Benimana, Senior Principal, MASS Design Group, and Director of The African Design Centre & Maria P. Neira, WHO Director, Department of Environmental, Climate Change and Health

Rethinking Resources - How To Do More With Less
Diébédo Francis Kéré, Founder and Principal, Kéré Architecture, 2022 Pritzker Prize winner & Minik Rosing, Professor of Geology, University of Copenhagen

Partnerships for Change - Sustainable Urbanization with a Holistic Approach
Jim Hagemann Snabe, Chairman, Siemens, World Economic Forum Trustee & Mark Watts, Executive Director, C40 Cities

Climate Adaptation - Building for an Unpredictable Future
Kunle Adeyemi, Founder and Principal, NLÉ & Hans Joachim Schellnhuber, Founder & Managing Director, Bauhaus Earth

Inclusivity - A Big Challenge for Architects and The Built Environment
Chris Downey, Architect and Founder, Architecture for the Blind, and Jesica Amescua Carrera and Mariana Ordóñez Grajales, Architects and Founders, Comunal

Resilient Communities - Nature and Biodiversity Taking Center Stage
Mette Skjold, CEO, SLA & Partha Dasgupta, Emeritus Professor of Economics, University of Cambridge

WATCH VIDEO RECORDINGS OF KEYNOTE DIALOGUES
ON THE CONGRESS’ YOUTUBE CHANNEL:
YOUTUBE.COM/@UIAWORLDCONGRESSOFARCHITECTURE
The three tracks

To ensure that most aspects of the architectural praxis were addressed three main tracks formed the congress programme. Not only to reflect the six congress themes but also to include a multiplicity of voices and perspectives on the challenges facing architecture and the built environment.

### Science Track

Science Track ensured a high academic level in the discussions on how architecture could support the UN 17 Sustainable Development Goals by uniting the global scientific community and creating new alliances in- and outside academia.

The organisation and framwork behind the science track, the call for papers and the activities and pre-events that followed, lay in the hands of professor Mette Ramsgaard and associate professor Martin Tamke, both CITA, The Royal Danish Academy, and 17 renowned scientists and activists chairing the six panels and forming the Scientific Committee.

An outstanding amount of 700+ papers were submitted, which led to an extensive double-blind peer review process with 490+ reviewers involved. Over 250 Scientific Papers, identifying solutions to some of the most pertinent challenges facing architecture and sustainability today were presented. The paper presentations are now available in the official Springer Verlag publication and the work continues through a global, interconnected, research and practitioner community.

### Next Gen Track

To be heard on the same conditions as every other programme contributor, students and young professionals were invited to join the Next Gen Committee to curate their own sessions, exhibitions and competitions for the congress. Just about 2,000 participants were younger than 35 years and they contributed to more diverse discussions and increased focus on inter-generational challenges.

Besides the Next Gen Keynote Dialogues with Archivist Nyasha Harper-Michon and City Counsellor HY William Chan, who both called out for more activism in architecture, planning and building, the Next Gen activities entailed 16 well visited sessions and talks.

**Next Gen activities:**
- 125 students and young professionals from Denmark, Mexico, Korea, Kenya, South Africa, Colombia, and India were involved in DTU Skylab Next Generation City Action
- 70 students from University of Copenhagen, NEXT, and The Royal Danish Academy collaborated on Architecture In Common
- 400 responses from around the world for the Norwegian 120 Hours competition
- 7 young professionals contributed with artistic input in the exhibition halls
- 24 universities from 6 continents worked on the themes through the Global Student Summit.
- 34 students from 20 nationalities participated in the UIA Student Academy: A Society Built for Every Body
- 150 responses from 49 countries participated in the UIA student competition Great Green Wall
- 100 student fellowships, invited by companies & organisations

### Practice Track

Activities in the Practice Track were addressing new ways of working, new methods and materials and bold ideas to inspire architects, planners, manufacturers, developers and builders.

The Practice Committee included practitioners from the Nordic countries, the Danish Architecture Center, the Danish Association of Architectural Firms, the Royal Danish Academy and the University of Copenhagen. The more than 120 sessions, 750 speakers and large exhibitions highlighted both the daunting scale of the challenges and the extraordinary innovation going on in every discipline of architecture and construction.
Extra sessions were supported by UIA World Congress’ Impact Partners. They provided agenda driven content and shared knowhow and solutions by hosting grand symposiums, inviting important speakers and addressing relevant topics that enriched the congress.

REALDANIA TALKS
Realdania Talks were funded by the philanthropic association Realdania, and included a talk with Yasmeen Lari on the Rehabilitation of Climate Migrants, as well as Re-imagining Coastal Cities Facing Rising Sea Levels with Billy Fleming. Realdania was one of the founding partners of the congress, and contributed to a variety of congress activities including financial support for the SDG Pavilions and the Rebuilding Pavilion in the exhibition.

VELUX TALKS
VELUX hosted a symposium “Future Living Places” as well as 3 VELUX Daylight Talks featuring Omar Ghandi, Dorte Mandrup and Grafton Architects. The talks explored the significance of natural light in architecture and showcased the work of architects and offices who are actively working with daylighting in their projects, considering the role of natural light and its impact on human well-being, performance and joy. Velux also supported Francis Kéré as keynote on Rethinking Resources and contributed with a large SDG pavilion “Living Places” in a new urban development area.

OBEL AWARD TALKS
The Obel Award contributed with the Obel Award Talks with the following themes: Mending, Ungrounding, Seminal solutions, Adaptation, Well-being and Embodied emissions. Some of their talks are available on the congress’ youtube channel. From Obel Award came also the ‘unPAVILION’ - an enormous ‘green-washing machine’ - floating in the harbour as part of the 15 SDG Pavilions’ exhibition, several side events and support for several fellowships.
Social events

The congress programme offered many opportunities to network and meet new and old colleagues. Different formats and locations gave colour to the events and the majority of the participants talked, laughed and danced together.

WELCOME RECEPTION

The congress’ welcome reception took place on Sunday July 2nd, in the majestic City Hall of Copenhagen. Lord Mayor of Copenhagen, Sophie Hæstorp Andersen, as well as distinguished speakers from UNESCO, The Honorary Committee and The World Capital of Architecture welcomed the participants to Copenhagen with speeches, drinks and the famous City Hall Pancakes.

OPENING CEREMONY

The formal grand opening of the UIA World Congress took place at Bella Center on Monday, July 3rd. Speakers were Natalie Mossin, President of Congress; Jakob Engel-Schmidt, Danish Minister of Culture; Audrey Azoulay, Director-General, UNESCO; Michal Mlynár, Deputy Executive Director, UN Habitat; and Jesper Nygård, CEO of Realdania and chair of UIA 2023 Honorary Committee. Live performances by Danish artists August Rosenbaum, Coco O and Jeuru.

AFTER HOURS AT THE ROYAL DANISH ACADEMY

A special networking event took place at the Royal Danish Academy on Tuesday July 4th, celebrating new talents in architecture and design. An opportunity to connect with fellow architects from around the world and enjoy a social atmosphere with drinks and music while exploring the newly opened graduation exhibition “NEW DESIGN & ARCHITECTURE”.

FAREWELL DINNER

A festive ‘family style’-dinner gathered 850 participants on Wednesday, July 5th, exploring the Nordic Vegetarian Cuisine in the hip, old industrial area. Live music made an irresistible groove and the dance floor was packed with happy congress guests for hours.

CLOSING & AWARD CEREMONY

The Awards Ceremony marked the end of the congress Thursday, July 6th. The Closing Ceremony also included the launch of The Copenhagen Lessons by Natalie Mossin, and the passing on of the UIA World Congress Banner to the City of Barcelona - the next host city of the UIA World Congress of Architects in 2026.
The 15 SDG Pavilions in Copenhagen were one to one experimental projects. The explorative constructions on selected locations in Copenhagen welcomed visitors during the Summer of 2023. The pavilions were the results of a collaboration between the Danish Association of Architects, the City of Copenhagen, CPH City and Port Development and 100 creative and strong partners from the Danish architects’ eco-system.
Powered by co-creation

Each pavilion was the result of collaborations between visionary architects, engineers, material producers, universities, associations, and foundations who strive to build in ways that support the UN 17 SDGs. In accordance with the theme of the congress “Sustainable Futures – Leave No One Behind”, all SDG Pavilions were designed to be accessible for all and build with emphasis on responsible consumption of materials and with explicit plans for reassembly and reuse after the exhibition.

For example the Bio-Centre Pavilion in front of BLOX has been taken over by the NGO, Action-Aid. The pavilion Poetic Daylight has found a new home at the Royal Danish Academy, and The Raft will remain a new floating urban space for all kinds of activities.

Half a million visitors came by

The pavilions gave tactile insight in old and new building materials, e.g. wood, straw, clay and mycelium, showcasing how to build in regenerative ways that respect the planetarian boundaries.

An estimate of 500,000+ visitors, counting locals, world congress participants and tourists visited the pavilions during the summer.

“Let’s make the coming years an era of slowing down the pace, focusing more on the beautiful and meaningful act of creating a liveable and tranquil society. The 15 pavilions are great and inspiring samples of innovation and collaboration.”

-Jens Kruse, architect and co-founder Catapult Projects

These manifest examples of the future of buildings turned out to be very rewarding both in terms of being extremely audience friendly and in terms of enabling highly professional discussions and learnings, not to mention the attention they got in the media.
“Architecture is never neutral. It either heals or hurts!”

Christian Benimana, Senior Principal, MASS Design Group, and Director of The African Design Centre

“Only architecture that considers human scale and interaction is successful architecture. First life, then spaces, then buildings - the other way around never works.”

-Jan Gehl, Architect, Professor (ret.) of Urban Design, The Royal Danish Academy, Founding Partner, Gehl
30 guided tours

More than 1,500 congress guests participated in the tour programme powered by Danish partners ‘Grundejernes Investeringsfond’ (GI), ‘Bevica Foundation’ and ‘Danish Architecture Center’ (DAC) as well as independent tour providers. The congress tours adressed Adaptive Reuse; Universal Design and Urban Architecture in Denmark, Sweden and Iceland.
75 side events

A broad variety of side events - from guided morning swims in the harbour to talks and exhibitions at Louisiana Museum of Modern Art - took place from June 30 to July 9. Side events were organised, financed and executed by external partners and communicated through congress channels on web and in the congress app. The events were well visited and gave room for deeper conversations about specific topics and good chances to meet the locals.

OPENING OF EXHIBITION
HOUSE OF PEACE

MORNING EXERCISE
FREE OF CHARGE
JULY 4, 2023 7:30-8:15

MORNING EXERCISE AT
KONDITAGET LÜDERS

EXHIBITION
FREE OF CHARGE
JULY 3, 2023 17:00-19:00

SPACE10 GALLERY:
DESIGN IN THE AGE OF AI

ROUND TABLE
FREE OF CHARGE
JULY 3, 2023 17:30-19:00

OBEL AWARD TALKS:
EMBODIED EMISSIONS

ROUND TABLE
1.35 EUROS
JULY 2, 2023 14:00-15:30

OBEL AWARD TALKS X
LOUISIANA

TALK
FREE OF CHARGE
JULY 5, 2023 18:00-22:00

GREENHOUSE SESSIONS
PRESENTED BY RE:ARC INSTITUTE
Demographics

The congress welcomed about 6,000 participants from 135 countries, creating an atmosphere of cultural exchange and knowledge sharing.

The 2023 World Congress attracted key stakeholders from the built environment. Around 6,000 professionals from 135 countries came to Copenhagen: architects, designers, clients, developers, advisors, urban planners, global decision makers and business leaders convened with renowned scientists from all over the globe, highly motivated students, dedicated NGOs and politicians to widen their horizons, debate and get inspired by new products, research and learnings – and of course to network.

All ages were represented but what differed from previous congresses was the high participation of young professionals, students and youth, with 37% of the audience being under the age of 35. Women and men were equally represented by 48% each.

“I was surprised by the young generation of architects and their enthusiasm in the built environment.”

-Congress participant, feedback survey

When asked to rate the congress, participants gave an average of 4,2 on a 5 point scale in feedback survey.

Gender and age balance
Global balance

The UIA congresses are key events for professional and cultural exchange, convening thousands of architects from around the globe every third year. Each event focuses on a different architecture-related theme and the 2023 congress brought the Nordic sections together to welcome the rest of the world in Copenhagen. Not surprisingly, the most represented country was Denmark with over 2,000 participants. Other well represented countries were Germany (265), China (224), the US (197) and Italy (150). 135 countries were represented in total.

“My greatest learning was that the true inspiration is to be found in the Global South”.

- Congress participant, feedback survey

Congress participants map
Engagement

Digital communication made communication more seamless, whether it was through e-mail, social media channels, the congress website or the congress app. The app (UIA World Congress 2023) was downloaded by 5231 individual users and helped participants:

- get a better overview of the programme
- find scientific papers
- plan their days at the congress
- save preferred sessions
- connect with other participants
- stay tuned on tours and social activities
- overview partners, exhibitors and much more

All partners and exhibitors had a company page visible to all participants to showcase their products, solutions and employees present at the congress. The exhibition programme was made available to congress participants named “Talks on floor” facilitated by the partners themselves in their exhibition stands.

Participants were encouraged to share their experience on social media using the hashtags #uia2023cph and #SustainableFutures2023. The hashtag #uia2023cph has 1000+ posts on Instagram and during the congress week, unique impressions topped with 20,000 on Linkedin.

In the participants survey we asked which themes were most relevant - the result was as follows.

Which themes were most relevant?

Converter

Find examples on Instagram via this QR code
Sustainable congress

Many measures were taken to minimize the congress’ carbon footprint. From the choices of venues, hotels and catering, travel and transportation to marketing, sales and merchandise.

From the start of the congress planning the congress secretariat focused on minimizing the carbon footprint. Making an event with thousands of participants flying in from all over the world, would only be appropriate if the congress was as sustainable as possible.

A venue with a holistic approach
The first step towards curbing the emissions was choosing a venue with a responsible profile. Next one, to make the majority of all communication digital; to promote eco-friendly hotels, and encourage participants to use public transportation, bike or walk.

The venue, Bella Center Copenhagen (BCC), was chosen for setting people and planet over profit, and for its commitment to sustainability. BCC has a target of net zero emissions by 2050 and numerous actions taken to reducing energy consumption, minimizing food waste and waste in general.

The venue also holds a DGNB gold certification for the Plenary Hall and a 2023 Green Key re-certification. The roof-integrated solar panels produce green energy that covers the annual consumption of 537 households.

Archistay - the architects’ homestay
To offer an eco-friendly accommodation concept that also could boost participants network, the Danish Association of Architects co-created a non-profit-homestay service “Archistay” together with Human Hotel. According to calculations from Nordic Council of Ministers (2017) homestay is 4 - 5 times less energy consuming than an average hotel room. During the congress 172 nights were spent in homes of Danish architects creating new friendships with less energy.

Veggie meals and refillable coffee mugs
To reduce the carbon footprint from carnivore food production, all meals offered at the congress were vegetarian. This choice of veggie menus were a success to 99% of the participants.

To reduce the amount of post congress litter, the guests were urged to bring their own devices - e.g. refillable bottles to use at the free coffee and water stations to reused congress bags. This made the 3,500 pre-produced 2023-congress bags highly coveted objects and not a single bag was left at the end of the congress.

Digital footprint
The congress secretariat focused on digital communication for numerous reasons - primarily to reach an international audience but also to limit printing and paper waste as well as physical advertising and signage detrimental to the environment.

Even though the hosting service of the congress website was powered by green energy, the congress website produced 1.39g of CO2 per page. With minimum 20,000 monthly views, this would amount to more than 330 kg a year - per page.

To mitigate these heavy numbers all digital activities were trimmed as much as possible - using the following adjustments among others:

- reducing image size
- creating better user experience for more focused user behaviour
- limiting video hosting (by linking to Youtube)
- using AMP, PWA and caching
- limiting e-mail correspondence by sending fewer e-mails and less attachments using links instead
- Replying only when necessary - using likes instead

To reduce the amount of post congress litter, the guests were urged to bring their own devices - e.g. refillable bottles to use at the free coffee and water stations to reused congress bags. This made the 3,500 pre-produced 2023-congress bags highly coveted objects and not a single bag was left at the end of the congress.
The promise - Leave No One Behind

By asserting Leave No One Behind as a policy for the 2023 World Congress, the commitment was implemented in all components of the congress through talks, exploration and the exchange of solutions.

Leave No One Behind is the central, transformative promise of the UN 2030 Sustainable Development Goals. This promise and premise represents the commitment to reduce the inequalities and vulnerabilities that leave people behind and undermine the potentials of individuals and of humanity in general.

Accessibility, inclusivity and sustainability were top of mind in planning the congress – from designing the website, planning tours, building pavilions, setting up exhibitions, designing the programme, calling for side-events to throwing the farewell party. Not that the good intentions led to perfect results, but everybody did their best and learned a lot during the process – from organizers to partners, speakers, exhibitors, and participants – who all adopted the premise and made wonderful contributions.

Leave No One Behind was also an invitation to participate irrespective of age, gender, origin, or disability challenges. In that sense the congress did well with the majority of the participants coming from countries outside the Nordics.

To back a diverse representation of voices, the congress offered fellowships to both students and architects from lower income countries as did many of the congress’ generous partners. More than 400 fellows participated.

One output for further inspiration was the publication ‘Design for Inclusivity’ – the first of six volumes of proceedings from the Science Track, published by Springer Nature under their Sustainable Development Goals series.

It presents 57 papers investigating Design for Inclusivity through the lenses of: Gender; Race, Ethnicity & Minority; Ability; Neurodiversity; Age; Poverty & Socio-Economy; the Non-Human; and Intersectionality.

“Historically our cities have been designed by, and for "Reference Man". Great design starts by ditching “Reference Man”. I invite every architect instead to think in two non identical people, two local plants, two local animals.”

Universal Design

As a natural manifestation of the congress ethos of Leaving No One Behind, Universal Design had a strong presence at the congress. The latest research and learnings were presented in sessions and in exhibitions and revealed many innovative solutions. They showcased why Universal Design must be included from the very beginning of the creative process, and how architects must embrace it as an asset rather than a challenge, when designing for an inclusive, regenerative and just future.

An example was the session hosted by Fritz Hansen, a leading Danish furniture company, who invited delegates to discussions about ‘Connecting Design and Architecture: How Design Impacts Body and Mind’. It focused on the different perceptions of a given design, depending on people's physical mobility.

Panelist, Caspar Eric, a Danish poet and writer, who was born with Cerebral Palsy, has experienced how design often excludes him in his daily life, whether using a piece of furniture, entering a building, or moving from A to B in the city.

A good example of Universal Design in everyday work life was showcased on one of the UIA Tours to the headquarters of Disabled People’s Organizations Denmark (DPOD), offered by the Bevica Foundation. The office building counts 300 employees and daily visitors who can move and work on equal terms whether they have a disability or not, and regardless of the nature of their disability. Congress participants had the opportunity to experience a built work environment, within the average cost of an office building, while still being accessible.

“Is architecture for everybody? Or just for the ideal body?”

- Casper Eric, Danish poet and activist

Good links:
https://www.bevica.dk/partnerskaber/universal-design-hub/
https://universaldesignguide.com/
Student Academy – for Every Body

The UIA World Congress Student Academy 2023 delivered a spectacular and engaging exhibition: ‘A Society Built for Every Body’.

34 students from 20 countries convened for two weeks at the Royal Danish Academy and were introduced to artistic interpretations of Universal Design and to working with diversity as the core of the design process. The exhibition became an eye-opener for how to embrace diversity and think in more inclusive ways when designing for the future.

“I learned how we should be more attentive to minority groups, how we have more similarities with people with disabilities than differences. The take-away for me will be the insistence on always being inclusive from the very start when we are designing and conceptualizing any project. Two quotes come to mind: ‘Abled is temporary’ and ‘necessary for some, beneficial for all’...”.

- Participant at the Student Academy
Communication

Communication, sales and marketing were designed to attract a diverse and international audience within the built environment creating both awareness and curiosity.

The strategy was to:
- create and curate relevant content
- attract an international audience
- inform partners on progress
- contribute to better understanding of the congress' theme & programme
- facilitate navigation for participants during the congress
- help legacy live on afterwards
- keep stakeholders happy and committed

Content was cut to the point and to make sure to spread the word before, during and after the congress, campaigns appealed to diverse audiences via: website, newsletter, SoMe channels & videos. Partner packages and collaborations that drew attention to the congress via pre-events and marketing efforts were primarily digital campaigns as well as press efforts, pitching stories internationally as well as locally.

During the congress, wayfinding and the congress app helped participants navigate in the programme as well as finding events. Communication via SoMe channels, newsletters and website spread messaging of the congress, for example by sharing free, recorded keynotes on youtube or point to 300 Science Papers available for download via Springer Nature.

By encouraging speakers, participants, partners and exhibitors to share their experiences on social media, the congress reached an even larger audience than can be measured. Ongoing mentions on social media and increase in followers continued months after the congress.

Social Media
Content was carefully curated so that partners, speakers, exhibitors and the City of Copenhagen were promoted as a part of the congress. The approach was a visual journey, leading to increased curiosity for the visitor, and a wish to go on to visit the various profiles by using tags and hashtags strategically.

Instagram (7,000 followers), popular with the main target group (architects), was preferred as a medium facilitating visual storytelling but content was also made for Linkedin (5,000 followers, preferred for partner references), Facebook (1,500 followers) and Youtube (600 followers, both channels more popular in the Global South). Monthly newsletters were sent to 1,500 subscribers from around the world.
All content followed the design guide, using UIA colours, fonts and graphics. Partners, such as Wonderful Copenhagen and The Architects’ Association, shared photos and content. This was carefully planned according to the communication strategy in order to follow production and important key dates.

The production was an ongoing process and the congress' channels gained momentum organically from a broad variety of content that was easy to share. It was also helped along with paid content, google banners and sales efforts towards the last few months, to increase sales right before the congress.

Social media samples

Total clicks: 3895, impressions: 7510, Reactions: 311, engagement rate: 56,21%
Media partnerships

Media partnerships backed that the overall theme of the congress “Sustainable futures - Leave No One Behind” reached beyond the participants at the congress.

Media partnerships gave great results as they were aimed at a targeted audience. A longer collaboration with journalists allowed for better understanding of the congress themes and raison d’etre, and therefore resulted in more thorough articles that carried the messaging of the congress to larger audiences. Media partners were: Archdaily (CH), Byrummonitor (DK), Dezeen (UK), Stirworld (IN).

Media partner ARKA produced 40+ short videos with speakers or topics from the congress. An example was a feature on Anna Heringer, OBEL AWARD winner. Videos are shared through UIA World Congress Channels and on ARKA's own channel: https://arka.video/

Learnings

- Reach and engagement were the main target on Linkedin and Instagram - not followers.
- Measurable reach on social media was close to 300.000 users, primarily via own content
- Banner campaigns performed greatly for relatively low cost (receiver-specific)
- Printed ads did not perform well for sales in DK, although they potentially reached 1 million users.
- Partner communication and Pavilion visibility were effectful. Social Media reach peaked with Pavilions communication and partners shared communication materials on their own channels.

Keep it simple

Simple messaging gets the best results. It needs to be direct and to the point and speak to the right audience. The attention span is getting shorter so complex messaging turned out tricky and ideas that challenge the norm needed further explaining.

If themes are too abstract, it can be difficult to create relevant stories that inspire people in a few seconds and lead to action.

Simplicity is key both in content creation, in methods and in structuring future congresses as well as websites and programme. Diversity is also an important factor in representation and will be noticed going forward.

Press partnerships

- Internationally reach potentially 1 million through 60+ articles
- Denmark, reach potentially 10,000 through 40+ articles in Byrummonitor

Digital campaigns

Paid campaigning was necessary to facilitate sales. Campaigns, banners and ads helped reach a larger audience and printed ads were used for local market. Several communication packages were shared for different audiences (partners, pavilions, speakers, exhibitors) – mostly to increase reach on social media and include partners of the congress in knowledge sharing.

Campaign samples
Across all platforms, video content performed best, with an average view rate of 25%. Carousels and product shots were also generating high engagement rates.
Press samples

716 Press mentions globally, 310 in Denmark, 4 Media partners, +110 articles through mediapartners. Reach through press estimated at +1 million internationally through Archdaily, Dezeen and Stirworld and +10,000 in Denmark through mediapartner Byrummonitor, LICitationen and Dagens byggeri.
Impact and legacy

Having a mission about building more regenerative, inclusive and equitable societies and launching a world congress to attract stakeholders from the global community to support this mission, takes its toll on all kinds of ressources. A world congress like this has to leave remarkable results, lasting impact and a strong legacy.

From the start of the congress preparation it has been imperative to match the amount of ressources spent - money, time and energy - with the scale and scope of the expected impact. In other words - the results of the UIA World Congress 2023 had to be remarkable, effective and lasting.

That meant monitoring all communications activities - like sharing, likes, visits, attention - and collecting participants reviews, counting all kinds of activities and events before, during and after the congress, and listening carefully to the 'talk of the town' to register the positive derivatives from the congress.

A multi-channel series of ideation meetings, pre-congress seminars, talks, workshops, competitions, and communication across every possible global outlet combined with strong media partnerships and dedicated collaborators from the realm of the built environment proved to be critical in shaping the success of the event and its legacy.

Not only in terms of creating awareness of the congress and its mission, but also in terms of building new connections, networks, alliances, and business opportunities for everybody who participated.

At first it seemed like a positive spillover from the congress itself, but as the congress matured and finally took place it became clear that the spillover was transmissible and it became part of the impact. Some would even say it has evolved into a movement and with about 6,000 dedicated ambassadors for a more regenerative, equitable and inclusive built environment out there, hope is high.

“It's really important for us to ensure that we are making decisions not just for the now but for tomorrow, for the next generations and their children.”

-HY William Chan, Lord Mayoral Councillor, City of Sydney and Global Public Leadership Fellow, World Economic Forum

Some results with impact:

New Academic Alliances
The congress’ academic partners – universities, academies, and schools – report that an overwhelming amount of new scientific partnerships have been forged, and that global institutions of high caliber are reaching out to connect.

New State and City Architects Network
On behalf of the City of Copenhagen a network of State and City Architects was established during the congress, convening a broad representation of global experts in sustainable city development, and creating new opportunities for the sharing of knowledge and experiences in the future.

The Copenhagen Lessons I
Ten principles on how to build in the future - without harming the planet and its inhabitants – were launched on the final day of the congress and have obtained great attention and interest.

Adopted by the Capital - Copenhagen Lessons II
The City of Copenhagen has already transformed the 10 principles into five dogmas soon to be adopted by the surrounding municipalities on both sides of the Swedish/Danish border.
Springer UIA Scientific Proceedings
Proceedings - the 250+ scientific papers are published by Springer Nature under their ‘Sustainable Development Goals’ series. Each volume represents one of the congress’ themes: Design for Climate Adaptation, Design for Rethinking Resources, Design for Resilient Communities, Design for Health, Design for Inclusivity & Design for Partnerships for Change. Go to: https://link.springer.com/conference/uia

The UN SDG Architecture Guides and Exhibition
Three publications filled with inspiring architecture cases that covers the UN 17 Sustainable Development Goals. Volume One and Two showcasing global projects - the latter, Volume Three, covers Danish projects. The guides are available here: https://uia2023cph.org/the-guides/

The Exhibition “Danish Architecture and the UN 17 SDGs” showed a reel of innovative Danish architecture project and was curated by the Danish Association of Architects on the occasion of the World Congress. The exhibition format will continue to travel and showcase inspiring projects e.g. The Copenhagen Lessons.

Lets Talk (more about) Architecture
The congress pre-event format “Lets Talk Architecture”, co-created with Danish Architecture Center and launched during UN Climate Week in New York 2022, proved to be a very strong channel for addressing and debating sustainable architecture. It has now become a lasting debate-format at the Danish Architecture Center. Download pod-casts of the talks for free at www.dac.dk

“I insist that we must have an honest conversation about what problem we are trying to solve; and that problem, as far as I am concerned, is inequity and injustice”.

- Christian Benimana, Senior Principal, MASS Design Group, and Director of The African Design Centre
The Copenhagen Lessons

Copenhagen Lessons were the result of the knowledge and learnings from pre-events, scientific paper presentations, partnerships, talks and debates. The Lessons represent the essence of the congress and can be seen as a version of the UN 17 SDGs that addresses the built environment.

The Copenhagen Lessons are build on substantive new research and practice developed and brought together in the years leading up to and during the congress, exploring architecture’s contributions to the UN Sustainable Development Goals. The Copenhagen Lessons are formulated with the hope that they can serve as inspirational principles when building for a sustainable future.

The global engineering, architecture and consultancy company Ramboll / Henning Larsen has provided the background documentation for the Lessons as Knowledge Partners.

The Copenhagen Lessons were launched during the Closing Ceremony of the congress, and a process, anchored in the Danish Association of Architects, is being developed for their dissemination in the global architectural community. This process will explore how the principles match the needs of different target groups across professions and in different geographies. The principles will then be used in a range of communication activities designed to maximize long-term impact and global reach.

As such, the Copenhagen Lessons are already an important part of the congress legacy. They embody the holistic approach to sustainability which was also a key to understanding the six congress themes. Next step will be to develop relevant and measurable indicators of how each of the 10 principles perform in terms of dissemination, awareness and implementation.

The goal is to ensure an enduring, international interest in knowing more about the principles and any additional background material and cases and that the Copenhagen Lessons continue to be referred to as a turning point and a source of inspiration and change.

“How we act on this must be bold – even radical - compared with current practice”.

- Natalie Mossin, President of Congress
The Copenhagen Lessons consists of 10 principles for a rapid and radical change in the built environment to reach the UN's 17 Sustainable Development Goals.

## COPENHAGEN LESSONS

10 principles to build on

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Principle</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>01</td>
<td>Dignity and agency for all people are fundamental in architecture, there is no beauty in exclusion.</td>
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<tr>
<td>02</td>
<td>People at risk of being left behind must be accommodated first when we construct, plan, and develop the built environment.</td>
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<tr>
<td>03</td>
<td>Existing built structures must always be reused first.</td>
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<td>04</td>
<td>No new development must erase green fields.</td>
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<tr>
<td>05</td>
<td>Natural ecosystems and food production must be sustained regardless of the built context.</td>
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<tr>
<td>06</td>
<td>No virgin mineral material must be used in construction when reuse is possible.</td>
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<tr>
<td>07</td>
<td>No waste must be produced or left behind in construction.</td>
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<tr>
<td>08</td>
<td>When sourcing materials for construction, local, renewable materials come first.</td>
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<tr>
<td>09</td>
<td>In everything we build, carbon capture must exceed carbon footprint.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>When developing, planning, and constructing the built environment, every activity must positively impact water ecosystems and clean water supply.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
“The congress was truly eye-opening. We have to change the way we build, teach and live!”

-Congress participant, feedback survey

“The amazing presence and contributions of the next generation was an incredible gift to the congress!”

- Natalie Mossin, President of Congress
Copenhagen - World Capital of Architecture 2023

Copenhagen was designated “UNESCO-UIA World Capital of Architecture 2023” by UNESCO, the United Nations' organisation for education, culture, communication and science.

A city alive with architectural events

The City of Copenhagen has been a close partner of the UIA World Congress, and Copenhagen a warm and welcoming host city. As part of a long lasting collaboration between UIA and UNESCO, Copenhagen was designated ‘UNESCO-UIA World Capital of Architecture 2023-2026’, and more than 500 activities related to the celebration of the city kicked off during the year. Locals, tourists, congress guests and others with interest in the built environment, biogene materials and sustainability participated in the many spectacular events as well as more than 100,000 read in international magazines and newspapers.

The City focused on bringing architectural topics to a broader audience and invited citizens, local businesses, and organisations to host small or large events for the public. The City also revealed new urban projects and places focusing on inclusivity and regenerative urban design under the label Copenhagen in Common.

“...Architecture isn’t just about bricks and mortar. It isn’t just about the historical monuments. It is also everyday architecture, how we move and share spaces and we need to be able to talk about the more difficult subjects as well. That is what the World Congress was all about, on a global scale, to find solutions to challenges and seeing architecture as an agent of change”

- Camilla van Deurs, City Architect, City of Copenhagen
Both private sector companies and private foundations contributed to the planning and execution of the congress. Private foundations financed specific projects whereas the private sector showcased new solutions and contributed to the programme within a given topic. Others exhibited new solutions and materials. Partners were divided into nine categories depending on the type of support and level of engagement in the congress.

**Founding Partners**

The seven Founding Partners - Realdania; Danish Architects Association; Danish Association of Architectural Firms; Royal Danish Academy; Aarhus, School of Architecture; Dreyers Foundation and Bevica Foundation generously funded the planning and execution of the event and supported a large number of congress activities, scientific research, pavilions, student academy and more.

**Impact Partners**

The two Impact Partners, VELUX and OBEL AWARD, contributed with a considerable investment by providing content, sharing know-how and solutions by hosting symposiums, supporting case-competitions, and setting up larger exhibitions and lounges, for networking and talks. All engaged in showcasing and debating sustainable and inclusive solutions from a variety of sectors within the built environment.

**Knowledge Partners**

Knowledge Partners represented a variety of sectors ranging from the industry, associations, NGOs, universities, and philanthropic foundations.

Many partners joined forces with interdisciplinary stakeholders to create nuanced debates and sessions, to inspire congress participants and enrich the congress experience.

**Congress Partners**

CPH City and Port Development, has been a dedicated partner in particular in relation to the realisation of the SDG pavilions along the harbour. The Danish Architecture Center (DAC) contributed with communication, knowledge, pre- and side-events, talks and guided tours to promote and support the mission of the congress.

Wonderful Copenhagen brought their expertise and support into the making of the congress from the very beginning to legacy building at the end.

The City of Copenhagen has been a creative and skillful partner in terms of creating a strong bond between the congress activities and the activites that followed being appointed UNESCO-UIA World Capital of Architecture 2023.

“The World Congress of Architects 2023 in Copenhagen was an enormous empowerment of the global community meeting up and engaging into talks, debates, with keynotes and numerous informal meetings, both expected and many unexpected new acquaintances, with promising spin-off for future relations.”

-Lone Feifer, Director, Sustainable Buildings, VELUX

Many partners joined forces with interdisciplinary stakeholders to create nuanced debates and sessions, to inspire congress participants and enrich the congress experience.

**Dedicated partners**

135 partners participated and invested in the UIA World Congress in Copenhagen. The congress operated with five main partner labels: Founding-, Impact-, Congress-, Knowledge- and Pavilion-partners. The partner portfolio represented 70% national and 30% international partners.
Partner Pre-events

An example of a partner supported pre-event was the ‘Let’s talk Architecture’-series co-created with Danish Architecture Center during 2022-23. The events were locally hosted debate-meetings in Paris, New York, Berlin, Milan and Madrid, supported by the Danish Ministry of Culture and promoting the agenda of the UIA Congress. During Climate Week in New York 2022 a series of events with several local and Danish partners took place on The High Line. The event was hosted by the Danish Consulate General and featured the congress’ mission and themes.

Exhibitors

The Professional Congress Organiser (PCO) CAP-Partner attracted small/medium exhibitors with a commercial aim to promote sustainable solutions and products targeting the building industry. 70 companies were part of the exhibition, with additional 44 booths for UIA member sections and 15 UIA Work Programmes and Commissions.

"For me, the congress was a forum with thousands of like-minded people with different circumstances and obstacles they are struggling with. We shared our difficulties and dreams and reminded each other of the responsibility of an architect and a human being to create a space for a dignified, comfortable life and to unite communities on the path to equality and sustainable development".

-Viktoria Didych, Balbek Bureau, Ukraine, part of the Rebuilding Pavilion project
## Partners

### Founding Partners

![Partner Logos]

### Impact Partners

![Partner Logos]

### Knowledge Partners

![Partner Logos]

### Congress Partners

![Partner Logos]

### Nordic Section Partners

![Partner Logos]

### Kindly Invited By

![Partner Logos]

### Tour Partners

![Partner Logos]

### Media Partners

![Partner Logos]

### Exhibitors

![Partner Logos]
The congress organisation

**UIA 2023 CPH Board of Directors**
The Board of Directors were responsible for the direction and coordination of the UIA 2023 CPH.

- Natalie Mossin, Chair Person of the Board, President of UIA World Congress 2023, The Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts
- Lars Autrup, Vice Chair, CEO of the Danish Association of Architects
- Nina Kvested Helk, CFO, Realdania
- Lene Damand Lund, Rector, Royal Danish Academy
- Lene Espersen, former CEO of Danish Association of Architectural Firms
- Torben Nielsen, Rector, Aarhus School of Architecture

**The Nordic Advisory Board**
The Nordic Architectural Board was formed to secure the congress program with the highest level of quality in the architectural disciplines, to point out relevant keynotes, and to promote the world congress. Members of the board were appointed by the Nordic Associations of Architects:

- Denmark: Kai-Uwe Bergmann, BIG
- Sweden: Monica von Schmalensee, White Architects
- Norway: Tine Heglii, former director at Snøhetta
- Finland: Rainer Mahlamäki, Lahdelma & Mahlamäki Architects

**UIA 2023 CPH Coordination Council**
The Coordinating Council under the Presidency and direction of the UIA President, was responsible for the establishment of the general principles governing the congress, the monitoring and orientation of the preparatory works, the achievement of coordination and cooperation among different parties, as well as the management of the Agreement signed between the UIA and the Danish Association of Architects.

- José Luis Cortés Delgado, MX, UIA President
- Tan Pei Ing, MY, UIA General Secretary
- Seif Allah Alnaga, EG, UIA Treasurer
- Teresa Taboas Veleiro, SP, Council Member, UIA
- Igor de Vetyemy, BR, Representative of the UIA Congress in Rio de Janeiro 2021
- Johnny Svendborg, DK, President of the Danish Association of Architects

- Paula Huotelin, FI, CEO of the Finnish Association of Architects
- Kari Bucher, NO, CEO of the Norwegian Association of Architects
- Tobias Olsson, SE, CEO of the Swedish Association of Architects
- Ízélina Van Melle, DK, landskabsarkitekt mdl, IFLA delegate
- Lone Ravn, DK, Head of Unit, the Danish Agency for Culture and Palaces, the Danish Ministry of Culture
- Andreas Blohm Graversen, DK, Head of Office, the Danish Ministry of Culture
- Janet Nielsen, DK, Ministry of Transport and Housing
- Rikke Zeuner, Head of Office, the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs followed Louise Bang Jespersen, in 2021
- Camilla Van Deurs, DK, City Architect in The City of Copenhagen
- Natalie Mossin, DK, President of UIA World Congress 2023, The Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts
- Mette Ramsgaard, DK, General Reporter, The Royal Danish Academy
- Mette Lindberg, DK, CEO of UIA World Congress 2023

**The Honorary Committee**
The Honorary Committee was composed of eminent professionals who would lend strength to the congress through their knowledge and experience. These honourable persons were appointed by UIA and the Board of Directors.

- Jesper Nygaard, Chairperson, CEO of Realdania
- Bjarke Ingels, Architect MAA, Founder of BIG
- Mogens Lykketoft, former Minister for Finance; former Minister for Foreign Affairs and President of the Seventieth Session of the United Nations General Assembly.
- Kristian Jensen, former Minister for Finance and former Minister for Foreign Affairs
- Sophie Haestorp Andersen, Lord Mayor of The City of Copenhagen
- Martha Thorne, former Dean of IE School of Architecture and Design, Madrid, Member of the Pritzker Prize, and Senior Advisor to the OBEL AWARD
UIA 2023 CPH Scientific Committee, Advisory Board and Panel Chairs
The Scientific Committee was responsible for the scientific and professional content of the UIA 2023 CPH World Congress.

The ambition of the Scientific Committee was to foster and facilitate greater exchange of knowledge between research and practice across disciplinary niches and geographies. The Scientific Committee was organised around six Scientific Panels that shaped the themes of the UIA 2023 World Congress in Copenhagen.

The 17 leading international researchers, appointed as special advisors or chairs for each thematic panel, represented and connected an array of architectural expertise and contexts.

Committee members and panel chairs:
- Panel 1, Climate Adaptation: Billie Faircloth and Maibritt Pedersen Zari.
- Panel 2, Rethinking Resources: Carlo Ratti and Mette Ramsgaard Thomsen.
- Panel 3, Resilient Communities: Anna Rubbo and Juan Du.
- Panel 4, Health: Arif Hasan and Christian Benimana.
- Panel 5, Inclusivity: Magda Mostafa and Ruth Baumeister.
- Panel 6, Partnerships for Change: Sandi Hilal and Merve Bedir.

General Reporters
- Mette Ramsgaard Thomsen, Architect, PhD, Professor, Royal Danish Academy
- Martin Tamke, Associate Professor, Royal Danish Academy

Special Advisors
- Kathrine Richardson, USA, Professor in Biological Oceanography, University of Copenhagen
- Chris Luebkeman, CH, Dr., ARUP, ETH Zürich
- Camilla Ryhl, DK, Head of Research- and Development, Bevica Universal Design Hub
- Thomas Bo Jensen, DK, Head of Research, Professor, School of Architecture, Aarhus

Research Curator and Coordinator
- Pernille Maria Bärnheim, Academic Employee, Royal Danish Academy

UIA Secretariat Paris
The UIA Secretariat was represented by Pei Ing Tan, Secretary General and architect; Sonia Cela, Administrative Director, and staff. The congress was organised by the UIA 2023 Congress Secretariat in Copenhagen, the board, several committees and councils and in close collaboration with the UIA Secretariat in Paris.

The Communications Committee
To enable good partner communication, a committee of communications officers from the founding partners were formed:
- Sara Kolka, Communications Director, UIA 2023 CPH
- Sussi Heimburger, Communications Officer, Danish Association of Architects
- Pia Møller Munksgaard, Press Officer, Realdania
- Karen Sejr, DK, Communications Officer, Danish Association of Architectural Firms
- Mads Stampe, Communications Officer, Bevica Foundation
- Inge Henningsen, Press Officer, Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts
- Signe Janderup, Communications Officer, Aarhus School of Architecture
- Kathrine Krebs, Communications Officer, Dreyers Foundation

UIA World Congress Copenhagen Secretariat
- Mette Lindberg, CEO
- Anne Mette Niebuhr, Partnerships
- Sara Kolka, Communication
- AC Rino, Social Media
- Kristian Serensen, Programme
- Mie Haldrup, Project Management
- Isadora Wistrom, Project Management
- Regitze Hess, Tours
- Ingeborg Hau, SDGs
- Carina Hammer, Partnerships
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Programme content details are not fully visible due to cropping.
## Programme

### Wednesday, July 5

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### Thursday, July 6

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### Monday

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### Tuesday

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### Wednesday

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