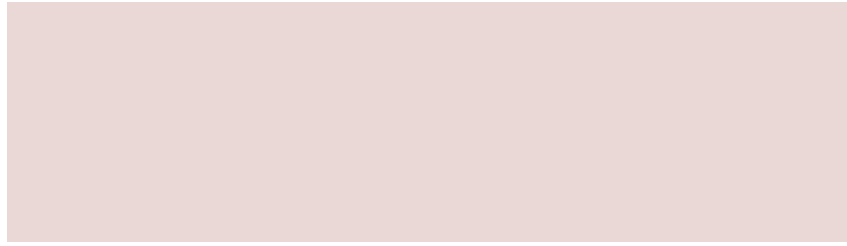


MAY 2020



Healthy people in healthy places equals a healthy economy





Healthy people in healthy places equals a healthy economy

The impact of the global COVID-19 pandemic will be felt for years to come – on the economy, on people and on our way of life. Yet through it all, we've found ways to come together, to reinforce our bonds and to strengthen the connections that make us uniquely human. While cities across the globe work to flatten the curve and return to some sense of normalcy, we must face a new reality: The world we return to might look nothing like the one we've left behind.

Fifty percent of the world's population already lives below the poverty line, and the IMF estimates from 2020-2021 the **cumulative global GDP** loss from this pandemic could be around \$9 trillion – greater than the economies of Japan and Germany combined.

It is no secret that the most vulnerable among us will feel the gravest impacts. We're going to have extraordinary mental, physical and financial health repercussions in nearly every part of society.

In short, what is unfolding will challenge us in new and previously unthinkable ways. Remaining resilient – both in business and in life – will require every industry and individual to adapt at a pace we might never have thought possible.

But what lies ahead is also a responsibility for us to design a more resilient future. It's a chance for us to gather under the common banner of humanity and champion a better quality of life for millions of people around the world.

USGBC and its members are already the leaders in building sustainably. We believe that healthy people in healthy places is the fastest way to build a healthy economy. And the global pandemic has only made our beliefs that much stronger and our mission that much more vital. We don't have to choose between public health and a healthy economy. The future will require both to thrive. That is why going forward, we will prioritize our efforts to build people's trust that their spaces are healthy and have a positive impact not only on them, but the economy at large.

In other words, our second generation at USGBC will focus on our relevant and reimagined vision:

Healthy people in healthy places equals a healthy economy.

This is a once-in-a-lifetime crisis, but it's also a once-in-a-lifetime chance for us to fulfill that vision by asking the right questions and discovering the most equitable, inclusive and innovative solutions:

How will we build a healthier, more sustainable future for current and future generations to honor the lives lost? How will we rebuild our economy and replace unprecedented job losses around the world? How will we remain resilient against future threats to our global health, like climate change? And, how can we ensure the trust people have in feeling safe and healthy in the spaces where they live, work, learn and play?

That is why USGBC is outlining a series of actions and priorities that will support the global recovery effort and leverage the power of our community to shape a healthier future for all.

Responding to now: Our new vision

We'll face many important decisions in the months ahead about how to change our practices to address this current crisis, but there is no time to waste.

That's why USGBC is taking some immediate steps:

- 1. Upgrades to LEED v4.1:** We will make a series of upgrades to LEED v4.1 in support of our new vision that will be available later this year.
- 2. New LEED pilot credits:** On an emergency basis, we will promptly release LEED pilot credits to support social distancing, nontoxic surface cleaning, air quality and infection monitoring.
- 3. Call for ideas:** USGBC will launch a call for ideas to hear perspectives from the broader market on how LEED can better evolve to deliver on the new reality we're facing.
- 4. CEO Advisory Councils:** We will create regional CEO Advisory Councils to advise and support USGBC's CEO on how the entire organization and its programs can adapt and move forward.
- 5. Accelerate USGBC Equity:** At Greenbuild Atlanta in 2019, we announced our intent to launch the USGBC Equity program. We will accelerate the implementation of this program in order to help our stakeholders address the social, health and economic disparities within their communities.
- 6. Adapted review process:** GBCI will amend its LEED review process immediately to incorporate the lessons learned over the last two months from COVID-19. In doing this, we can provide unequivocal support to all projects, and ensure those that are currently undergoing LEED certification can dynamically transition and make their spaces healthier.
- 7. Guidance reports:** USGBC will publish a series of reports offering specific guidance on best practices to help project teams assist their occupants as they reenter their spaces.

We will introduce this new USGBC vision during **Town Halls** and provide additional opportunities for our global community to share thoughts. We want to hear from each other and share best practices on transforming new and existing spaces to be healthier and have a more positive impact on people and the economy.

LEED On: A progressive way forward in a post-pandemic world

Unlike any other moment in the history of this organization, this crisis will require us to fully reimagine the spaces where we live, learn, work and play. We are committed to doing just that – and to communicating the impacts that buildings have on human health.

LEED Positive has never been more important. Continuing to work toward a future that is regenerative will enable us to broaden our environmental, economic and health benefits. By helping everyone understand the role a LEED-certified building can have in creating spaces that heal and repair, we can help rebuild public trust, stimulate the economy and ultimately bring about a healthier standard of living for all.

To realize that essential goal, we are outlining these important actions:

- 8. Launch LEED v4.1 Regional Working Groups:** We will establish groups in the United States, Canada, Europe, North Asia, Southeast Asia, the Middle East and Latin America to provide recommendations to the LEED Steering Committee and Technical Advisory Groups.
- 9. Take Advantage of the Human Experience Certificate:** We will leverage the Human Experience performance certificate in Arc to deliver a workplace reentry or healthy space report or certificate for spaces to monitor and improve their occupant satisfaction, comfort and confidence. Arc reports and certificates are a steppingstone to obtaining a third-party verification and certification of green business work from GBCI.

10. Invest in Better Materials: We will continue improving the Better Materials platform along with our partners to curate and highlight products that improve their occupant health, wellness and confidence.

11. Focus on Advocacy: We will intensify our work with federal, state and city governments to advocate for policies, guidance and incentives in support of our new vision.

12. Research: We will conduct focused and timely research projects and publish a series of reports to help our community better understand the broader trends and opportunities to advance our new vision. We will initiate a LEED ROI study to demonstrate both return on investment and impact.

13. Greenbuild: We will bring our community together to celebrate all their progress and support for this new vision.

For more than 25 years, we've worked together to build **USGBC**, **GBCI** and **LEED** into the extraordinary entities they are today. We have spent the better part of our days talking about the need for our society to be more resilient, healthy and equitable. And now, as we enter the second generation of USGBC, and as COVID-19 continues to change our way of life, we have the opportunity to help each other by sharing our best practices and resilient behaviors with vulnerable communities around the world. We can rely on each other and on these foundations to help us recalibrate and recover from this crisis.

But to be able to effectively initiate that recovery, we must refine LEED strategies to clearly communicate the economic, health and environmental benefits of a project to its occupants and the community to which it belongs.

Healthy people in healthy places equals a healthy economy.

This is our new timely, relevant and necessary vision. We hope you'll join us in making it a reality.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mahesh Ramanujam". The signature is written in a cursive style and is underlined with a solid black line.

Mahesh Ramanujam

President & CEO, USGBC, GBCI & Arc