



PLOUGMANN VINGTOFT®



December 2021

# Sustainability Report



# Statement from our CEO

**At Plougmann Vingtoft, sustainable global development and social responsibility is at the core of our brand and embedded in our daily work.**

While we are aware that the impact of initiatives taken in-house at an office-based consultancy like ours is limited, we strive to make a difference where we can.

One way in which we feel we can make a difference is by doing ours to create a diverse workplace. As part of this journey, we signed the Confederation of Danish Industry's Gender Diversity Pledge this year. More about this on page 5.

Further, we are convinced that our line of work makes an actual difference in the world, as we help our clients move innovative solutions forward.

**WE ARE PART OF THE PROCESS OF TURNING GOOD, SUSTAINABLE INITIATIVES INTO PROFITABLE, LONG-LASTING BUSINESSES IN OUR DAILY WORK WITH THREE TYPES OF CLIENTS.**

Firstly, we work with industry leaders within the fields of renewable energy, new technologies, pharma, and healthcare. As should be expected of corporations in leading market positions, they push the sustainable agenda and focus on making a positive impact on the planet we inhabit – and we assist them in driving new, sustainable technologies to market.

Secondly, we assist SMEs and universities in pursuing potentially groundbreaking ideas. We help make sure that innovative thinking pays off.

Thirdly, we are committed to helping start-ups succeed with their sustainable ideas. Therefore, every year, we select a start-up with a solution that impacts one or several of the UN SDGs directly and donate our expert consulting advice. This initiative is marketed under the named "IP Matters".

IP does in fact matter when firms are turning their bright ideas into viable solutions that will lead the way going forward. We aim to show this in our Communications on Progress this year. Further, we will describe our actions to improve the integration of the UN Global Compact and its principles into our daily operations.

I hereby reaffirm Plougmann Vingtoft's support for the UN Global Compact in the areas of Human Rights, Labour, Environment, and Anti-Corruption. Further, and on behalf of the firm, I commit to promoting the initiative and sharing this information with stakeholders.

Enjoy the read!



**Finn Strøm Madsen**  
CEO





# Pro bono initiatives

## IP MATTERS

At Plougmann Vingtoft, we wish to contribute to sustainable global development. The best way for us to do so is to help build the future of bright ideas by enabling the development of innovative solutions and ensuring that sustainable initiatives turn into good businesses. Therefore, in 2019 we introduced an initiative under the name "IP Matters".

IP Matters is Plougmann Vingtoft's annual donation of our expert IP-consulting services worth of DKK 50.000.

**WE CANNOT SAVE THE WORLD WITH IP-CONSULTING. BUT WE CAN MAKE SURE THAT THE TALENTED, DANISH ENTREPRENEURS, WHO ARE INTRODUCING SUSTAINABLE SOLUTIONS, GET THE SUPPORT THEY NEED TO TURN THEIR IDEA INTO A SUCCESSFUL BUSINESS. THAT IS EXACTLY WHAT THEY WILL GET FROM THIS DONATION.**

**Finn Strøm Madsen, CEO at Plougmann Vingtoft**

Each year, we select a Danish start-up that we consider able to influence one or several of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals. The start-up gets access to a team of handpicked IP experts with specialized academic knowledge within the relevant business area. This way, we can help them move forward and closer to the market with their idea.

In 2021, we received 21 applications for the IP Matters donation. By 2030, we hope to have enabled 12 start-up firms to make a difference for our planet.

## WINNER OF IP MATTERS 2021:

### UVISA HEALTH

Uvisa Health is an early-stage FemTech start-up that is trying to change the way we treat vaginal infections in women. The start-up is working on a non-pharmaceutical and reusable solution for bacterial and yeast infections.

"As an early-stage medical device company Uvisa have a long and expensive road ahead. Therefore, de-risking potential future investments by patenting our technology is of vital importance," says CEO and co-founder Ella Harris.



## Sustainable Development Goals:





# Involvement

We are involved in several communities that back entrepreneurship and sustainable development locally as well as globally. Below, you will find a list of organizations that we support and contribute to.

## DIGITAL TECH SUMMIT

Digital Tech Summit is part conference and part exhibition powered by all the universities in Denmark. Their vision is to create the largest research-based meeting place in Denmark within the field of digitization. Each year, we take part as both speakers and exhibitors at the two-day summit.

## DANISH FOOD & BIO CLUSTER

Our life science experts within food and agriculture participate in groups working to improve practices within food technologies. One of them is the Danish Food & Bio Cluster in which the efforts are aimed at bringing Danish Research Solutions in to the [Global Sustainable Food Production](#).

## MEDICON VALLEY ALLIANCE

Medicon Valley Alliance (MVA) is a non-profit membership organization in the Danish-Swedish life science cluster Medicon Valley. The activities in MVA focus on strengthening conditions for a vibrant life science ecosystem in Medicon Valley through networking events, increased collaboration, analysis, and communication activities.

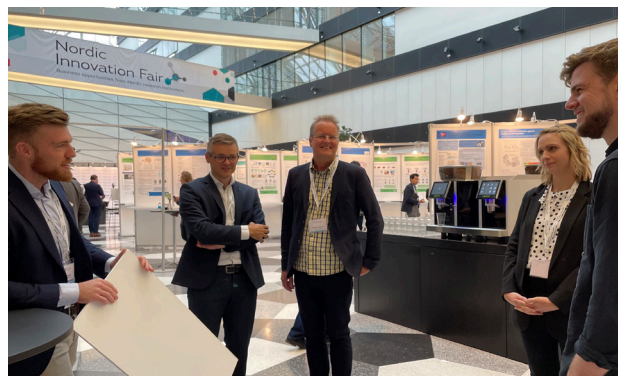
## DANSK BIOTEK

Dansk Biotech takes steps to increase the public knowledge about modern biotechnology. The organization

publishes books and articles, participates in the public debate, and teaches about biotech research conditions, genetic modification, and ethical matters.

## DANISH BUSINESS ANGELS (DANBAN)

DanBAN is a non-profit organization that connects more than 300 Danish investors, who support national as well as international entrepreneurs and help them scale up. As part of our involvement, Plougmann Vingtoft teaches DanBAN members about the IP system. Further, DanBAN is involved in finding candidates to receive our annual IP Matters donation.



## NORDIC INNOVATION FAIR

Nordic Innovation Fair brings together Nordic research institutions and their new technologies. The fair is a place for companies, investors, and entrepreneurs to meet and network about business opportunities. We support the annual event and use it as a platform for exchanging knowledge with students, researchers, and entrepreneurs.



# Gender equality

As part of our commitment to UN Global Compact and the UN Sustainable Development Goals, we strive to make a difference where we can, and one place in which we feel we can make a direct impact is by committing to create gender equality in the workplace.

Therefore, in 2021 we signed the Confederation of Danish Industry's Gender Diversity Pledge.



Half the Danish talent-pool consist of women, but women only account for 1/3 full-time employees in the Danish private sector. The pledge aims to achieve a 40/60 split by 2030. Further, it aims to increase the proportion of women in management roles and in boardrooms.

The initiative encompasses a total of 16 principles, which can be found in their entirety [here](#).

Some of our focus areas include:

- Offering equal opportunities regardless of age/ seniority, ethnicity, nationality, and gender.
- Actively trying to create female role models throughout all levels of employment in the hope that we can inspire more women to pursue a career in IPR.
- Building a diverse workforce of the future by helping to break down gender-stereotypical educational choices by attending career fairs and lecturing at universities.

Our current diversity figures can be found on page 7.

We are committed to working actively towards the 16 principles laid out in the Gender Diversity Pledge ahead to 2030 to create greater diversity in the Danish labor market.







## Local efforts

At Plougmann Vingtoft, we are conscious of the mark we leave on our surroundings, and we are always on the lookout for ways to make our business more socially responsible.

While part of our business is to help bring to life ideas that can make a difference on a global scale, we are also mindful of how we can help make a difference close to home for socially disadvantaged and marginalized people.

Therefore, our offices in Copenhagen and Aarhus have joined the initiative Pant-for-Pant, which is run by Danish homeless organization Hus Forbi.

Pant-for-pant is a not-for-profit initiative that offers homeless and socially disadvantaged people an opportunity to build a meaningful future by giving them access to the job market and helping them get back on their feet.

By donating our bottle deposits, we can support the education and remuneration of Pant-for-Pant's staff directly.



## Knowledge sharing & education

Several of our IP attorneys work as lecturers or examiners at educational institutions such as the University of Copenhagen, the University of Aarhus, the University of Aalborg, the Technical University of Denmark, and the University of Southern Denmark.

Others provide lectures and presentations at institutions such as Copenhagen School of Design and Technology (KEA) and the innovation program at Copenhagen Business Hub (Iværksætterhuset).

Aside from sharing knowledge with educational institutions, Plougmann Vingtoft takes on the responsibility of educating young professionals in the IP industry. We have a comprehensive internal trainee program that provides new employees with all the necessary knowledge to pass the exams that are required to achieve a career within IPR.



## Plougmann Vingtoft in facts & figures

Our focus is and has always been to hire the most skilled and best qualified people. We therefore set our team of experts regardless of age/seniority, ethnicity, nationality, and gender, and we have several languages and cultures represented in our offices.



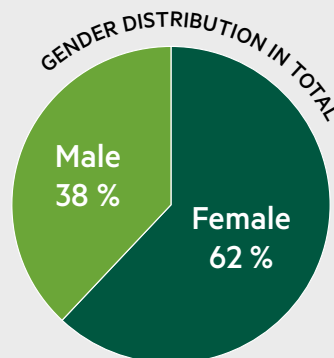
WE HAVE 60 FULL TIME EMPLOYEES  
(54 FTE)

46

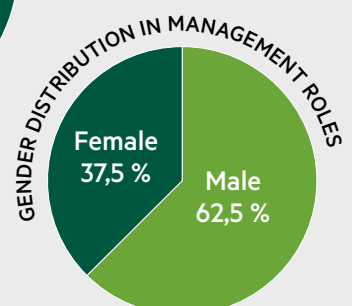
THE AVERAGE  
AGE IS 46

10

42 % OF OUR  
EMPLOYEES  
HAVE BEEN AT  
THE COMPANY  
MORE THAN 10  
YEARS



6 STUDENT WORKERS  
ARE EMPLOYED  
PART-TIME





# Employee satisfaction

As should be expected, we commit to high ethical and professional standards, and we do our best to take care of our employees and their bright minds.

Put simply and yet sincerely: we want to be the preferred employer and the best place to work. To maintain employee satisfaction, we have three focus areas: physical environment, psychosocial environment, and the experience of personal development.

## **PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT**

We dedicate resources to monitor, remedy, and eliminate environmental and safety risks through our work environment committee. The committee members are elected by and among the employees for a three-year period during which they receive mandatory work environment courses. Part of the committee's work is to carry out regular workplace assessments and make sure to follow up on expressed needs from employees.

Further, employee insurance is a priority and a mandatory part of the Plougmann Vingtoft employment contract. All contracts entail a personal accident insurance as well as an extra health insurance, which provides all employees with quick and competent treatment in case of illness.

Additionally, we offer employees to be vaccinated against the flu annually. This initiative is free of charge and participation is of course voluntary.

## **PSYCHOSOCIAL ENVIRONMENT**

We have established a work-life committee, which consists of employees from different departments in the

company. The committee works to improve job satisfaction in direct dialogue with the top management. In addition, we apply a situational management principle in order to keep a close dialogue whenever needed. For example, we have an ongoing dialogue concerning workload, which is part of our efforts to enhance job satisfaction and prevent stress.

Finally, we plan sessions between our employees and their managers. These sessions deal with employee performance, development, need for training as well as a discussion of what the individual can do to take responsibility for his/her contribution to the team and overall to the company. Some of these topics lead to the final branch of employee satisfaction: personal development.

## **PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT**

Several of our attorneys have completed the European Qualifying Examination (EQE) and many of our paralegals are Qualified Intellectual Property Administrators (QIPA's). We encourage our employees to further educate themselves and to keep updated on the latest developments and trends in the world of Intellectual Property Rights.

We support employees who pursue educational opportunities – both financially and in terms of flexibility in the work schedule.

In other words, it is a priority for us to keep investing in our employees and make sure that they experience a personal career development and feel confident in meeting the demands of constantly changing industries.





# The impact of IPR

In a knowledge-based society, new ideas and inventions are the backbone when creating and maintaining a successful business, and therefore it is often essential for companies to ensure their intellectual property rights.

Plougmann Vingtoft is able to contribute with great value when guiding companies in the global IPR system, helping them to make the right decisions in order to protect their business the best way possible.

As mentioned earlier, we believe this is crucial in order for good, creative and sustainable ideas to win territory and market shares globally.

Below is a short look into how our line of work makes an actual difference in the world.

The **Life Science** industry is one of our top strategic priorities. We acknowledge the fact that food is rapidly becoming a scarce resource globally, and humankind needs to find new ways of preventing widespread famine. We assist R&D within foods, for which Denmark is renowned throughout the world, by helping companies gain from their innovations through IPR.

Further, we work with world leaders of the health-care industry, as well as first-movers within industrial biotech and medical technology. Each of them have innovative and sustainable solutions for life on land, life below water, and good health and well-being on the agenda.

The industry of **clean technology** is also worth mentioning. Clean technology relates to products and services that improve operational performance,

productivity or efficiency while reducing costs, inputs, energy consumption, waste or pollution.

We assist all kinds of players in protecting their breakthroughs in renewable energy transition. Further, we have experts who consult on matters concerning energy efficiency and water conservation.

Creators of clean technologies need patent protection for their inventions and investments, as it secures their business and stimulates further innovation on climate action – for the common benefit of our society.

## COMMUNICATION ON SUSTAINABLE INVENTIONS

Working with frontier technologies and solutions demands a keen attention to secrecy. However, we are always delighted to share and promote the stories behind the different inventions as soon as this is appropriate.

On our website, we share stories about innovation that changes the world for the better. Since our last COP, we have highlighted stories about:

- An eco-friendly and practically bi-catch free krill fishing technology.
- A stem cell-based method of restoring potency in men that have become impotent due to prostate cancer surgery.
- A life science solution that has health promoting and disease preventing effects in pigs.
- An electrode-based technology that can help release minerals and combat mineral deficiency.

# Matching the UNGC 10 principles

## Human Rights

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**PRINCIPLE 1:** Businesses should support and respect the protection of internationally proclaimed human rights; and

In Denmark, the labor market is governed by many laws ensuring human rights to a very high degree, and we experience very few violations of said laws.

**PRINCIPLE 2:** make sure that they are not complicit in human rights abuses.

We are devoted to monitoring our foreign business partners with a view to assessing their compliance with human rights.

## Labor

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**PRINCIPLE 3:** Businesses should uphold the freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining;

We offer employments regardless of age/ seniority, ethnicity, nationality, and gender.

**PRINCIPLE 4:** the elimination of all forms of forced and compulsory labour;

We provide employee representatives with appropriate facilities to assist in the development of effective collective agreement. This is obvious in our work life- & work environment committees.

**PRINCIPLE 5:** the effective abolition of child labour; and

We offer regular dialogue sessions to monitor job satisfaction as well as the employee's individual workload and stress level.

**PRINCIPLE 6:** the elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation.

We are focused on creating gender equality in the workplace through our commitment to the Confederation of Danish Industry's Gender Diversity Pledge.

## Environment

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**PRINCIPLE 7:** Businesses should support a precautionary approach to environmental challenges;

We offer pro bono work that supports solutions to environmental challenges.

**PRINCIPLE 8:** undertake initiatives to promote greater environmental responsibility; and

We focus strategically on industries such as cleantech and life science.

**PRINCIPLE 9:** encourage the development and diffusion of environmentally friendly technologies.

## Anti-Corruption

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**PRINCIPLE 10:** Businesses should work against corruption in all its forms, including extortion and bribery.

According to [Transparency International's Corruption Perception Index](#), Denmark ranks as the least corrupt country in the world.





## Concluding remarks

As an office-based consultancy, the nature of our operations makes our direct environmental impact relatively small as compared to e.g. production plants.

However, we are constantly looking for ways to act environmentally sound. For example, we focus efforts into developing digital tools that can ease our procedures and decrease our consumption of resources.

We are proud to continue our full support for the UNGC initiative.



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