

# IJGlobal ESG Technical Adviser of the Year – Arup

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## Angus Leslie Melville

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The independent panel of judges selected Arup as the winner for the technical advisory award singling it out for “working hard to help its clients manage ESG in line with best practice”.

The judging team identified Arup as “defining strength and depth” having submitted “a really good submission that highlights their policies, strengths and achievements in E, S and G.” This final comment is particularly important given the requirement for entrants for these ESG awards to identify achievements in all three elements.

The compliments came thick and fast for Arup with one judge saying it was “clearly a leader in this area” and that its “ESG strategy is innovative and evident”.

One of the judges said: “Arup’s submission suggests they genuinely are doing more than many technical advisory firms to drive the ESG agenda. My personal experience is that most TAs are still doing woefully too little on ESG factors, whereas Arup’s ‘ESG value’ approach indicates a refreshingly holistic approach to these issues. Other technical advisers should pay attention.”

This was joined by another saying: “Arup is a solid technical adviser with very competent technical professionals. It is good to see they have re-skilled to address the ESG agenda and momentum and are focused on that, as demonstrated by the two case studies. We will need all the advisers in the industry re-skilling or upskilling to address the existing gaps in ESG and advising the clients, in what is quite a substantially technical matter.”

Meanwhile, another judge recognised the firm’s “well-articulated strategy that demonstrates Arup impacts at project and ESG topic level, with clear social and environmental benefits, both at developing and developed markets”. The judge continues: “The electric railway in Tanzania is an outstanding example of the combination of environmental and social angles where I would like to command the clear addressment of ‘just transition’ considerations.”

## The Arup way

In the Arup submission, it states: “The ESG agenda, and the regulations that shape it – such as EU Taxonomy, SFDR and TCFD – are changing the equation for investors in every sector, driving urgent need for action. Investors increasingly see huge potential benefit for enhanced returns and reduced volatility from proactively managing ESG.

“To unlock this potential, we have completely reframed the stereotypical environmental due diligence scope creating a much more value- and outcome-driven approach going way beyond an EHS compliance tick-box, identifying and quantifying ESG risks and opportunities and creating roadmaps for implementation.”

On the transaction front, the Arup submission drew reference to the Dar es Salaam to Makutupora Railway in Tanzania where the has embarked on an ambitious initiative to promote regional social and economic development by establishing modern, efficient and sustainable transport links throughout the nation and beyond.

Arup also played a key role on the financing of Northvolt's first lithium-ion battery manufacturing facility in the north of Sweden – which also wins an award. This plant is being developed by Northvolt, one of the most successful European industrial start-ups of recent years which is quickly becoming an iconic leader in the battery manufacturing value chain, a highly innovative sector for Europe. In June 2020, Northvolt announced that it had raised \$1.6 billion in debt financing, with Arup's support as legal technical adviser.



Steven Lloyd



On an internal level, Arup's global strategy promotes that "sustainable development is everything", consistent with its roots as a purpose-led organisation. Its founder – Ove Arup – said in 1970 "we should always be asking ourselves 'how does this create a more sustainable future for the world', and if it doesn't, we shouldn't be doing it".

According to the submission: "This philosophy is encapsulated within our sustainable development implementation strategy A Better Way, mapping out how Arup will drive a radical shift towards adaptive and regenerative designs, prioritising action to address climate change, making sustainable use of natural resources and delivering natural net gains."

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