

## **Henning Larsen's winning design for 55,000 m<sup>2</sup> workspace explores small-scale personal wellness as the basis of professional life**

**New project in Paris' Saint-Denis commune achieves grand volume on human terms, drawing inspiration from rural French villages to create an intimate setting for urban and professional life**

How do we create a 55,000 m<sup>2</sup> space that speaks to the individual? As we design for individuals, how do we bring professional space in closer connection with city life and culture?

These questions have shaped Henning Larsen's winning bid to design NØRR, an office and cultural center in Saint-Denis, France. At NØRR, grand volume emerges within a Scandinavian-styled human scale. Here, the professional world does not forfeit the fundamentals of human wellness: 50,000 m<sup>2</sup> of working spaces exist in direct dialogue with lush terraces, natural daylight and a tight sense of community. NØRR challenges the boundary between corporate and public culture, reflecting shifting attitudes towards working and living spaces.

The design concept translates the typology of rural villages for a human-oriented workplace. On the ground level, 5,000 m<sup>2</sup> of outdoor cafes, cultural space and green gardens invite the public into NØRR's daily life, offering pedestrian corridors and small-scale gathering points that mirror the intimate setting of village streets. This village typology continues in the upper office floors – Offset building volumes avoid long, impersonal hallways, instead channeling occupants through smaller corridors marked by common social hubs. As the scene of living and working community, NØRR's commitment to designing on a human scale ensures that work life grows in close dialogue with a broader sense of urban spirit.

"Our starting point was creating a design that could fulfill 55,000 m<sup>2</sup> of space while giving off a smaller sense of scale. We want to create a village, not a monolith," Søren Øllgaard, Partner and Design Director at Henning Larsen said. "By gathering cultural venues and offices under the same roof, NØRR reimagines work life with a Scandinavian emphasis on personal interaction and a close connection with nature."

The name NØRR reflects the building's French-Scandinavian roots. Literally interpreted, it speaks to Saint-Denis' orientation north of Paris. Visually, the divided 'Ø' represents where dualities converge – where natural meets urban, where private meets public, and professional meets playful.

NØRR emerges along a corridor of significant new development. Major public and residential projects by architectural firms including Snøhetta, Kengo Kuma and Marc Mimram are all planned to rise within one kilometer of NØRR, as well as the new aquatics center for the Paris 2024 Olympics. A close neighbor to the 80,000-seat Stade de France stadium and metro station, itself just one stop away from the forthcoming Grand Paris Express hub station at Saint-Denis Pleyel, NØRR stands at the crossroads of local urban life, and draws professional and public realms together at a new hub of Saint-Denis culture and activity.

The project is Henning Larsen's second win in Paris in 2019, following the studio's contract for a major transformation and expansion of the Opéra Bastille in Paris. NØRR is co-developed with AXA IM – Real Assets, Bouygues Immobilier and Plaine Commune Développement, a Saint-Denis-based public-private development agency.

## About Henning Larsen

Henning Larsen is a Copenhagen-based architecture and urban design firm working across continents to deliver tailored, context-driven solutions for our clients. Founded in 1959, Henning Larsen has grown beyond Denmark to support a diverse team of 300 employees throughout offices in Copenhagen, Oslo, Munich, the Faroe Islands, Hong Kong and New York City.

The studio is born out of the Scandinavian architecture tradition, grounded in a democratic philosophy that architecture should be open and beneficial to us all. Our work is grounded in contemporary research, insight and rethinking traditions. We believe buildings get life from their users. We design with people in mind and let our work find identity in local contexts, with the goal of giving back to the communities and cities into which our buildings are born.

## About AXA IM – Real Assets

AXA IM – Real Assets is one of the sector's most active developers in Europe, with an established track record of managing and executing over 250 development projects worth more than €14 billion over the past 20 years, while it also has a further close to €8 billion of projects currently underway.

## About Bouygues Immobilier

Bouygues Immobilier is a leading private property developer in France and Europe, with 1,969 employees at 31 December 2018 and sales of €2,628 million in 2018. With 39 branches in France and four outside France, Bouygues Immobilier has nearly 60 years' experience in developing residential, corporate and commercial projects in more than 250 towns and cities. Bouygues Immobilier has a strong commitment to innovation and sustainable development and therefore seeks to provide better quality of life over the long term for all its customers by making their experience of the buying process and their use of the living spaces and services created for them as pleasant as possible. Our high demands in terms of quality and our concern for the working conditions of employees is recognised by the fact that Bouygues Immobilier is the first property developer to be certified ISO 9001 in France, NF Habitat HQE and Top Employer France 2019.

## Press contacts

**Henning Larsen:** Dan Bjerg Hansen, Global Communications Director  
Tel.: +45 82 33 80 75 | Email: [dbh@henninglarsen.com](mailto:dbh@henninglarsen.com)

**Bouygues Immobilier:** Valérie Petitbon, Guillaume de la Broïse  
Tel.: +33 (0)1 55 38 26 09  
[VPB@bouygues-immobilier.com](mailto:VPB@bouygues-immobilier.com)  
[g.delabroise@bouygues-immobilier.com](mailto:g.delabroise@bouygues-immobilier.com)