

# Kings of architecture

Rulers of our realm, the kings of architecture define public places with a fervent passion for sustainability

**D**aring to envision a world more liveable than our own, these five design and architectural firms showcase the extraordinary capabilities of a collaborative approach. Remaining true to their heritage whilst expanding via international studio networks, notions of possibility have been redefined. Conceiving some of the most iconic landmarks of our time, the unrivalled vision of Nikken Sekkei and Foster + Partners contextualises the remarkable expertise of engineering greats Sweco and GDH. Transcending aesthetics with considered functionality the success of each

firm is a direct reflection of their desire to create meaningful change.

## FOSTER + PARTNERS

Drawn to large-scale projects, a particular interest in the health and wellbeing of the communities Foster + Partners design for allows extraordinary dreams to enrich individual lives. Balancing scale with texture, Foster + Partners was established on the principles of innovation, sustainability and design seeking to co-create buildings ahead of their time.

Founded by Sir Norman Foster in 1967, Foster + Partners take pride in the by-line of some

of England's most commanding public gathering spaces including Wembley Stadium and the redevelopment of Trafalgar Square. International accolades are showcased in the success of Apple Park and the McLaren Technology Centre.

Employing methods of vernacular architecture, Techo International airport anchors the new airport city as Foster + Partners endeavoured to design one of the greenest airports in the world. [fosterandpartners.com](http://fosterandpartners.com)

## NIKKEN SEKKEI

A creation of perpetual movement, Nikken Sekkei draws on a long history of Japanese business prowess. Tracing their origins to the early 20th Century Sumitomo Corporation, Nikken Sekkei boast a vibrant history of South and East Asian full-service delivery with in-house collaboration amongst planners, architects, and engineers.

Firmly grounded in the Tokyo landscape, their distinct 'experience, integrated' approach seeks to reinvent solutions to age-old architectural conundrums highlighted through their mammoth volume of work. ▶

**Below: Shanghai's Foster + Partners-designed Fosun Foundation Art Center is famous for its stainless steel pipes resembling theatre curtains**





**Left: London's Gherkin designed by Foster + Partners**  
**Below: Tokyo Skytree and Asahi Beer Headquarters building**  
**Bottom: The New library designed by Nikken Sekkei has become one of the seven new landmarks in Guangzhou, China**



a large-scale engineering consultancy firm diving into environmental technology as the future of design. Working to 'transform society together' a team of 22,000 collaborators co-create the future of industrial design.

Heavily centred around community spaces, Sweco has thoughtfully grown their reach with over 100 mergers and acquisitions resulting in the claim to over 130 years of engineering experience.

Diversifying internal operations directly influences the diversity of projects from the relocation of the Abu Simbel Temples to the exceptional creativity of Kuwait's 30+ water towers.  
[swecogroup.com](http://swecogroup.com)

Envisioning the highest calibre of execution Nikken's most famous projects include the Tokyo Tower, Cairo Opera House, and Dubai's vertical urban oasis Za'abeel One.

Recent expansion confirms a growing international presence with the opening of Nikken's Dubai office in 2023.  
[nikken.co.jp/en](http://nikken.co.jp/en)

#### **GENSLER**

Established by Arthur and Drue Gensler in 1965, today Gensler operates from 53 cities across 17 countries leading the world's largest architectural firm by number of architects and annual revenue. Skyrocketed into the spotlight with their 52 storey Bank of America building, Gensler continues a legacy of sky-scraping success including the design of the Shanghai Tower. Consistently ranking in the top providers for commercial architecture, 2023 remained a year of critical acclaim naming Gensler as the top choice for commercial design from technology-centred firms to people focused hospitality.

Gensler's current office-to-residence project at 160 Water Street Manhattan bolsters the firm's accolade with praise from locals for a meaningful contribution to urban liveability.  
[gensler.com](http://gensler.com)

#### **SWECO**

Taking their name from Swedish Consultants, Sweco dreams bigger than architecture with

#### **GHD WOODHEAD**

Empowering transformation at the speed of change, GHD innovates for a positive impact throughout Australia and their international network of design studios. Nearing 100 years of operation, GHD began their journey in 1928 guiding Melbourne's engineered waterways, today they offer a full-service collaborative approach to large scale projects.

Known for striking linear elements, a GHD design marks commitment to a sustainable future. Envisioned by Gordon Gutteridge, business boomed in the Second World War providing an extraordinary effort to hundreds of defence projects. GHD's current portfolio balances a legacy of defence work with inspiring civic spaces from hidden infrastructure to meaningful interaction between people and place.

Their most recent merger expands the network to encompass crowd dynamics, although far-fetched from GHD's beginnings, people remain at the centre of their mission.  
[ghdwoodhead.com](http://ghdwoodhead.com) ■