

# THE DAYLIGHT AWARD

# Purpose of The Daylight Award

**The Daylight Award honours and supports daylight research and daylight in architecture, for the benefit of human health, well-being and for the environment. The award puts specific emphasis on the interrelation between theory and practice.**

**The Daylight Award is given in two categories; architecture and research. The Daylight Award is presented every second year with a lecturing programme in the intermediate years. The award is given as two personal prizes, and each to the sum of €100,000.**

---

**The Daylight Award for Architecture** is awarded to one or more architects or other professionals who have distinguished themselves by realising architecture or creating urban environments that showcase unique use of daylight. Special emphasis will be put on architecture that considers the overall quality of life, its impact on human health, well-being and performance, and its value to society.

**The Daylight Award for Research** is awarded to individuals or smaller groups of scientists who have distinguished themselves as outstanding contributors to internationally recognised daylight research. It acknowledges highly original and influential advances in the areas of natural science, human science or social science, with special emphasis on the effects of daylight on human health, well-being and performance.

---

## **Nominations for the award**

Nominations of candidates for The Daylight Award are submitted online through an open call. The nominees are not informed of their nomination. The Daylight Award Jury select the coming laureates based on nominations for current and previous years.

---

## **Jury**

The jury shall represent the highest possible level of expertise in the field of daylight research and daylight architecture, including relevant and comprehensive knowledge of the international scientific and architectural world. In terms of merit, recognition and knowledge, the members are expected to be outstanding and highly respected by the international community.

The jury comprises at least six and no more than nine members. The jury should have members from at least three different countries and should not have more than two members from the same country.

---

## **Lecturing Programme**

In the intermediate year following their award, the laureates will give open lectures where they will present their work and discuss daylight in research and architecture and specifically the interaction between the two fields.

---

## **The foundations behind the Award**

The Daylight Award is presented by the philanthropic foundations, VILLUM FONDEN, VELUX FONDEN and VELUX STIFTUNG, established by Villum Kann Rasmussen – inventor of the VELUX roof window. Thanks to the financial results of VKR Holding and the daily efforts of approximately 15,000 employees, the foundations are able to support a wide range of non-profit purposes, in scientific, social, cultural and environmental projects.

The three foundations have a long history when it comes to awarding best practice in daylight. Since 1980, they have awarded daylight prizes to, among others, Jørn Utzon (DK) (1980), Henning Larsen (DK) (1987), Bob Gysin (CH) (2007), Richard Perez (USA) (2008), Peter Zumthor (CH) (2010), James Carpenter (USA) (2010), Lacaton & Vassal (F) (2011), Gigon & Guyer (CH) (2012), SANAA (JP) (2014), Marilyne Andersen (CH) (2016), and Steven Holl (USA) (2016).

---

### Why is Daylight important?

Daylight has been the primary source of light in buildings and a vital part of architecture for centuries.

Our bodies need daylight as they need food and water; daylight is a nutrient for our metabolic processes and we know that daylight improves vision, overall psychological health, and has a positive effect on people's performance, attentiveness, satisfaction and capacity to learn.

Yet, today we tend to spend up to 90% of our time indoors, where we are exposed to relatively low light levels and where the patterns of light and darkness occur at irregular intervals. Therefore, adequate levels of daylight during the day and darkness at night are critical in maintaining key aspects of our overall health.

Preliminary evidence even suggests that low light exposure is associated with diminished health and well-being and can lead to reduced sleep quality, low mood and a lack of energy.

Daylight is not only crucial to human health but it is also a sustainable source of energy, as the considerate use of daylighting in buildings can reduce dependency on electrical lighting.

---

### Theory and practice

Given the importance of daylight, it is crucial that the fields of research and architecture exchange knowledge and work together. The fields must combine theory and practice in order to maximise the benefit of daylight for humans. In architecture, successful daylighting requires design considerations at all stages of the building design process - from site planning to the building envelope and interior design. Daylight research should play a crucial role in each stage of this process, guiding the architects and building professionals with the most recent studies and findings in the field. To ensure that daylight is an important part of future buildings, the fields of research and architecture must unite - and The Daylight Award is a step in this direction.

Daylight research also needs to look far beyond buildings and our needs inside them. The Daylight Award wants to encourage research in all areas related to the effects of daylight on human health, well-being and performance.





## Background information

---

### The foundations

VILLUM FONDEN, founded in 1971, supports research in the technical and natural sciences, as well as environmental, social and cultural projects in Denmark and abroad. The foundation is responsible for awarding the Villum Kann Rasmussen Annual Award for Technical and Scientific Research.

VELUX SITFTUNG, founded in 1980, is a Swiss charitable foundation supporting science in daylight research – especially daylight & humans, daylight & nature, daylight technology – as well as healthy ageing and ophthalmology. The foundation supports high-quality research causing impact in science and/or society.

VELUX FONDEN, founded in 1981, supports scientific, cultural, social and environmental projects that seek to advance an informed, open, inclusive and sustainable society. The foundation's priority areas are: active senior citizens, ophthalmology and gerontology.

### VKR Holding A/S

VKR Holding and its subsidiaries – the VKR Group - comprise roughly 110 companies in more than 40 countries and employ a total of approximately 15,000 employees. VKR Holding is owned by foundations and family, its major shareholder being the foundation, VILLUM FONDEN. VKR Holding is a limited holding and investment company with the objective to create value through financial investments and ownership of companies. VKR Holding owns companies that bring daylight, fresh air and a better environment into people's everyday lives within the following areas; roof windows, skylights, vertical windows, solar thermal energy, ventilation and indoor climate.

Established in 1941, the VKR Group's mission was as simple as it was groundbreaking: to transform dark attics into living spaces with daylight and fresh air. The company's first products were glass roofs, but soon Villum Kann Rasmussen (VKR) came up with an idea to develop a roof window, that in every respect was as good as the best vertical roof window.

Soon after, Villum Kann Rasmussen even came up with a name for the product that said it all: VELUX, the merging of the words "VE" (ventilation) and 'LUX' (Latin for light).

The development of high-quality VELUX Roof Windows and the first VELFAC facade window in 1952 not only brought more daylight into people's lives but were significant milestones in the development of the VKR Group.

What began as a school renovation project in Denmark in the beginning of the 1940s has since then grown into an international group of companies in more than 40 countries. In 2016, the group celebrated the 75-year journey of this remarkable idea, on which it has founded the companies and business.

Through 75 years of innovation and dedicated work, the VKR Group today offers a wide range of products and solutions that contribute to the quality of life - for people living and working in buildings and for children learning in schools.