



4 September 2015

**6<sup>th</sup> VELUX Daylight Symposium:**

**Daylight in architecture - for health and happiness**

***New ideas, tools and methods for design of buildings that promote happiness and health emerged at the 6<sup>th</sup> VELUX Daylight Symposium in London 2-3 September. For two days, researchers, architects, engineers and building professionals discussed how daylight can drive change in today's 24/7 society.***

- As designers, we should focus on creating positive mental well-being for people rather than building to avoid illness. In this, daylight plays a crucial role, said Professor Koen Steemers from Cambridge University in his introductory speech at the 2015 Daylight Symposium. He introduced his new concept; 'nudge-architecture', where buildings actively encourage people to connect, be active and keep learning for better health and happiness in life.

Getting people outside and more daylight inside was the call to action from Christoph Reinhart from the MIT Sustainable Design Lab. He broadened the perspective of daylight in individual buildings to daylight as a driver of change, health and happiness in ever denser urban environments.

To design proactively with daylight for happiness and health ran as a red thread through the 35 lectures at the Symposium attended by more than 350 participants from all parts of the world.

- Daylight research is maturing. The Symposium showed how tremendous amounts of insight and knowledge will enable us to create new solutions that combine classical design virtues with modern technology to promote health and happiness in the built environment, said Michael K. Rasmussen, CMO of the VELUX Group.

David Nelson, Head of Design at Foster+Partners, demonstrated the versatile opportunities in designing with daylight through the impressive global design portfolio of his company. Other examples from China to the US and Europe showed that daylight as a key to sustainable buildings – is a global movement.

**Exposure to light is like a drug, changing something in your body**

A recurrent theme at the Symposium was how daylighting design can support the natural daily and seasonal rhythms of human beings who spend more than 90 percent of the time inside buildings.

In her thought-provoking lecture "First – do no harm", Deborah Burnett from Benya Burnett, USA, advocated for a closer cooperation between designers and medical doctors to make sure that proposed lighting solutions are truly beneficial to human health.



- Exposure to light is like a drug that changes something in the body. It impacts heart rate, blood pressure, immune system, metabolism, and mood. As designers, we may believe that what we practice is good for people's health, but we need to work more evidence-based in close cooperation with medical scientists to make sure that we propose the right lighting solution, she said.

More specifically, the Symposium looked at how daylight can benefit rapid recovery at hospitals and enhance learning capabilities of children at school.

**Need for new regulation**

Goodwill of individual building owners and designers are important steps towards healthier buildings, but to actually accelerating new practices, legislation and legislators play an important role. Daylight metrics and regulation was therefore a main topic at the second day of the Symposium.

- We need to create new methods to appraise daylighting performance linking building location, orientation and seasonal data and displaying the information in ways that are easy for decision-makers to understand and use, said Bernard Paule from Estia in Switzerland.

Marc Fontoynt introduced the draft for the new European Daylight Standard, which will be sent out in public enquiry shortly. Marc is the covenor of the CEN TC169 work group. The standard comprises recommendations for minimum daylight provision and view out, exposure to sunlight and protection from glare.

Internationally renowned artist Olafur Eliasson concluded the Symposium by presenting highlights of his work and also introducing the winners of the Natural Light International Design Competition, Mariana Arando and Luca Fondello from Argentina. "Link it up" is the name of their prize winning solar lamp concept, unifying and connecting people by providing light to off-grid areas of the world.

The VELUX Daylight Symposium celebrated its 10th anniversary with this sixth event held in the 'International Year 2015' of Light - proclaimed by the United Nations and Unesco. John Dudley, the originator and chairman of the Year of Light emphasized in his opening speech on the first day of the Symposium, the importance of promoting public and political understanding of the central role of light in the modern world.

Get more impressions from the <http://thedaylightsite.com/>

**About the VELUX Group**

For more than 70 years, the VELUX Group has created better living environments for people around the world. Making the most of daylight and fresh air through the roof. Our product programme includes roof windows and modular skylights as well as a range of decoration and sun screenings, roller shutters, installation solutions and intelligent home controls. These products help to ensure a healthy and sustainable indoor climate. For work and learning. For play and pleasure. We work globally – with sales and manufacturing operations in more than 40 countries and around 10,000 employees worldwide. The VELUX Group is owned by VKR Holding A/S, a limited company wholly owned by foundations and family. For more information, visit [www.velux.com](http://www.velux.com).

**PRESS RELEASE**



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**Facts about the Daylight Symposium 2015**

The 6<sup>th</sup> VELUX Daylight Symposium took place at Tobacco Dock in London, 2-3 September 2015.

The theme of the 6th symposium was "Daylight as a driver of change" focusing specifically on the challenges faced by today's 24/7 society.

35 researchers and scientists presented leading-edge knowhow at the Symposium. A full list of speakers is available in at the [daylightsite.com](http://daylightsite.com)

The Symposium is open to researchers, practitioners, educators, legislators, media and other stakeholders in the field of daylight research and daylighting design.

The 6th VELUX Daylight Symposium is part of the International Year of Light (IYL) programme. IYL is proclaimed by the UN General Assembly and shares the agenda to raise global awareness about how light promotes sustainable development and solutions to global challenges in energy, education and health. VELUX Group is IYL sponsor.

The previous daylight symposiums, held in Budapest in 2005, in Bilbao in 2007, in Rotterdam 2009, in Lausanne 2011 and Copenhagen 2013 have set the scene. They have brought together participants from different fields who rarely meet at conferences.

The symposium has today established itself as an internationally recognized meeting point for daylight research, daylight practice and policymaking.