

# VALUES, LEADERSHIP AND TECHNICAL EXPERTISE COMBINED

**June 2020, Flemming Bligaard Pedersen stepped down as chair of the Ramboll Foundation's Board of Trustees after serving six years.**

In 1976, Flemming Bligaard Pedersen turned down an offer to work in Ramboll.

Flemming was about to finish a PhD from the Danish Technical University, and the stationing for Ramboll in Tunisia just wouldn't work. An amazing 44-year long career in Ramboll might never have been. But fortunately, a few months later, Ramboll made Flemming a second offer to work on the newly won assignment to build a new complex for the Danish Ministry for Foreign Affairs. This time Flemming accepted, partly because of the friendly, warm and straightforward atmosphere in the company.

"I was employed with Ramboll as a specialist in structural engineering with emphasis on structural dynamics. I was a technical nerd, and my intention was to stick to this kind of work - my great interest and passion.

But during my first project on the Foreign Ministry complex, I realised that working with people - colleagues, contractors and clients - was inspiring and interesting. This experience got me interested in leadership and management of complicated projects."

## LEADERSHIP AND DIRECTION

For 20 years Flemming Bligaard Pedersen was the CEO of Ramboll, and when he left Ramboll Group in 2012, it was transformed. On his watch, the company had grown from a Danish consultancy of less than 1,000 employees to a global one with more than 9,500 employees.

In 2002, it was Flemming who initiated the bold step to acquire Swedish Scandiaconsult - a company the same size as Ramboll at the time - to create the largest Nordic engineering consultancy and establish the foundation

for Ramboll's strategic ambitions to grow into an international company.

"Establishing this strategic platform was for me a long-time dream and quite a risky idea - most people do not realise I am a bit of a gambler. The same evening the deal came through, I drove home along the Danish coast and, seeing the lights on the Swedish coast across the strait, I was relieved and happy for this new opportunity for Ramboll - a new path into the future."

## VALUES TIE US TOGETHER

As Ramboll has become more international, the Ramboll Foundation's role and activities have adapted to reflect the more diverse employee base while maintaining the original legacy.

"As Børge always mentioned, it was much easier to communicate the values and coordinate

internally when the company had a size where all employees could sit and talk around a lunch table. So, realising that the company now have a size and spread that in a communication perspective is very challenging, the Foundation decided that a more intense on-boarding program will be developed and implemented in collaboration between the Group and the Foundation with strong focus on our heritage and Foundation ownership.

### THE STRONG LEGACY

As new chair for the Ramboll Foundation Robert Arpe is picking up the baton, Flemming's hopes for the future are to maintain the "One Company" philosophy and the values embodied by the company's founders Rambøll and Hannemann whom Flemming knew and worked closely with - their excellence and ambition, as well as their compassion, engagement, and straightforward style.

"We have wanted to establish a multidisciplinary consultancy that would be able to work with and handle the most challenging and inspiring projects in the world. To build a society consultancy that can offer solutions to all the challenges of modern societies, now and in the future. A company that always and in all aspects would be respected for its outstanding values and excellence". Looking back, Flemming Bligaard Pedersen has been on quite



a journey with Ramboll: From a Danish operation with 300 employees to an enterprise with 16,500 colleagues in over 35 countries, delivering crucial and impressive international society consultancy and principal advice to private companies and public institutions.

"I am deeply grateful for having had this opportunity to stand upon the shoulders of giants such as Børge and Johan and many others, and to have continued their work and ideas together with so many professional colleagues and good people. I am sure that Ramboll will continue to grow and fulfil the original ambitions to remain one of the most esteemed global consultancies among peers."

### Flemming Bligaard Pedersen

MSc in Civil and Structural Engineering DTU 1973, PhD in Structural Dynamics, DTU 1977  
Member of the Danish Society of Engineers (IDA), Danish Court of Arbitration for Buildings, Transport & Infrastructure and The Danish Academy of Technical Sciences (ATV).

Former President of The Danish Association for Consulting Engineers (F.R.I), the European Federation of Engineering Consultancy Associations (EFCA) and Director of the Global Federation for Consulting Engineers (FIDIC).

Awarded 'European CEO of the Year 2011' by an international jury appointed by ACE, the Association for Consultancy and Engineering of the United Kingdom.