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HUMAN TECHNOPOLE HEADQUARTERS & CAMPUS, MILANO

In the heart of Milan's MIND district, Piuarch designs a new campus for medical research that puts the accent on relations, transparency, and sustainability.

Piuarch signs the Human Technopole headquarters and campus, the innovative research institute for Life Sciences to be located in the MIND district – or Milano Innovation District -, the new Italian hub of scientific excellence and city district, fruit of a significant urban regeneration scheme involving the former site of EXPO 2015.

The **backbone** of the project is structured around **three main spaces of a public and collective nature**: an **accessorized parterre**, a **sheltered square**, and a **roof garden**, which form an uninterrupted sequence from the ground floor to the top of the building. These are surrounded by the **offices and laboratories, laid out in two compact and separate blocks**, both positioned parallel to the covered square. Inside these volumes, spatial distribution follows the criteria of maximum optimization and flexibility: numerous partitions, for instance, are mobile, to allow for rapid adjustment to the research centre's evolving needs.

The green parterre: a connective space

At street level, the accessorized parterre, which interconnects the main building occupied by offices with the other buildings of the Campus, has an artificial topography of sloping levels alternated with sheltered passageways and convivial gathering points based on the amphitheatre concept. Generally speaking, the landscape design has evolved from an analysis of the architectural project and its specific features, in such a way as to develop the vegetation solution that most effectively enhances each environment, while creating a system of diversified composition. The landscape project has set out to maximise any spaces able to accommodate greenery and, in the case of outdoor areas, the choice has fallen on low-maintenance tree species that adapt well to a wide range of climatic conditions, as well as looking attractive at various times of the year.

The full-height piazza: exchange of ideas and skills

From this open-air space, there is seamless access to the building interior: a fully glazed lobby anticipates the large piazza which, entirely sheltered, extends from the ground floor to the roof. Flooded with natural light, the piazza is the authentic core of the Human Technopole Headquarters: conceived as an introvert vertical campus overlooked by all offices and laboratories, it is traversed by a system of ramps and walkways that interconnect all levels of the building. This is a crucial space of interaction and exchange of ideas: the central flight of steps and the various meeting points make it an ideal place for researchers to converse in. In more general terms, this panoptic and interconnected space is the architectural transcription of the values upheld by institutions such as Human Technopole which promotes scientific research as an ethical and transparent activity. The widespread presence of house plants is contemplated for this environment, some of which will be of a considerable size, to be grown in hydroculture and semi-hydroculture, a technique that enables plants to be grown without soil and with very little maintenance required.

The rooftop garden that embraces the city

The rooftop garden is the natural completion of the sheltered piazza and the place in which the building embraces its surrounds and the city. On the asymmetrical slopes of the roof, green banks planted with vegetation, terraces and spacious wood platforms alternate to multiply the availability of polyfunctional spaces, all of which are freely accessible to the building's users. From here, the view extends in a south-

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easterly direction as far as the centre of Milan; at the same time, the characteristic fragmented profile of its crowning element makes the Human Technopole Headquarters an unmistakable presence, a new architectural icon for the future of MIND.

In view of its height and visibility, the trees and shrubs for this environment have been chosen intentionally to recall the spontaneous vegetation typical of hilly or mountain areas, while mingling evergreens with deciduous varieties to ensure that the vegetation looks attractive throughout the year, even in the winter months.

The Human Technopole Headquarters has been conceived as a **highly sustainable eco-system**. The **vegetation**, whether growing at ground level or overhead, enables a correct management of rainwater. The **photovoltaic systems** installed on the ground floor shelter elements and the roof contribute significantly to the energy requirements of the building. The **brise-soleil** punctuating the facades dose the amount of sunlight required at various times of the year.

Amounting to an investment of 94 million Euros, the Human Technopole Headquarters is an essential project for the future of Milan and Italy. With its 35,000 square metres, 16,500 of which serve as laboratories alone, it testifies to the renewed centrality scientific research must have in the near future of our country, and the fundamental role played by architecture in designing the spaces it occupies.

ARCHITECTURAL PROJECT

Piuarch Architectural project

Client Fondazione Human Technopole / Arexpo

Structural project 3TI Italia

System design Seingim

Infrastructure design J+S

Urban design Archimi

Medical laboratories consultant Ing. Massimo Acerboni

Landscape Design consultant Laura Gatti

PIUARCH

Founded in Milan in 1996, Piuarch is an architecture and urban planning firm, a group of international professionals in which different backgrounds, identities, and skills merge. Piuarch delivers an architectural concept that is contemporary yet deeply rooted in its surroundings, with respect for current and future planetary resources. Activities range from the design of office buildings to retail and hospitality premises, with forays into the development of residential complexes, urban renewal, and regeneration projects. The firm's primary objective is the planning of quality urban contexts and community spaces which, through new concepts of usage and shared functions, may stimulate renewed forms of civil co-existence.

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