INTRODUCTION TO THE FIRM

William McDonough is “the mastermind of sustainable design.”

—Vice President Al Gore

William McDonough + Partners is an award winning design firm active on a diverse, international array of projects from our studios in Charlottesville, Virginia, and San Francisco, California. We are architects, planners, and leaders in sustainable design; all of our designs integrate environmentally intelligent strategies. We practice a positive, principled design approach that draws inspiration from living systems and processes. At its heart, this unique approach celebrates the abundance of nature.

William McDonough, the firm’s founding partner, has played a prime role in defining sustainable design for more than two decades. Founded in New York in 1981, the practice was relocated to Charlottesville, Virginia in 1994, when McDonough became Dean of the School of Architecture at the University of Virginia. The firm’s partners collaborate closely with McDonough to bring his design concepts into reality. In the process, we have created pioneering architecture and community designs that consider the long-term consequences of design.

Among the practice’s diverse achievements are several recognized landmarks of the sustainability movement: the Herman Miller “GreenHouse” Factory and Offices; Gap Inc.’s corporate campus (now home to YouTube); Nike’s European Headquarters; the Adam Joseph Lewis Center for Environmental Studies at Oberlin College (described by The New York Times as ‘the most remarkable of a new generation of college buildings’ and by the U.S. Department of Energy as one of the 30 ‘milestone’ buildings of the 20th century); and the Ford Rouge project.
CRADLE TO CRADLE APPROACH

“One of the most influential recent books on design and environmentalism.”
—Alice Rawsthorn, *The New York Times*

“[McDonough] point[s] to a path out of the seemingly unwinnable trench war between conservation and commerce.”
—James Surowiecki, *The New Yorker*

“A rare example of the ‘inspirational’ book that actually is.”
—Steven Poole, *The Guardian*

Fundamental to our approach is an emphasis on the Cradle to Cradle® thinking developed by William McDonough and German chemist Michael Braungart in their 2002 book, *Cradle to Cradle: Remaking the Way We Make Things* (North Point Press). It refocuses product development from a process aimed at limiting end-of-pipe liabilities to one geared to creating safe, healthful, high-quality products right from the start.

**The Principles of Cradle to Cradle Design**

**Everything is a resource for something else.** In nature, the discharge of one system becomes food for another. Likewise, buildings can be designed to be disassembled and safely returned to the soil (biological nutrients), or re-utilized as high quality materials for new products and buildings (technical nutrients).

**Use renewable energy.** Living things thrive on the energy of current solar income. Similarly, human constructs can utilize renewable energy in many forms—such as wind, geothermal and gravitational energy—thereby capitalizing on these abundant resources while supporting human and environmental health.

**Celebrate diversity.** Around the world, geology, hydrology, photosynthesis and nutrient cycling, adapted to locale, yield an astonishing diversity of natural and cultural life. Designs that respond to the unique challenges and opportunities offered by each place fit elegantly and effectively into their own niches.

Cradle to Cradle® is a registered trademark of MBDC.
Eco-effective Design

An important component of Cradle to Cradle is the concept of eco-effective design. Using this model, our firm seeks to move beyond current best practices of environmental efficiency, which tend to focus on reductions in the use of material resources and the minimization of pollution and waste. Instead, we pursue an eco-effective agenda that seeks to optimize quality at all scales while considering a diverse range of economic, ecological, social, and technical criteria. Simply stated, by encouraging patterns of human activity that are regenerative by design, this eco-effective approach aspires to be 100 percent positive, not just less negative.

The design, construction, and operation of buildings and landscapes offer a signal opportunity for a community to collectively consider and promote the ideas and ideals that it wishes to express:

What problems do these places resolve?
What aspirations do they embody?
What human relationships do they nurture?
What legacy do they leave?

Our approach fosters a deep connection between the built and natural landscapes. By re-engaging people with their natural surroundings, we wish to design in accord with the laws that govern natural systems and processes, instilling an environmental intelligence that was once second nature.

Leadership

William McDonough, shown here with Wan Gang (Chinese Minister of Science and Technology), and John Holdren (senior advisor to President Barack Obama on science and technology issues and America’s chief scientist), was an official White House representative for the private sector in the 2012 joint dialog on the Future of Science and Technology and Innovation in Beijing.
“We wanted the Rouge again to be the most copied and studied industrial complex in the world. My great-grandfather would have thought the Rouge Revitalization—a project imagined, planned, and executed by William McDonough + Partners and a team of consultants—was fantastic.”

—William C. Ford, Jr. Executive Chairman, Ford Motor Company

**PROCESS**

*Innovation through Design Leadership*

We lead design teams in the pursuit of place-specific, high-performance designs. Our collaborative design approach begins with a detailed analysis of each site, program and community, identifying the economic, environmental and social forces that will give form to the design solution. We then synthesize these unique characteristics with broader criteria for habitat creation, watershed protection, mobility, energy production, material health and recapture, and indoor environmental quality.

For each project, we create a design framework built upon clearly articulated principles (what is valued), short, medium and long-range goals (what projects hope to accomplish), and specific design strategies (how goals will be achieved). This framework establishes the project’s direction and serves as a reference point throughout the building’s lifespan—it establishes priorities and focus by asking the right questions at the right time.

Our design teams begin with our clients and their communities and extend to the multidisciplinary consultants with whom we collaborate from the earliest stages of the project. We foster a team dynamic that gives everyone a voice while providing the right expertise at key decision points. Working around the world from our three locations, we use the latest technologies to facilitate frequent and effective communication with each project team.
WHAT’S NEXT FOR DESIGN AND SCIENCE
THE UPCYCLE: BEYOND SUSTAINABILITY—
DESIGNING FOR ABUNDANCE

“Bill McDonough and Michael Braungart invite you to think about the future we share; to imagine what could be and how to make it so. We are all in this together, and we’ll need a global commitment to sustainability if we want our children to inherit a world of shared opportunity, shared responsibility, and shared prosperity. Let’s get to work.”
—excerpt from the foreward by President Bill Clinton

The Upcycle: Beyond Sustainability—Designing for Abundance is the eagerly awaited follow-up to Cradle to Cradle.

Evocative and provocative as ever, William McDonough and Michael Braungart imagine how human society might, at last, begin to rewrite its role in the history of the natural world. In The Upcycle, the best-selling authors offer numerous fascinating scenarios in which humans transcend the role of mere stewards of the planet. Instead, they suggest, why not become co-creators of the simplest invention ever: abundance?

Drawing on a decade of lessons in putting Cradle to Cradle concepts into practice with businesses, governments, and people around the world, McDonough and Braungart invite us to reimagine everything from doorknobs to the Hoover Dam. In a world that uses design as a tool for positive impact, industry can do better than “do less harm”: it can actively “be more good” and improve everything with which it comes into contact.
WILLIAM MCDONOUGH, FAIA, INT. FRIBA
Founding Partner

William McDonough is a globally recognized leader in sustainable development. Trained as an architect, Mr. McDonough's interests and influence range widely, and he works at scales from the global to the molecular. In 1996, Mr. McDonough received the Presidential Award for Sustainable Development, and in 2003 he earned the first U.S. EPA Presidential Green Chemistry Challenge Award for his work with Shaw Industries. In 2004, he received the National Design Award for exemplary achievement in the field of environmental design. Mr. McDonough is the architect of many of the recognized flagships of sustainable design, including the Ford Rouge truck plant in Dearborn, Michigan; the Adam Joseph Lewis Center for Environmental Studies at Oberlin College; and NASA’s “space station on Earth,” Sustainability Base, one of the most innovative facilities in the federal portfolio.

Mr. McDonough has written and lectured extensively on design as the first signal of human intention. He was commissioned in 1991 to write The Hannover Principles: Design for Sustainability as guidelines for the City of Hannover’s EXPO 2000, still recognized two decades after publication as a touchstone of sustainable design. In 2002, McDonough and the German chemist Dr. Michael Braungart co-authored Cradle to Cradle: Remaking the Way We Make Things, which is widely acknowledged as a seminal text of the sustainability movement. Their much-anticipated new book, The Upcycle: Beyond Sustainability—Designing for Abundance was released in April 2013.

Mr. McDonough advises commercial and governmental leaders worldwide through McDonough Innovation. He is also active with William McDonough + Partners, his architecture practice with offices in Charlottesville, VA, and San Francisco, CA, as well as McDonough Braungart Design Chemistry, the Cradle to Cradle consulting firm co-founded with Dr. Braungart. He has co-founded, with Braungart, not-for-profit organizations to allow public accessibility to Cradle to Cradle thinking. These include GreenBlue (2000), to convene industry groups around Cradle to Cradle issues, and the Cradle to Cradle Products Innovation Institute (2009), founded at the invitation of California Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger to create a global standard for the development of safe and healthy products. Mr. McDonough also co-founded Make It Right (2006) with Brad Pitt to bring affordable Cradle to Cradle-inspired homes to the New Orleans Lower 9th Ward after Hurricane Katrina.

EDUCATION
Yale University, School of Architecture, Master of Architecture, 1976
Dartmouth College, Bachelor of Arts, Magna cum Laude, Phi Beta Kappa, 1973

INTERNATIONAL
China-U.S. Center for Sustainable Development
U.S. Chairman and Member of the Board of Councilors, 1999–2009
Chairman Emeritus of the U.S. Board of Councilors, 2009-present

U.N. Conference on Environment & Development (The Earth Summit)

Preparatory Committee for UNCED (The Earth Summit)
Official Representative, New York, 1992

Time magazine recognized William McDonough as “Hero for the Planet,” noting: “His utopianism is grounded in a unified philosophy that—in demonstrable and practical ways—is changing the design of the world.”
ACADEMIC

University of Virginia
Dean, School of Architecture and Edward E. Elson Endowed Chair, 1994–1999
Darden School of Business, Professor of Business Administration & Alumni Research Professor, 1999–present

University of Cambridge
Sustainability Leadership Council, founding member, 2007–present

Stanford University
Consulting Professor, Civil and Environmental Engineering, 2004–present

Yale University
School of Forestry & Environmental Studies Leadership Council, 2002–present

Arizona State University
International Board of Trustees for Sustainability, 2007–present

Instituto de Empresa, Madrid, Spain
Eco-Intelligent Management Center, Chair, 2004–2006

Cornell University
A.D. White Professor-at-Large, 1999–2004

Tongji University, Shanghai, Honorary Professor, 2004

COMMERCIAL

Walmart, External Advisory Council, 2009–present

General Electric, Ecomagination, Board of Advisors, 2008–2009

Dow Jones Sustainability Index, Advisory Board, 2004-present

VantagePoint Capital Partners, Senior Advisor, 2004–present

Cherokee Sustainability Council, member

SAP CEO Sustainability Advisory Panel, member, 2011-present

NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

Clinton Global Initiative, Advisor, 2013-present

Cradle to Cradle Products Innovation Institute, cofounder, 2010

World Economic Forum
Cultural Leader 2002–2008
Global Agenda Council on Design, 2010

Make It Right Foundation, cofounder, 2006
Board Member, 2006–present

Healthy Child Healthy World, Advisory Board, 2006–present

Green Blue, cofounder, 2002

President’s Council on Sustainable Development, Special Advisor to President Clinton, 1993–1996

ASSOCIATIONS

American Institute of Architects, Fellow, 1997–present;
Committee on the Environment, Founding Member, 1989–1993

Royal Institute of British Architects, International Fellow, 2008–present

Urban Land Institute, Fellow, 1999–present

U.S. Green Building Council, Charter Member, 1993–present

American Society of Landscape Architects, Honorary Membership, 2008

SELECTED HONORS AND AWARDS

United States Presidential Award for Sustainable Development, 1996

The Smithsonian Institution, Cooper-Hewitt Museum, National Design Award, 2004

Presidential Green Chemistry Award (for work with Shaw Industries), 2004


Hero for the Planet, Time Magazine, 1999

Benjamin Botwinick Prize for Ethical Practice in the Professions, Columbia University Business School, 2003

I.D. Forty Design Award, I.D. Magazine, 2001

Designer of the Year, Interiors Magazine, 1999
“We wanted to base this project on the Cradle to Cradle principles put forth in Bill and Michael’s book. It was our belief that for this new technology to work, it couldn’t just be a rich man’s toy, but it had to be proven at a low income level. It had to be available for everybody. I must say, the result has far exceeded my expectations...”

Brad Pitt speaking about Make It Right during an introduction of William McDonough

MAKE IT RIGHT

William McDonough founded with Brad Pitt in 2006, dedicated to building 150 safe and healthy homes in the Lower 9th Ward, with an emphasis on high design quality and preserving the spirit of the community’s culture.

William McDonough + Partners developed criteria to frame Make It Right’s environmental mission, using Cradle to Cradle® thinking to outline design and systems performance requirements for each home, achieving the goal of LEED Platinum certification for all of the houses.

WILLIAM MCDONOUGH AND STANFORD UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES CREATE A NEW KIND OF “LIVING ARCHIVE”

The Stanford Libraries and McDonough have agreed to collaborate on a comprehensive approach to archiving the McDonough collections, which include paper and born-digital material. The libraries will use the digital components to create a set of open-source archival technologies that will allow creators, archivists and selected contributors to actively collaborate.

Stanford University Librarian Michael Keller sees the acquisition as “an extraordinary opportunity not only to advance and redefine what an archive can be, but also a chance to engage with William McDonough to explore and document such questions as how the sustainable movement happened, and to examine links between pioneering thinkers such as McDonough and Buckminster Fuller.”

Meryl Streep and Susan Sarandon hosted the November 2012 gala announcing that William McDonough would be the first “living archived” person by Stanford University.
DAVID JOHNSON, AIA
Partner, Managing Director

As the founding member of the San Francisco studio, David is an accomplished designer who has demonstrated exceptional leadership during his three-decade career. He has directed teams from concept design through client occupancy on an array of technically challenging and programmatically intricate projects in the U.S. and abroad. David’s portfolio includes planning, interiors, sustainability consulting and architectural design for a range of large-scale international urban planning projects and commercial and institutional buildings.

David speaks frequently about Cradle to Cradle and architecture; some recent engagements include speaking at the USGBC’s Greenbuild in Toronto (November 2011); AASHE Conference in Pittsburgh (November 2011); The World Green Building Council’s International Congress in Singapore (September 2010); and the AIA National Conference in Denver (June 2013). David served as the International Expert Advisor for Cradle to Cradle in the Built Environment, a manual for implementing Cradle to Cradle for the Danish construction industry.

SELECTED PROJECTS
Recology (Norcal Waste Systems) Zero Waste Facilities Master Plan, San Francisco
Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory/UC Berkeley Campus at Golden Gate Fields, San Francisco
Bornholm Island Science Park and Green Solution House Conference Center, Denmark
UCSF Medical Center at Mission Bay, San Francisco
Treasure Island Sustainability Guidelines, San Francisco
PG&E Sustainable Community Initiative, San Francisco
Shui On Land’s Long Range Development Plan and Sustainability Strategies for Dalian Tiandi, China
State of California, Department of Conservation Sustainability Principles
University of California, Community Health Campus Master Plan and Department of Health Academic Offices, Berkeley
2001 Market Street, Mixed Use Condominiums, San Francisco

LOCAL GOVERNMENT OFFICE
Planning Commission Vice Chair, Town of Corte Madera, California

EDUCATION
University of Arizona, Bachelor of Arts in Architecture, magna cum laude, 1986

TEACHING
Stanford University Architectural Design Program, Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering, Design Studio, Lecturer, 2009