

# The Museum of Modern Art

## THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART ANNOUNCES SUSTAINABILITY EFFORTS AHEAD OF EARTH DAY 2022

### MoMA's Emilio Ambasz Institute for the Joint Study of the Built and Natural Environment Launches New Programming, Including First Annual Earth Day Lecture

**NEW YORK, April 19, 2022**—The Museum of Modern Art announces new programming and operational updates that focus on sustainability, including its first annual Earth Day Lecture, on April 20, and new, innovative efforts across the Museum that reduce carbon emissions and material waste.

#### **Ambasz Institute Programming**

On April 20, MoMA's [Emilio Ambasz Institute for the Joint Study of the Built and Natural Environment](#) will host its first annual Earth Day keynote address online, in an exploration of the cultural shifts and challenges posed by the global climate crisis. Nigerian architect Kunlé Adeyemi, the founder and principal of NLÉ, will deliver the inaugural lecture. Martino Stierli, the Philip Johnson Chief Curator of Architecture and Design at MoMA, and Carson Chan, director of the Ambasz Institute, will offer introductions, and Beatrice Galilee, curator, cultural advisor, and author of *Radical Architecture of the Future* (2021), will moderate a Q&A. Details are available [online](#).

Since December 2021, the Ambasz Institute has been hosting an online series called [Material Worlds](#), which gathers together experts and scholars to discuss specific building materials in an effort to better understand humanity's impact on the nonhuman world and to envision a new future. Topics have included mass timber, waste, and plastic, with the most recent discussion focusing on concrete. On April 15, Lucia Allais, Elise Berodier, and Kiran Pereira [participated in a discussion](#) moderated by Lindsey Wikstrom about the implications of this “essential” resource. Material Worlds takes place about once a month.

#### **Sustainability at MoMA**

The Museum of Modern Art is committed to being a leader in sustainability and the responsible use of resources. It has set ambitious goals for reducing carbon emissions 30% by 2024 and material use and waste 50% by 2025.

Sustainability and environmental design were priorities when conceptualizing the 2019 building expansion, which both contributes toward New York City's goal to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 80% from 2005 levels by 2050 and also earned a Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design (LEED) Platinum certification—the highest level of green building certification as designated by the US Green Building Council (USGBC). MoMA is now the only major museum in the US to earn this certification.

Building off this LEED Platinum certification, the Museum convened a cross-departmental Sustainability Task Force to plan a multiyear sustainability strategy that will transform the Museum's buildings, operational practices, programmatic vision, and audience engagement efforts. Colleagues around the Museum have been working toward reducing carbon emissions and material waste.

### **Centralized Waste Stations**

The Museum launched organics collection on site in September 2021 to divert compostable material from the landfill. Individual waste bins have been removed and staff use three main bins at centralized locations to sort and dispose of organics, mixed recycling, and landfill. As of March 2022, **73 tons of waste** have been diverted from the landfill. That's equal to carbon sequestered by **1,703 tree** seedlings grown for **10 years**.

### **Exhibition Design and Production**

A new way of working has been adapted to support exhibition program while upholding museum-wide goals of long term financial and ecological sustainability. The streamlining of processes and focus on recycling materials includes:

- Standardization and the reduction of wall build
- Expanded reuse of existing frames
- Reuse and standardization of vitrines and pedestals
- The introduction of a reusable modular wall system
- Repurposing and reusing art crates

### **Staff Café**

Efforts are being made to make food operations and offerings more sustainable:

- All packaging is made from compostable and recyclable materials.
- Single-use plastic bags are no longer available.
- Employees save \$.50 on coffee when they bring their own mug.

### **Retail**

MoMA Design Store teams have been adjusting their operations and the products they sell to make business more sustainable:

- Specific items' packaging has been changed from plastic to recyclable paper.
- Reusable/recyclable air pillows have been substituted for non-recyclable packaging.
- Reusable plastic totes have been employed to transport orders to stores.
- The Retail team strives to work with designers using innovative materials, and new products that look to nature for inspiration will continue to be introduced.

## **Information Technology**

MoMA's IT department has implemented energy-conserving best practices across museum devices:

- All computers and printers have been set to sleep after 15 minutes.
- All copiers are EnergyStar rated, default to black/white only, and print on both front and back.

## **Lighting**

In 2019, the Museum replaced all halogen bulbs in gallery spaces with new, custom LED fixtures that have improved capabilities and use significantly less energy. Today, the new LED fixtures use close to 1/3 of the energy the gallery lights formerly required.

### Custom LED fixtures (today)

7,000 fixtures use 23W  
Total: 161,000 watts

### Halogen Bulbs (prior to 2019)

4,738 fixtures used 50W  
2,290 fixtures used 90W  
Total: 443,000 watts

## **Water Consumption**

Water consumption has been reduced through careful selection of low-flow plumbing fixtures such as kitchen faucets, bathroom faucets, toilets, and urinals.

## **Energy Use**

Modelled building site energy use for MoMA's recent expansion approximates 90 kBtu/ft<sup>2</sup>-y (annual energy use per square foot) and represents a 35% reduction over the ASHRAE 90.1-2007 baseline. An efficient new cooling plant contributes to nearly 44% savings in space-cooling energy and the space heating design has a 33% reduction in steam consumption. Demand-control ventilation and variable air volume air system with efficient controls in the gallery spaces added to the overall efficiency of the expansion spaces. MoMA is currently focused on projects that will upgrade the rest of the campus' infrastructure systems that were completed in 2004 and earlier.

## **Exhibition Program**

The Museum also continues to explore sustainability and climate change issues with artists and audiences through exhibitions and programs like *Neri Oxman: Material Ecology*, *Broken Nature*, *Automania*, *Neelon Crawford: Filmmaker*, and *Reuse, Renew, Recycle: Recent Architecture from China*.

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