



HUMANSCALE FLOAT TABLE

Can a product really create positive good in the world? Humanscale, an office products manufacturer, is using the tenets of the Living Product Challenge (LPC) to guide the manufacturing of their latest **Diffrient Smart Chair** and **Float Table**. The company seeks to refine their processes to produce Living Products that will indeed pose a positive impact and will serve as a precedent for the transparency movement.

The LPC does for manufactured goods what the ILFI's renowned Living Building Challenge (LBC) does for buildings, upending the paradigm of energy-intensive, high-impact structures and replacing it with a blueprint for regenerative design. Unlike the bulk of 21st-century products, Living Products are free of toxins, sourced as locally as possible, and made without extraneous inputs of electricity and water. Living Products are a model for true sustainability, stepping beyond band-aid fixes and imagining products that give back to people and the land.

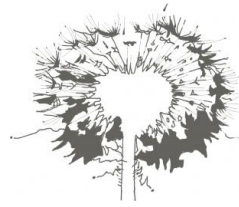
The LPC operates via a series of seven performance requirements, also known as Petals: Place, Water, Energy, Health and Happiness, Materials, Equity, and Beauty. Each of these Petals, in turn, contains Imperatives that must be met in order to achieve full LPC certification. To meet such Imperatives, Humanscale had to reform its entire manufacturing process—but in a way which benefited the company immensely. When some suppliers failed to provide nontoxic materials, for example, Humanscale found new suppliers. Such shifts benefit the company's entire product line.

It's not just consumers who benefit from the LPC's rigorous health requirements: workers also feel the impact. When daily exposure to toxic chemicals drops, employees experience fewer illnesses and are more energetic at work.

Perhaps the greatest hurdle for Humanscale was LPC's requirement that products be free of Red List chemicals. The ILFI developed the Red List in the early 2000s to limit people's exposure to carcinogens and other highly toxic compounds that are common in the manufacturing sector. Such chemicals are so commonplace, however, that Humanscale had to work for months to find alternatives. Their perseverance indicates Humanscale's commitment to sustainable living and paves a path for other companies to do the same.

Other companies are paving the way as well. "From entrepreneurial startups to some of the world's largest manufacturing companies, corporate leaders are accepting the challenge and pushing the entire industry forward," says Living Product Challenge Director, James Connelly.

Amid a dearth of effective chemical regulation and a corporate culture that keeps a closed lid on product ingredients, the Living Product Challenge represents a channel by which responsible companies can move their products to market and care for the earth at the same time.



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