

Press release

10 June 2021

New range of chairs added to Benchmark's OVO furniture collection

Foster + Partners has launched a new range of chairs to complement its existing OVO furniture collection for Benchmark. Comprising an armchair, a stackable armless version and a lounge seat, the soft, tactile forms match the overall aesthetic of the collection, marrying ergonomics with a clarity of form. As wellbeing comes into sharper focus and the desire for warmer, more tactile furniture grows, the OVO chairs offer a solution that is suited to a variety of settings from office and commercial to domestic uses.

Mike Holland, Head of Industrial Design at Foster + Partners, said: "The OVO collection is a celebration of craftsmanship and materiality, a tactile range of furniture that is characterised by the simplicity of form. We felt there was a need to complement the existing collection with a range of seating solutions that cater to a wide variety of uses. From the exceptionally flexible stacking chair to the ease and comfort of the lounge seat, every piece has been meticulously designed and crafted to fit within the overall OVO aesthetic that serves as a compelling invitation to touch."

The design of the stackable version arises from a demand for flexible furniture that can be easily stored away after use. This light, armless version offers a seat for a range of uses such as meeting rooms, lecture halls and other multipurpose spaces. On the armchair, the tops of the armrests have a soft, pillowed finish and softened edges that widen to form the backrest. These armrests have been widened to form a support for a

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cup or a laptop on the lounge chair, with a deeper, more spacious seat, making it suitable for office lobbies, breakout spaces or airline lounges.

The seat is designed in a modular fashion so that it can be replaced, with either a solid timber or upholstered version available as standard. The latter comes with a choice of aniline leather, which has received Nordic Swan Ecolabel certification. Rather than plastic foam, the fillings of the upholstered seats use organic lambswool, which has anti-microbial properties, is naturally breathable, and meets British fire standards without the application of toxic fire-retardant chemicals. The OVO furniture range has been accredited by the International Living Future Institute as 'LBC Red List Free' on its Declare label, guaranteeing that no toxic chemicals are used in its manufacture and that it does not emit harmful VOCs. This also means the OVO pieces meet the requirements for WELL Certified buildings.

Independently verified Environmental Product Declarations (EPDs) have been published on the collection, which demonstrate the cradle to grave environmental performance of the pieces. All three OVO chairs when made with a solid timber seat are carbon neutral or better and have a negative carbon footprint – meaning that they store more carbon than is emitted during their manufacture, distribution and expected use.

Manufactured in the UK by Benchmark, the OVO chair will be available in oak with an ebonised or white oil finish and in walnut with a clear oil finish.

Notes to Editors

Co2 equivalent figures (for timber seat variant) from the EPD are as follows:

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OVO Armchair

Carbon absorbed -22.4kg

Carbon emitted +16.3kg

Total carbon footprint: -6.1kg

OVO Stacking Chair

Carbon absorbed -21.4kg

Carbon emitted +15.2kg

Total carbon footprint: -6.2kg

OVO Lounge Chair

Carbon absorbed -31.3kg

Carbon emitted +22.7kg

Total carbon footprint: -8.6kg

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