



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

KPF Launches KPF Public to Address Racial and Social Inequality in Architecture

Through the new platform KPF is taking specific action to combat inequities within the architecture profession and the built environment.

New York, New York – August 12, 2020, Informed and inspired by the national conversation around racial justice, Kohn Pedersen Fox last month launched KPF Public with a mission comprising three areas of focus: internal education, outreach, and projects. The first integrates topics of injustice into the firm’s education program to broaden the purpose and perspective underlying its design and culture. The second is both to increase racial diversity within the firm through hiring and development and to leverage KPF’s position within the industry to create academic and employment opportunities for BIPOC professionals. The third is to pursue collaborations and commissions in both the public and private sectors that enable design to create more equitable cities.

“Our practice is dedicated to helping achieve fundamental goals of social well-being to do what we can as our country continues to struggle with issues of racial discrimination and economic inequality,” said James von Klemperer, KPF President. “In this context, KPF is determined to do its part to combat racism and help build an equitable society. As a new initiative, KPF Public will constitute an important agent for change both within and outside our firm. Everyone in our practice will join in this effort, participating in shaping goals and following through with actions that will contribute to a better world.”

“We proposed the initiative in direct response to the protests happening around the country against long-standing social and racial inequity,” said Mustafa Khan, Asli Oney, and Antoine Robinson, the three founding members of KPF Public. “We felt that the architecture industry, like many others, should no longer be complicit, but rather act as an agent for social change. Our colleagues and KPF leadership have been incredibly supportive of this mission. We recognize that the scale at which KPF operates makes it influential within the industry. We chose the name ‘Public’ because we feel it speaks to what needs to be centered within the industry, public access: doing work that provides access to everyone, access to better work environments, access to a more equitable built environment, and access to a sustainable academic future.”

Each of the group’s three focus areas will be enacted by staff across all levels and disciplines, who have established clear goals, objectives, and timelines to advance their missions. The committees meet several times a month to collaborate, while KPF Public on the whole gathers monthly to update members about collective progress. To date, KPF Public has redoubled the firm’s commitment to [Publicolor](#), a stay-in-school youth development program that engages high-risk students through a continuum of design-based programs; partnered with the National Organization of Minority Architects ([NOMA](#)) through direct collaboration on equitable hiring practices and through the AIA Large Firms Roundtable; and is expanding its involvement in the [ACE Mentor Program](#), an award-winning, afterschool program designed to attract high school students into pursuing careers in the Architecture, Construction and Engineering industry.

Additionally, KPF is involved in [Neighborhoods Now](#), a joint effort of the Urban Design Forum and the Van Alen Institute to reopen New York City neighborhoods most affected by the pandemic. In New York City and across the country, the COVID-19 pandemic has disproportionately affected communities of color. This crisis threatens to shutter small businesses and expand the racial wealth gap in neighborhoods that

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already lack access to resources and capital as a result of long-term structural inequity and racism. In response, and in a move to channel the talent of New York's top design firms into these communities' recovery, Neighborhoods Now connects four impacted neighborhoods with leading design firms to collaborate and develop safe and effective reopening strategies. As the city reopens on a broader scale, this initiative provides the opportunity for experimentation and innovation at the neighborhood level.

These actions mark only the beginning of KPF Public's efforts, which will be tracked and reported to KPF leadership on a quarterly basis. The group acknowledges the challenge and importance of the work ahead, and through a clear plan for both near- and long-term actions, aims to create a positive impact on the industry and its future stewards.

To read KPF's statement on racial injustice, please click [here](#). To learn more about the firm's other community groups, including KPF Pride and KPF+, please click [here](#).

About Kohn Pedersen Fox Associates (KPF)

Kohn Pedersen Fox Associates (KPF) is one of the world's preeminent architecture firms, providing architecture, interior, programming and master planning services for clients that include some of the most forward-thinking developers, corporations, entrepreneurs, and institutions in the United States and around the world. The firm's extensive portfolio spans more than 40 countries and includes a wide range of projects from office and residential buildings to civic and cultural spaces to educational facilities. Driven by individual design solutions, rather than a predetermined style, KPF's mission is to create buildings and places of the utmost quality and contextual sensitivity, providing a valuable impact on the cities they inhabit.

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