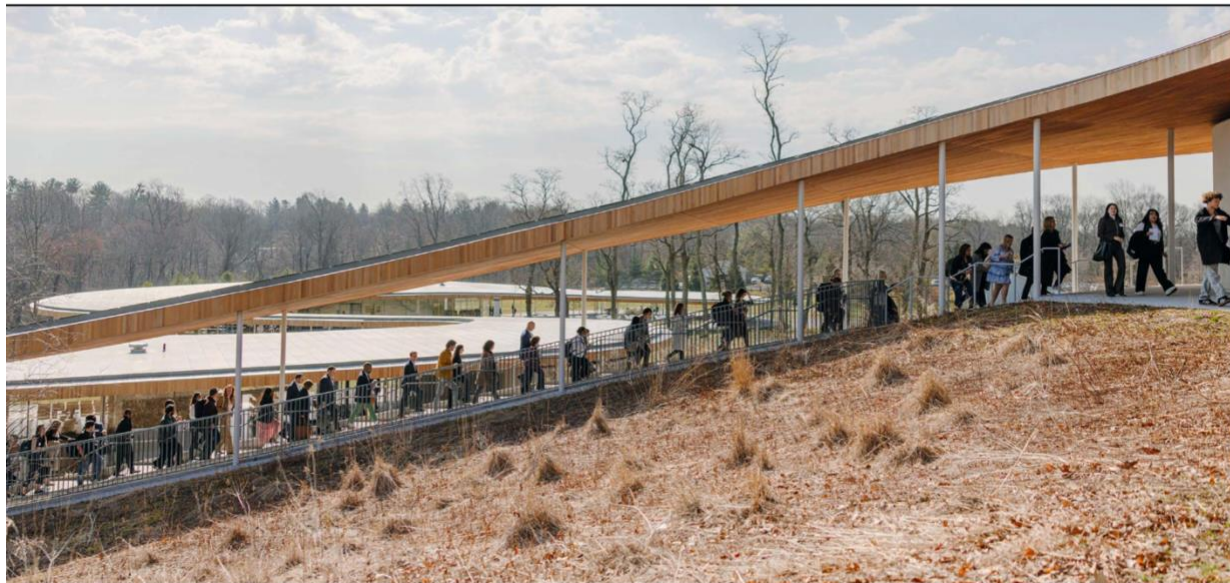


## Grace Farms' Design for Freedom Summit Advances a More Ethical Built Environment



Industry leaders convene at Grace Farms to advance a more ethical built environment. See story on page 3.

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The Design for Freedom movement reached a new milestone yesterday as Grace Farms hosted its fifth annual Design for Freedom Summit, convening leaders from architecture, construction, technology, manufacturing, academia, and government to advance the global push toward a more ethical built environment. The day-long summit brought together voices from across sectors to tackle some of the built environment's most pressing challenges, including U.S. foreign policy and how it can be used to help end forced labor, ethical sourcing for data centers, material circularity in construction, the narratives of monuments in underrepresented communities, and ethical decarbonization.

Reflecting the movement's growing reach, Grace Farms announced four new Design for Freedom Pilot Projects, including two international projects. More than 550 leaders attended this year's Summit, as well as students from 21 colleges and universities nationally.

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*Sharon Prince opens the Design for Freedom Summit*

The Summit began with a welcome address from Sharon Prince, who then joined Ambassador (ret.) Cindy Dyer to discuss the impact of U.S. foreign policy on forced and child labor.

The panel on Ethical Sourcing and Circular Construction in Datacenters was moderated by Grace Farms' Ethical Materials Director Nora Rizzo and featured Miranda Gardiner, Executive Director at iMasons Climate Accord; Dave Wildman, Global Head of Data Centers of Infrastructure & Workplace Sustainability at Bloomberg; and Noah Goldstein, Sustainable Construction Lead – Data Centers, Google. The panel addressed the challenge of reconciling AI and digital infrastructure growth with responsible sourcing practices.

Grace Farms Founding Creative Director Chelsea Thatcher and curator of With Every Fiber, the Design for Freedom exhibit at Grace Farms, moderated a discussion with artists whose commissioned work is featured in the newest iteration of the long-term exhibit, including artist and Ohio University professor John Sabraw, Studio Cooke John Principal Nina Cooke John, and Webb Yates Engineers Director Steve Webb. The panel explored innovations in pigment, stone, and glass and how advances in these materials open possibilities for more ethical and sustainable sourcing.

Chelsea Thatcher said, “With Every Fiber is the first and only permanent exhibition dedicated to Design for Freedom. It is a space curated for presence and attention, where materials rotate to reflect both urgent challenges in the building materials supply chain and innovations advancing more ethical, sustainable practices. The exhibition has expanded from a focus on timber, textiles, and concrete into pigments, glass, and stone, deepening a dialogue around circularity, reuse, and the intersection of ethics and innovation.”

At the Summit, new Pilot Projects were announced. Each year, Grace Farms selects and works closely with a small number of projects designed by leading architects to develop innovative research and advance responsible sourcing. There are now more than a dozen Pilot Projects across four continents.

The newly announced projects are:

### **National Juneteenth Museum (Fort Worth, TX)**

The National Juneteenth Museum will be the epicenter for the education, preservation and celebration of Juneteenth nationally and globally, hosting exhibitions, discussions, and events about the significance of African American freedom. The new building is designed by Bjarke Ingels Group (BIG), Allgood Song Architecture and architect-of-record KAI Enterprises.

### **Bloomberg Park Avenue Office Expansion (New York, New York)**

Designed by Fogarty Finger and with Socotec as sustainability and advisory partner, the expansion of the company’s Park Avenue Office will create a healthful and inspiring space for Bloomberg employees to gather and collaborate. It demonstrates how Pilot Projects translate principles of integrity into practice, delivering real value in the workplace while illuminating the potential to scale this work across Bloomberg’s broader real estate and property management portfolio.

### **National accessArts Centre (Calgary, Canada)**

The National accessArts Centre is Canada’s oldest and largest disability-arts organization, supporting a growing community of more than 400 artists through training, creation, and exhibition opportunities across multiple disciplines. Their new pavilion, the Multidisciplinary Disability Community Arts Hub, will be a home for the performing arts that approaches disability arts as a central force in cultural life. This zero-carbon building is designed for rehearsal and incubation, with public-facing spaces that bring the neighborhood into the campus, and the campus into civic life. The project is designed by DIALOG.

### **Médano by Viñoly (Montevideo, Uruguay)**

Médano by Viñoly is a sustainable beachfront residential development designed by Rafael Viñoly Architects. Positioned behind coastal dunes, its elongated, sinuous form follows the natural topography, preserving the character of the coastline while minimizing its visual presence and framing views of the Atlantic Ocean and a northern lagoon. Stretching 425 meters along the shoreline, the low-lying “landscaper” comprises approximately 120 terraced residences. Conceived as a Nearly Zero-Energy development, the project integrates passive design strategies, renewable energy systems, and generous indoor-outdoor living. This is the first Pilot Project in the residential market and in South America.

Sharon Prince concluded the day by looking ahead to what is next for Design for Freedom, saying, “As we look ahead to the next five years, our race to Design for Freedom will meet the technology race head on. We aim to upend AI right where we have the ability to do so. AI cannot flourish without the datacenters, the servers, the infrastructure we are building. So, when miles of deep foundation piles and millions of pounds of structural steel are specified and procured, we are advocating for pressure points to be clear. We must build without using the slavery discount, without exploitation built into the next generation of AI or the next generation of workers.”

