

*Integrating emerging sustainable practices in their everyday work will allow future Architects to fulfill their role of creating symbiotic designs that benefit built and natural environments holistically.*

Architecture is often regarded as the unification of art and building sciences; the master builder's contribution to the built environment. This endeavor is inherent to our profession, though today's environmental circumstances render it deficient. A resounding lack of commitment to retaining - or preferably restoring - natural ecosystems has been pervasive throughout our industry. Fortunately, as creative problem-solvers, we have the capacity to manifest impactful solutions to contemporary ecological challenges. The future Architect should aim to produce these solutions by leveraging skill-sets and initiatives currently on the cusp of architectural design into their everyday work.

Today, projects increasingly reflect design efforts to foster holistic environmental well-being. While not yet commonplace, these projects emphasize several nascent initiatives for future Architects. First, we must strengthen our understanding of building material life-cycles, their embodied energy, and vet materials using environmental product declarations. Second, available technologies can and should be used to enhance building performance by integrating passive strategies and renewable energy sources. Third, green-building certification metrics should be incorporated as ecological design standards with the same importance given building and accessibility codes. Doing so will increase our potential to accomplish state and national goals of carbon neutrality by 2030. Lastly, beyond the designer role, we must impart the significance of environmental stewardship to end users and the general public by educating them of their behavioral impact as occupants on energy consumption and waste production.

Architects who value these initiatives have established the framework for a sustainable future within our industry. As the profession, and its resources and capabilities progress, so to will our ability to simultaneously address the triple-bottom-line of people, profit, and planet. Future Architects, in this role, will generate symbiotic designs that allow the built and natural environments to flourish collectively.