

# ARTFORWARD

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## The Green Academy

Twenty kilometers on a bicycle, a generous helping of cracked eggs, and perhaps the finest view Copenhagen has to offer... these were just a few of the moments the partners in the European project Artforward carried with them after three intense days in the Danish capital.

This **March**, indeed, the Italian Chamber of Commerce in Denmark hosted **a vibrant group of around forty students and teachers** from high school Chierici in Emilia-Romagna, Italy, and the Institut Toulouse Lautrec in Bordeaux, France, together with the project partners, for three days of workshops and company visits.

## Sustainability in practice

It was an invitation not just to observe, but to experience firsthand how, in Denmark, sustainability is woven into the fabric of the creative sector, where ideas are not only imagined, but consciously designed to endure.

The first spark came from the design studio **Kirt & Thomsen**, who led a workshop on what it truly means to work at the intersection of design and digital thinking, where creativity and artistic sensibility find their place even within the structured worlds of engineering and mechanical sustainability.



## Wonderful architecture

The second meeting was at the renowned architecture firm **BIG**.

Known for shaping iconic buildings that seamlessly blend multiple functions, BIG designs not just for aesthetics, but for the everyday lives of those who inhabit and surround their spaces. Beyond the vision and mission of the studio, what lingered most vividly with our guests was the view from BIG's rooftop—a sweeping panorama stretching across Copenhagen, all the way to the distant shores of Sweden.



## Copenhagen by bike

What better way to experience Copenhagen than by bicycle?

That is precisely why, on the second day of the Green Academy, we dedicated an entire day to life on two wheels. The journey began with a special guide: Veronica Spano, founder of **CEA - Capsule**, who led us through a thoughtful exploration of sustainability in both fashion and urban development, reminding us of the importance of always keeping a critical eye.

Together, pedaling through the city, we reached **ARC**-Copenhagen's waste-to-energy plant, designed by BIG. More than an industrial facility, ARC stands as a symbol of the city's approach to sustainability, transforming waste into energy and heat for its residents, while also reimagining public space with a ski slope rising from its rooftop.

## Egg challenge

From there, we continued toward **Circular Atelier Amager**, a place where discarded materials are given a second life. Here, garments and accessories are crafted from waste, and clothing and upholstery are carefully repaired—quietly extending their stories, one stitch at a time.

The final stop of the day brought us to **Holscher Design**, where the students were met with an unexpected and delightfully unconventional challenge: the “egg test.” Divided into groups, they were asked to design a way to protect an egg from breaking when dropped from a height of one meter.

Laughter, tension, and bursts of creativity filled the room, but beyond the fun, the lesson was clear and lasting: innovation is rarely a straight path. To create, to improve, one must be willing to fail first.



## Social sustainability

On the final day of the Green Academy, the students stepped into the **Statens Museum for Kunst**, where art became something to touch, shape, and reinterpret. Inside its creative lab, guided by experienced hands, they experimented with patterns—cutting, weaving, and reimagining materials, giving new life to paper and recycled elements through their own designs.

The journey then led to **Christiania**, a place unlike any other. There, the group was welcomed by some of the community's founders, who shared not only the history of this neighborhood, but also its spirit. Through stories of challenges and resilience, they revealed how Christiania has endured—held together by a strong commitment to democratic dialogue and the active participation of its citizens.

Throughout those three days, the students were not only guided by experts who translated the complex ideas of social, environmental, and economic sustainability into clear and tangible examples within their fields of design, fashion, art, and architecture, but were also given something more personal: **a travel diary.**

Within its pages, each student was invited to pause, to reflect, to question. They captured thoughts, sketched impressions, and responded to prompts about their future paths and the meaning behind each experience they encountered along the way.

The Green Academy came to a fitting close back at the Danitacom offices, where the atmosphere shifted into something more relaxed—a final gathering over an aperitivo. There, conversations flowed easily, as students shared their impressions, flipping through pages filled with words and drawings that told the story of their journey.

What remains now is not only memory, but creation. **The outcome of this experience will take shape as a publication**, one that will bring together some of the most meaningful excerpts from these diaries, alongside practical guidelines for educators who wish to draw inspiration and create similar journeys of discovery for their own students.

