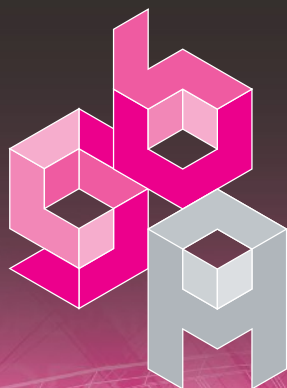


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## FINALISTS: SUSTAINABILITY & COMMUNITY

### FINALISTS

#### Aarhus. Ansvar. Fremtid: AGF Aarhus

Danish Superliga football club AGF Aarhus launched a sustainability programme focused on waste management, renewable energy, sourcing environmentally sustainable materials and promotion of public transportation. The club also became the first signatory in Denmark of the UN Sports for Climate Action framework, joining the likes of Liverpool, Paris Saint-Germain and Juventus.

#### The Beacon: Community Hub – Sunderland AFC

The Beacon, a multi-purpose facility operated by Sunderland AFC's Foundation of Light, was forced to organise virtual sessions as the COVID-19 pandemic led to the cancellation of in-person events. The Beacon held virtual health and fitness courses, quizzes and challenges, and also called vulnerable local people affected by the pandemic.

#### SMISA Stadium – St Mirren FC

Scottish Premiership football club St Mirren renamed its home ground as The SMISA Stadium in recognition of its fans group. The name was in place from November 2020 until the end of the 2020–21 campaign, with the gesture marking what was the last season before St Mirren became majority fan-owned.

#### Toronto Vaccine Day: Our Winning Shot

Toronto's Scotiabank Arena, home of the NBA's Raptors and NHL's Maple Leafs, set what was believed to be a world record as 26,771 people were vaccinated on one day on June 27, 2021. The event was dubbed 'Our Winning Shot' and was made possible thanks to nearly 1,500 staff and volunteers across 30 organisations. Toronto Mayor John Tory was among those vaccinated.

#### Wall of Honour: Ajax Fan Columbarium

Dutch Eredivisie football club Ajax teamed up with PC Uitvaart to set up a memorial field at Westgaard Memorial Park, allowing supporters who have passed away to be buried in an area dedicated to their favourite team. Funeral Products redesigned a traditional columbarium for the memorial field, which contains grass from Stadion De Meer, Ajax's home from 1934 to 1996.



## WINNER: SUSTAINABILITY & COMMUNITY

WINNER

### #BeAsOne Community Program

#### Cagliari Calcio

Italian Serie A football club Cagliari launched its #BeAsOne community programme to drive its daily operations through equality, inclusion and sustainability.

The club is looking to use the campaign to deepen its impact in the local community and use sport to fight against all forms of discrimination, reduce its environmental footprint and tackle the wasting of resources.

Cagliari launched new social channels and a website to promote the programme. Key elements of the campaign include the reduction of plastic use at the club's stadium and in the workplace, the cleaning of Sardinia's coasts and cutting greenhouse emissions.

Cagliari, which is due to begin work on a new stadium in 2022, states that #BeAsOne is not only a slogan but a "declaration of intent" and represents a "new paradigm" for the club.

Cagliari managing director Mario Passetti said: "We need to do more than just talk. Today, we want to go beyond what has already been done, together with the partners who have been with us for long, driven by the values that led us for the past seven years. We followed the path marked by the Carlo Enrico Giulini Foundation. Thanks to the foundation, many initiatives have been launched and carried out.

"We now want to strengthen those initiatives, building on top of them to create something more powerful. This is why #BeAsOne is born, the manifesto through which we will convey the philosophy and the ideas to be promoted from now on."

#### TheStadiumBusiness Judging Panel said:



*"By encompassing an approach where the club's community becomes integral to the sustainability initiatives, the impact is much greater than just at the stadium. This club is changing habits in the day-to-day lives of its fans and addressing longstanding societal issues around equality"*





## FINALISTS: FAN EXPERIENCE

### FINALISTS

#### 5G Test Bed at Cegeka Arena – KRC Genk, Belgium

IT services company Cegeka acquired naming rights to Luminus Arena, home of Belgian Pro League football club KRC Genk, in a 10-year deal that makes the venue 5G-ready. Cegeka's technology will allow Genk to introduce real-time data tracking of players, augmented and virtual reality experiences for fans, crowd-flow and Internet of Things (IoT) services to support the club's match-day operations.

#### Power Portal – Cleveland Cavaliers, USA

The Cleveland Cavaliers NBA team opened a new 'Power Portal' atrium space at Rocket Mortgage FieldHouse as part of a \$185m renovation of the arena. The Portal immerses fans with a full sensory experience of sights and sounds, with 2,200 square feet of LED screens and a 360-degree environment. The technology was designed and installed by specialists ANC.

#### AberDNA & Challenger Club – Aberdeen FC, Scotland

Scottish Premiership football club Aberdeen scaled back operational capacity at Pittodrie by around 6,500 as part of efforts to ramp up the fan experience. Aberdeen trialed the 'Red Shed', an area of unallocated seating, and closed the upper Richard Donald stand to help improve the atmosphere. The upper Richard Donald stand was handed over to fans to decorate with banners and flags.

#### Warriors' Dub Hub – Golden State Warriors, USA

The Golden State Warriors NBA team provided a virtual experience for fans as games were held behind closed doors during the 2020-21 season. The Dub Hub (below) allowed fans to see themselves courtside and interact with other supporters and players via LEDs. Fans also had virtual access inside the player tunnel.





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## WINNER: FAN EXPERIENCE

WINNER

### Allegiant Stadium Tours

#### Las Vegas Raiders/BRC Imagination Arts

The Las Vegas Raiders NFL team launched a tour experience at its new Allegiant Stadium to provide fans with a “fully immersive adventure” through the 65,000-capacity venue.

The Raiders engaged BRC Imagination Arts to create a tour experience that doubled up as an “open house” for its own fans and a “conversion tool” for supporters of other teams.

After the stadium opened without fans at games due to COVID-19 restrictions, the Raiders wanted to launch a tour experience that built brand loyalty with the team.

Under COVID-19 protocols, the Raiders trained over 40 hosts to lead fans through the tour, which sought to promote Allegiant Stadium as a must-see attraction in Las Vegas. Through a device on their wrists, hosts were able to control sound media and the LED ribbon inside the stadium bowl, adding a “magic-trick” element to the tour.

The 70-minute tour showcased the stadium’s torch, a built-in tribute to Al Davis, owner of the Raiders for 39 years until his death in 2011. The tour also included the broadcast booth, press conference room, locker room and the playing field itself.

BRC designed and installed immersive media experiences at key points in the tour. An original soundtrack telling the story of the Raiders’ moves between Oakland, Los Angeles and Las Vegas provided the backdrop for the tour.

Guest feedback has also been overwhelmingly positive, with 93% of guests feeling ‘extremely satisfied’ by the experience.



#### TheStadiumBusiness Judging Panel said:

*“We really liked the idea of making it a matchday experience before the fans had even had a chance to experience a matchday. This is taking stadium tours to a new level.”*

## FINALISTS: INNOVATION AWARD

### FINALISTS

#### Social Distancing Seating Tool – 3D Digital Venue

3D Digital Venue's Social Distancing Editor enables ticketing professionals to plan, project and adapt to ever-changing Covid-19 restrictions. With complete control over parameters and restrictions, the user can generate revenue forecasts, capacity projections, and ultimately a new seating plan. The tool can help clients to run different simulations from event to event.

#### VenueShield™ Programme – ASM Global

VenueShield comprises a comprehensive set of protocols and procedures to provide trusted protection for events re-opening across the globe through customised, in-depth workflows for venue reoccupancy that include industrial disinfection and safety initiatives. The VenueShield programme was developed in coordination with an international team of venue design, environmental hygiene and biocontainment experts.

#### Venue Twin – OnePlan

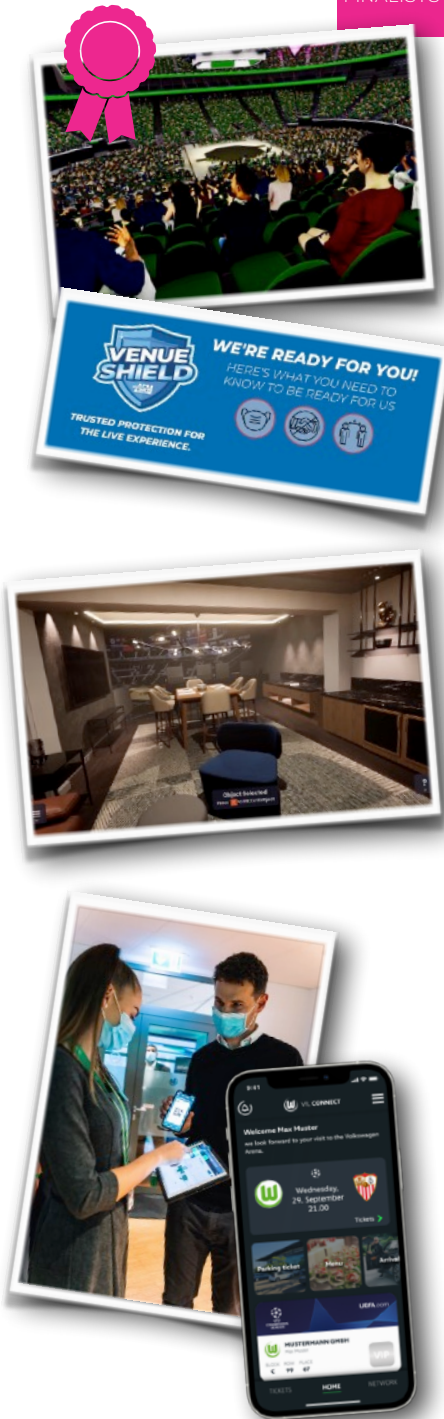
Venue Twin is OnePlan's new solution that unlocks the real value in venues. A fully interactive, centimetre-accurate 3D digital twin of any venue, it provides significant operational and commercial benefits. Venue Twin is effectively a 'second stadium' – a hyper-realistic digital twin that empowers operational and commercial teams.

#### VfL Connect hospitality app – VfL Wolfsburg

The app has been designed to meet the needs of sponsors, partners and guests throughout a matchday visit to the hospitality area of Volkswagen Arena. The app's core functions are to provide digital VIP ticketing, digital and on-site networking, Covid-19 tracing, a seating tool for hostesses, wallet tool for VIP tickets and parking tickets, along with general gameday information.

#### Covid Safety Hub – Realife Tech

The Covid Safety Hub is a range of mobile-based features that guide fans through new venue policies and procedures, with messaging delivered before, during and after events. The tool aggregates data to reduce queues at entry and exit, allowing for contactless ticket-purchasing, and delivering targeted safety and crowd density messaging through the venue or team's mobile app and website.



## WINNER: INNOVATION AWARD

WINNER

### GroundWOW Ground Printer

#### GroundWOW

GroundWOW is the world's first autonomous full colour stadium ground printer. The company's founding mission was to make printing on ground as easy as printing on paper.

Deployable in under 10 minutes, autonomous technology, artificial intelligence, machine learning and an end-to-end cloud platform have combined to turn that founding mission into reality.

With GroundWOW artificial intelligence, the robot interacts with the surface to guide the user on how much paint to apply consistently for maximum visual impact at the same time as managing the deposition of the paint down to a single drop.

In conjunction with a bespoke paint recipe, the colour can be managed such that it is applied to only the tips of the blades of grass rather than coating the entirety of the blade. There are significant upsides to this not just in driving huge efficiency in the amount of paint deposited, but in a related sense, putting less paint on the surface leaves less paint to be removed after the event.

From a user perspective, the technology is serious at the back end and intuitive at the front. At the back, the system operates via an end-to-end cloud infrastructure, delivering real time insights into print performance, efficiency and use.

From an overall industry perspective, a huge driver of the company's development has been the sustainability benefits and environmental credentials of an autonomous electric vehicle that deposits up to 90% less paint compared with other marking systems and methods.



#### TheStadiumBusiness Judging Panel said:

*"Given the challenges around staffing supply, applying technology to do a manual job is useful, creating greater efficiencies for the long term. The unit is electric, providing better consistency and less waste feeds into the industry narrative in terms of sustainability"*



## FINALISTS: INTERIOR & FIT-OUT

### FINALISTS

#### Cache Creek Club at Levi's Stadium

The San Francisco 49ers and Cache Creek Casino Resort targeted the creation of a luxury club space at Levi's Stadium ever since the two parties struck a multi-year partnership in 2019. Located in the northwest field tunnel between the visiting locker room and the field entrance, the new 1,400sq² club provides exclusive views of the players entering and exiting the field.

#### Field Cabanas and Bungalow Suites at SoFi Stadium

SoFi Stadium offers a reimagined luxury suite experience created exclusively for Southern California. Located at field level on each sideline are the Field Cabanas, including 20-24 tickets each with four VIP parking passes. Field Cabanas are all-inclusive, including food with beer or wine in the Field Club, while liquor can be purchased from one of the full-service bars.

#### Preservation & Modernisation – Helsinki Olympic Stadium

The four-year renovation project, which cost the city and state more than €300m, has increased the Helsinki Olympic Stadium's seating capacity to more than 36,300. Complementary frame components such as facades and the surface structures, in addition to windows, walls and floor coverings, required immediate repair and renewal, as well as the whole building services and operations system.

#### Westview at Stamford Bridge – Chelsea FC

Designed by KSS, Westview is the most significant development to the West Stand at Stamford Bridge since 2001, creating the newest premium ticket experience for Chelsea FC. The redevelopment features two new 360-degree bars with faster service, especially at peak times, a new food hall serving an expanded range of high-quality food, and enhanced accessibility.

## WINNER: INTERIOR & FIT-OUT AWARD

WINNER

### Wynn Field Club at Allegiant Stadium

#### Las Vegas Raiders

The Wynn Field Club (WFC) has risen to become one of Allegiant Stadium's most extravagant and iconic spaces, with the timing of its execution being one of the largest influences on its overall design.

What many people do not know is that the decision to transform an existing club design into a bespoke 'Las Vegas Nightclub' concept occurred very late in the project schedule, and well into the stadium's construction.

This posed numerous challenges for the designers, including working around critical infrastructure and already-installed major building systems.

Converting these restrictions into design opportunities to elevate the guest experience involved investing time in some of Las Vegas' most famous nightclub venues to gain a more comprehensive understanding of what makes each of them so successful.

Although the appearances and materiality of each venue were important to draw inspiration from, the designers were mostly focused on understanding the operational efficiencies that increased revenue potential, and how to apply that logic within the confinements of a major sports facility.

The design approach was then built upon two key principles: the anticipation and the arrival.

The entry sequence was broken down into deliberate atmospheres that guided guests down to a lower club while driving curiosity, anticipation and excitement. Dual DJ booths were designed to allow for a full game-day experience, where the DJ can be on display and perform for 65,000 fans – or directly within the club space during pre-game, halftime, or post-game after parties.

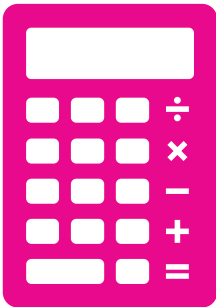


**TheStadiumBusiness Judging Panel said:**

*"If you are in Vegas, you need to embrace Vegas. A multi-use space available during events and during dark days creates an ability to program unique opportunities to a more diverse audience"*

## FINALISTS: VENUE TECHNOLOGY

### FINALISTS



### Infrastructure and Technology Services at Adams Park

At the home of Wycombe Wanderers FC, Landways Management has launched the UK's first digital audio system running over a stadium-wide, energy-efficient DC microgrid, featuring a full-fibre digital infrastructure capable of supporting multiple technology systems including performance guaranteed stadium WiFi and CCTV. All visitors can now enjoy a new, concert-quality digital audio system throughout the stadium, high-performance connectivity and various new systems to improve ground safety and security.

### Nationwide EPOS Implementation – ASM Global (UK)

ASM Global (UK) introduced a new Electronic Point of Sale System (EPOS) across its whole business network during Covid-19. This involved a \$3.5m project covering 1,300 installations across 22 venue locations in the UK with the aim of creating a number of environmental, guest and business wins by creating a safe, contactless transaction environment.



### Smart Wayfinding & Touchpoints at SoFi Stadium – LA Rams/Hollywood Park/PAM

PAM provides smart navigation across the Hollywood Park district. The cloud-based platform guides visitors to the district's sports, entertainment, retail and parking facilities through a network of 3D maps, digital signs and interactive kiosks. PAM is being used to deliver information ranging from Covid-19 protocols to emergency notifications in seconds across digital signage.



### Technology Partners Integration at Chase Center – Golden State Warriors

Chase Center has technology from Silicon Valley's leading companies woven into its infrastructure, resulting in a superior fan experience and enhanced business operations. The Warriors + Chase Center mobile app, offering wayfinding, ticketing and other services, was built in partnership with Accenture, while Verizon helped to deliver 5G connectivity, and the Dub Hub virtual interactive fan experience was also introduced.



## WINNER: VENUE TECHNOLOGY

WINNER

### LED Lighting System in Berlin's Olympic Stadium

#### Olympiastadion Berlin

The goal was to replace the existing lighting system with high-quality, full-colour and energy-saving LED technology.

The entire existing lighting system was changed, including floodlights, membrane lighting, the ring of fire, counterweight lighting, exterior lighting, walkways, vomitories, staircases, columns (outer ring), towers at the east gate and the Olympic Rings.

The unlimited lighting settings can be changed by the flick of a switch. This ranges from bright and fast-paced changes in colour over regular floodlight-type, bright white lighting to a concealed and moody light in order to emphasise the stadium's architectural charm.

Sold-out concerts, football matches and other sporting events, and the year-round sightseeing tours, are dynamically transformed by proper usage of the lighting system, allowing the host to reach the audience on an emotional level.

Existing light fixtures were used to keep structural changes to a minimum. For the floodlighting, detailed UEFA and DFL (German Football League) specifications were also taken into consideration and set as minimum requirements.

Furthermore, operator Olympiastadion Berlin GmbH used new 'reflector technology'. Despite saving about 50% of energy consumption in comparison to the former lighting system – around 142 tonnes of CO<sup>2</sup> per year – the new LED lighting system considerably exceeds the previous system regarding light output.

The work lasted about a year and roughly 58 tons of old lighting technology was dismantled while 28 tonnes of new LED technology was installed.



**TheStadiumBusiness Judging Panel said:**

*"The new LED lighting capabilities at Olympiastadion Berlin are simply amazing. This is the application of readily-available technologies to create and enhance the entire guest experience"*

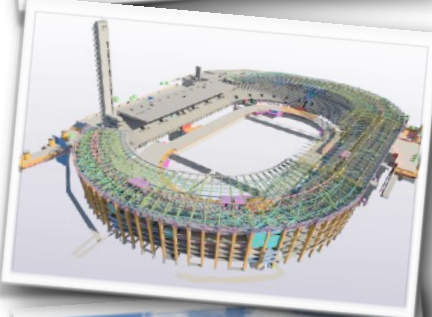
## FINALISTS: PROJECT OF THE YEAR

### FINALISTS



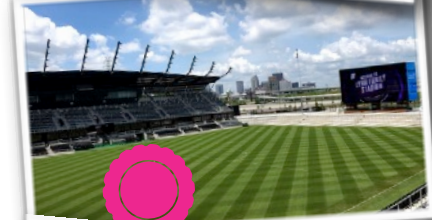
#### Grand Palais Éphémère – Paris2024

Designed and developed in less than 20 months by Jean-Michel Wilmotte/GL Events for Paris2024, the Grand Palais Éphémère has been built in a record time of 10 months in front of the Eiffel Tower. During renovation work on the Grand Palais, this temporary structure will host a range of events, as well as offering 490m<sup>2</sup> of hospitality space on the mezzanine and 740m<sup>2</sup> of additional office space.



#### Helsinki Olympic Stadium Renovation

The whole stadium complex has been modernised, including the stands, pitch and athletics track, with 20,000m<sup>2</sup> of new underground space doubling the indoor area at the venue. Versatile sports facilities, a tunnel following the track above, a logistics area and a multi-purpose hall are among the new parts of the iconic venue.



#### Lynn Family Stadium – Soccer Holdings/Louisville City FC

The ASM Global team behind Kentucky's newest state-of-the-art venue opened the dynamic new HOK-designed venue during the pandemic and delivered on all of the project's key objectives. Now in year two, LouCity leads the USL Championship in average attendances, while one of the largest outdoor bars nationwide, with room for 2,000 guests, has hosted a number of events.



#### Compton & Edrich Stands at Lord's

WilkinsonEyre's designs for the new Compton and Edrich stands at Lord's Cricket Ground break new ground for the world-renowned venue through two distinctive architectural structures that have transformed the spectator experience for general visitors. The stands, designed with structural engineers Buro Happold, deliver greatly improved sightlines, as well as upgrading capacity, accessibility and amenities.



#### Sahlen Field renovations – Toronto Blue Jays

The project packed a year's worth of work into a fortnight, with upgrades to the bleacher and concourse areas, as well as the lighting. While additions were needed to bring the stadium up to current Major League standards, both from competitive and health standpoints, the Blue Jays' staff in Buffalo also focused on recreating the feeling of a home park.

## WINNER: PROJECT OF THE YEAR

WINNER

### Leicester City FC Training Ground

Leicester City FC/KSS

The new Leicester City FC Training Ground is a beacon of ambition for the future and marks the next stage in the English Premier League club's development.

The site hierarchy looks to the future by creating an aspirational route, both in the external pitch layout and building configuration where an academy player has to earn the right to take every step to be in the first team area. This results in a layout where there is a distinct separation between the first team and academy facilities with shared areas between.

Placing the buildings in the centre of the masterplan takes advantage of the flattest part of the site and optimises the relationship between buildings and playing space. The building configuration and landscape screening are used to separate the site into zones to create a progression between the different age groups.

The length of the training centre building ensures maximum frontage to the pitches whilst the curve concentrates the first team and academy areas of the building towards their respective pitches, subtly protecting views of the first team area.

On the southern elevation, large, double height terraces punctuate the building at first floor level to articulate the first team and academy wings either side of a shared dining space.

The complete masterplan includes 12 full-size pitches, a show pitch with a 500-seat stand to allow academy teams to play in a match environment, a full-size indoor pitch and a signature building that moulds into the surrounding rural landscape.



**TheStadiumBusiness Judging Panel said:**

*"A world-class facility, enabling Leicester City to truly establish themselves as a player in the top of the Premier League"*



## FINALISTS: SPONSORSHIP, SALES & MARKETING

### FINALISTS

#### DRV PNK Stadium – Inter Miami CF

Major League Soccer's Inter Miami sealed a multi-year naming-rights deal with automotive retailer AutoNation, with the agreement intended to highlight the fight against cancer. Every October, associates from more than 300 AutoNation locations unite on DRV PNK Across America Day to deliver thousands of comfort bags to patients battling cancer at treatment facilities.



#### The Hundred – England & Wales Cricket Board

The short-form cricket competition sealed a wide-ranging sponsorship deal with KP Snacks for the inaugural edition of the tournament in 2021. Under the agreement, a range of KP Snacks' brands were featured on the players' kits, while the partnership was supported by the company's 'Our Taste For Good Programme'.



#### 'New Lawn' naming rights – Forest Green Rovers FC

English League Two football club Forest Green Rovers linked up with global partner innocent drinks to launch a stadium naming-rights competition, attracting thousands of suggestions from across the world. The campaign caught the attention of various forms of media, from Sky Sports to mainstream political satire TV programme *Have I Got News For You*.



#### Virtual Pink Seat & Sydney Cricket Ground

To overcome Covid-19 regulations at the 13th Pink Test, the McGrath Foundation, Cricket Australia and Sydney Cricket Ground delivered an innovative campaign whereby fans could purchase a virtual pink seat. The initiative enhanced the experience of fans, raised more than Aus\$3m and filled a virtual stadium three times.



## WINNER: SPONSORSHIP, SALES & MARKETING

WINNER

### Avicii Arena

Trygg-Hansa and Bauhaus/ASM Global/Tim Bergling Foundation

ASM Global, the Tim Bergling Foundation, Trygg-Hansa and Bauhaus united to make Avicii Arena a global symbol for mental illness prevention and a hub for sharing ideas and hosting activities with the focus on young peoples' mental health.

Visible from most of the city, Stockholm Live's 15,000-capacity venue, formerly known as the Ericsson Globe, was renamed Avicii Arena in May 2021. ASM Global and the Tim Bergling Foundation, along with two new naming-rights partners, Trygg-Hansa and Bauhaus, opted against using a corporate name.

Trygg-Hansa and Bauhaus are also launching synergistic initiatives, both in schools and within sports, to educate and improve young people's mental health.

The venue and its partners are planning to host a large-scale gala and concert in Avicii Arena each December with a commitment to raising funds and awareness for improving mental health among youth.

The Tim Bergling Foundation was launched by the parents of the famous DJ and producer, better known as Avicii, after the death of their son in 2018 at the age of 28. The foundation's work includes its 'For A Better Day' project that collects young people's voices, thoughts and needs into content that will serve as an important part of the continued Avicii Arena community collaboration.



**TheStadiumBusiness Judging Panel said:**

*"This powerful sponsorship and marketing initiative is one that has not only delivered new audiences for the venue, but has increased revenues and fostered new partnerships. A new approach to social-sponsorship"*

## FINALISTS: UNSUNG HERO

FINALISTS



### **Danielle Snyder, Senior Vice President, Guest Services & Security, STAPLES Center**

Danielle has played a critical role in the arena's successes and took a leadership role in the staging of two powerful memorial services for Los Angeles native Nipsey Hussle and Lakers legend Kobe Bryant and his daughter Gianna Bryant, working closely with families and organisations such as emergency services.



### **Lesley Spuhler, CEO, Foundation of Light**

Lesley ensured Sunderland AFC's community project continued to help those in need despite the challenges presented by the pandemic. Lesley and the team collaborated with other bodies and quickly developed online programmes to aid disadvantaged young people and some older adults in spheres including sport, education, health and employability.



### **Gary Storrie, Health and Safety Manager, Formula 1**

Gary played a key role in the resumption of Formula 1 following the pandemic, in his senior health and safety position. He recently completed his Spectator Safety Diploma with the Emergency Planning College (EPC).

### **James Tagg, Executive Head Chef, Manchester United FC**

Chef Tagg shifted his focus during the pandemic from fine dining and matchday meals to using his skills to support the local community. Leading a team of 100, he designed and implemented an industrial-scale operation to produce more than 100,000 meals for NHS staff and local families.



### **Guy Wickett, Development Manager (En Todo), Crystal Palace FC Academy**

Guy was Project Manager for Crystal Palace's new youth academy from inception to completion. He was able to condense into six months what other comparable clubs have needed years to achieve, saving the club considerable time and cost, with the facility opening ahead of schedule.



## WINNER: UNSUNG HERO

WINNER

### Jackie Ventura

Director of Facility Health and Hygiene, Golden State Warriors

Jackie played an instrumental role in leading and educating the Warriors front office through the COVID-19 pandemic, which involved the eventual return of basketball operations staff and fans at Chase Center during the 2020-21 NBA season.

She began to research and was the go-to source of information for the arena's general manager and the Warriors front office, months before the NBA officially went on hiatus in March 2020.

Jackie's work was crucial to ensuring Chase Center lived up to its claim to be "the safest indoor environment in the US".

Jackie led an internal health and hygiene task force made up of 60 staff members from across the organisation to develop a return to events manual.

In total, the Warriors were able to successfully test close to 60,000 individuals over the course of the season, which provided a huge benefit to the community's efforts to collect data around the virus.

Owing to Jackie's expertise and efforts the Warriors were able to resume increased levels of activities from summer mini-camps to games with no fans to fully attended events beginning this September.



#### TheStadiumBusiness Judging Panel said:

*"With so many worthy recipients and dedicated individuals in our industry, this is always the toughest of categories to shortlist and vote on. Navigating a team and an arena through a pandemic like nothing we have seen in our lives – with ever-changing regulations and safety concerns – is one of the hardest tasks and most thankless jobs. Jackie Ventura rose to the challenge, being pro-active and became the essential 'go to voice' during this most challenging period."*

## FINALISTS: EXECUTIVE OF THE YEAR

### FINALISTS



### **Vince Cicero – SVP of Corporate Partnerships, FC Cincinnati / TQL Stadium**

Cicero played a critical role in the execution and opening of FC Cincinnati's new venue, with a specific focus on sponsorship revenue generation, including the naming rights deal for TQL Stadium. Under Vince's leadership, FC Cincinnati now ranks in the top five of Major League Soccer clubs in sponsorship revenue despite operating in one of the country's smallest media markets.



### **Eric Granger – General Manager, KFC Yum! Center**

Granger led his team in opening a new stadium and three other theatres in Kentucky during the pandemic. Lynn Family Stadium, the new home of Louisville City FC, opened in July 2020 with a capacity crowd that was the biggest attendance at a team sports fixture since the start of the pandemic.



### **Freyja Handy – General Counsel (Europe), ASM Global**

Handy has been a central pivot to helping the UK government understand the key areas of the Manchester Arena attack in 2017 as well as leading the sustainability strategy of the ASM Global UK Business. She provided support across the whole of ASM Global's operations during the unprecedented challenges of the pandemic.



### **Joe Lacob – CEO & Co-Exec Chair, Golden State Warriors**

Lacob used his academic background in epidemiology and experience in medical technologies start-ups to devise the pioneering Operation Dub Nation plan to safely bring fans back to Chase Center. Warriors became the only team in professional sports to execute an on-site and at-home rapid PCR testing program before games.



### **Tim Shannahan – CEO, Orangetheory Stadium**

As head of the temporary stadium in Christchurch, New Zealand, Shannahan has navigated all the challenges associated with a city that was destroyed by earthquakes in 2011. While his long tenure ended in late 2021, his leadership has ensured that the venue has lasted way beyond its intended life and towards the opening of the new Multi Use Arena in 2024.

## WINNER: EXECUTIVE OF THE YEAR

WINNER

### Al Guido

President, San Francisco 49ers

Guido has led operations at the NFL team since 2016 having already played a key role in the opening of Levi's Stadium two years earlier. However, it is his actions and achievements since the start of 2020 that may well come to be the defining points of his long and successful career.

While the 2020 NFL season progressed without a single fan able to watch the 49ers at Levi's Stadium, Guido turned the team's focus to using the stadium for a different purpose.

In September 2020, the 49ers announced a multi-lateral partnership to make Levi's Stadium a voting centre for the November general election. During the early voting period, Santa Clara County totalled half a million votes, doubling the number cast during the same period in 2016.

Months after the election and the NFL season had come to an end, Guido began efforts to once again make Levi's Stadium a community safe haven. In February 2021, his team transformed the venue from a football stadium into the largest COVID-19 vaccination site in the state of California. Levi's Stadium vaccination site was able to administer over 350,000 vaccine shots.

In terms of business success, Guido has overseen a massively successful year for 49ers' corporate partnership department, with partner value records broken.



**TheStadiumBusiness Judging Panel said:**

*"Al Guido is everywhere - from the 49ers and planning vote centers and vaccinations clinics to growing Elevate during the pandemic is quite remarkable. He is experienced beyond his years and, in these toughest of times, remains willing to offer support, guidance and enthusiasm to all across the industry."*



## FINALISTS: VENUE OF THE YEAR

### FINALISTS

#### Allegiant Stadium

The new home of the Las Vegas Raiders NFL team blends groundbreaking engineering with an iconic, futuristic and comprehensive design concept that balances form and function seamlessly. The design includes an operable field tray, an ETFE fixed roof and operable Lanai-style bay doors that open to bring the views of the nearby Las Vegas strip into the stadium.

#### Anfield

Liverpool's famous stadium is continuing to evolve, with work having started on an expansion of the venue's Anfield Road Stand that will increase overall capacity to more than 61,000. In addition, a season-long trial of rail seating is taking place at the stadium, while the club has switched to fully digital ticketing.

#### Brentford Community Stadium

The newest stadium in London, at a capacity of 17,250, Brentford Community Stadium is the joint home of Brentford FC and London Irish. Delivered alongside a robust business plan, the stadium forms the centrepiece of a mixed-use masterplan, offering residential accommodation and regenerative opportunities, and an outstanding matchday experience with world-class hospitality options.

#### Chase Center

While Chase Center was closed during the pandemic, the arena operations team made significant enhancements to make it the safest indoor environment in the world while adding unique features to interact with fans virtually. As part of the changes, the arena's mechanical air filters were upgraded to a MERV 15 rating, well above the recommendation for air filtration.

#### Suncorp Stadium

Suncorp Stadium in Brisbane hosted the first live Australian sporting occasion since the start of the pandemic in May 2020 with a National Rugby League contest. The stadium went on to attract a crowd of 49,155 for a State of Origin clash in November 2020, marking the biggest attendance in world sport at the time since the COVID-19 outbreak.

#### WiZink Center

Madrid's WiZink Center became one of the first major European venues to reopen to sports fans after the COVID-19 outbreak, with various protocols in place at the 17,000-seat facility. WiZink Center, which also improved its ventilation systems to nullify recirculation of the air inside the venue, has since gone on to enjoy a packed schedule of sport and live entertainment.

## WINNER: VENUE OF THE YEAR

WINNER

### SoFi Stadium

Inglewood, California

SoFi Stadium, built in Inglewood, California, with the backing of Los Angeles Rams owner and chairman Stan Kroenke, is the most expensive stadium in NFL history.

The 70,000-capacity, multi-use venue, which hosts the Rams and rival NFL team the Chargers, welcomed fans back for the first time in May following the emergence of the pandemic.

The 298-acre site, formerly the home of Hollywood Park racetrack, is roughly one-third larger than the USC campus, and has a first-phase price tag of \$5bn, which includes the ultra-modern NFL Media complex and a futuristic stadium with a swooping silver roof, sides open to the coastal breezes and a playing surface sunk 100 feet below street level.

The HKS-designed complex comprises the stadium, a pedestrian plaza along with YouTube Theater – a 6,000-capacity music and theatre venue.

An independently-supported translucent canopy covers all three areas and features 302 ETFE panels, 46 of which can be opened to provide ventilation, supported by a cable net.

The canopy has 27,000 LED pucks embedded in it, allowing images and videos to be projected. The Infinity Screen by Samsung, a first-of-its-kind oval, double-sided 4K HDR video board, is also suspended from the roof over the field. The structure weighs 2.2 million pounds, displays 80 million pixels, and houses the stadium's 260-speaker audio system, as well as 56 5G wireless antennae.

SoFi Stadium has embraced state-of-the-art technology in an effort to take the fan experience to an even higher level ahead of it hosting the NFL's showpiece Super Bowl LVI in February.



**TheStadiumBusiness Judging Panel said:**

*"SoFi Stadium is one of the most groundbreaking venues of the last two to three years. Standing out in the NFL's stadium line-up is difficult but SoFi has done that – visually, commercially and operationally"*



## With thanks to THE #SBA21 JUDGING PANEL



*TheStadiumBusiness Awards* must thank the experts of our 2021 Judging Panel for their deliberations, insights and – ultimately – their votes as we reviewed the entries from the most unexpected and challenging of years. Our judges for 2021 included many previous recipients and our thanks go to (clockwise from top left):

- Jacque Holowaty, VP Employee & Guest Experience, Climate Pledge Arena
- Nick Sautner, Chief Executive Officer, The Eden Park Trust
- Dionna Widder, Chief Revenue Officer, Houston Dynamo
- Darren Burden, Executive Director, Kai Tak Sports Park
- Mel Raines, President & COO, Pacers Sports & Entertainment
- Paul Fisher, Consultant (Former Chief Executive, Jockey Club Racecourses)
- Ian Nuttall, CEO & Co-Founder, TheStadiumBusiness
- Christian Lau, CTO, Los Angeles FC / Banc of California Stadium
- Andy O'Sullivan, Venue Director, Tottenham Hotspur FC





## SPECIAL AWARD: LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT

2021 RECIPIENT

### David Keirle

Chair, KSS

TheStadiumBusiness Awards recognised venue design leader David Keirle as the recipient of the Outstanding Achievement Award 2021.

David founded KSS thirty years ago with the commission to transform Stamford Bridge and its surrounding masterplan for Chelsea FC. Today the multi award-winning AJ100 architecture and design practice still counts the Premier League club as a longstanding client, alongside leading clubs such as Liverpool FC, Leicester City FC and Brighton & Hove Albion FC. KSS also counts three national sports venues among its major project references: Twickenham, Wembleton and Wembley.

David remains the driving force behind the practice, building its international reputation in the design of arenas, stadia and training centres. He has an instinct for understanding clients' needs, and as an avid sports fan enjoys the challenge of creating memorable venues for spectators and sports stars alike.



#### TheStadiumBusiness Judging Panel said:

*"Pioneers are either crazy or wise. David Keirle was ahead of the industry curve when he made the wise decision – some 30 years ago – to take inspiration from his first big commission and focus his future practice on sports and entertainment. Combining his two passions – for sports and great design – has served him, his firm and our sector very well indeed."*



#### David Keirle says:

*"KSS set out to create a practice that would do things differently, and we have many people that have worked with us for a long period. If I have any talent, it is picking good people and getting out of their way as they do all the hard work. This honour is for the whole practice as it has been a real team effort. I thank you all for your friendship, support, creativity and genius"*

## About The Stadium Business Awards

*TheStadiumBusiness Awards* recognise leadership, innovation & achievement in the delivery, operation and management of sports facilities globally.

Inaugurated in 2010, the Awards are the first (and only) awards for our industry, by our industry. The Awards were launched in order to:

- Recognise achievement, innovation, fresh thinking and the leaders in the world of stadium, arena and sports venue management.
- Raise industry standards and encourage greater professionalism.
- Drive awareness of the stadium, arena and sports venue sector.

You can find out more about the Awards and research previous recipients from the past decade on *TheStadiumBusiness Summit* web site [here](#).

*Does your work deserve recognition?  
Who's the best in your venue business?*

*Nominations for the 2022 Awards open 21 March!*



MANICA