



Typology

Education

Site

2, avenue de l'Université
4365 Esch-sur-Alzette, Luxembourg
49° 30' 15.314" N 5° 56' 54.19" E

Competition/Award

Competition 1. Prize 2007
Zumtobel Group Award 2017
Building Developer Award 2016
Nomination: The European Union
Prize for Contemporary
Architecture - Mies van der Rohe
Award 2015

Client

Le Fonds Belval
Esch sur Alzette, Luxembourg

Cooperation

Christian Bauer & Associés, Luxembourg

Landscape design

Michael Desvigne

Interior design

Baumschlager Eberle Architekten

Photography

Eduard Hueber

Site area

13,720 m²

Area of building

1,500 m²

Gross floor area

47,052 m²

Building volume

214,857 m³

Floor area

40,436 m²

Start of planning phase

2007

Start of construction

2010

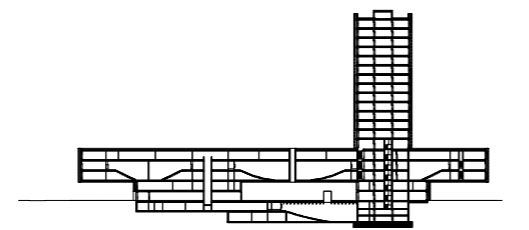
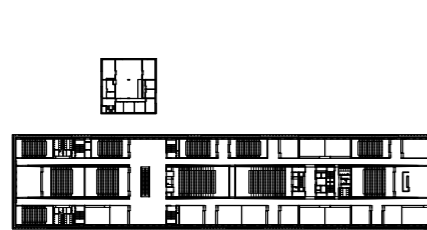
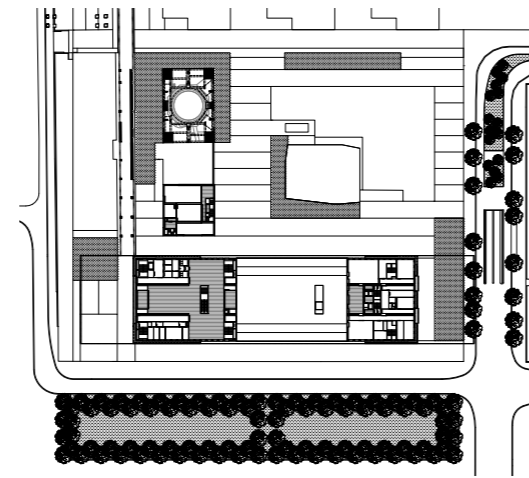
Completion

2015

Construction cost

EUR 88.65 million

La Maison du Savoir
Esch-sur-Alzette, Luxembourg



Insights

The façade is key, not only in terms of wind, rain and shade but also in giving the building the strength it needs to live up to the location and its steel-working past.



The brief here was to create a centrepiece for the "Cité des Sciences". Both reminder symbol of the future and reminder of the past, the Maison du Savoir was conceived by Baumschlager Eberle Architects as the focal point of the new University of Luxembourg campus and constructed in association with Christian Bauer & Associés as a striking landmark, visible for miles around. Located on the site of a former steel plant in the Belval district of Esch-sur-Alzette, the building comprises a **vertical rectangle and a floating horizontal bar** and makes numerous references to the history of the area, symbolising the site's transformation from steel production to a modern seat of learning. In various ways, the Maison du Savoir seeks to bridge the gap between a past in which steel was produced on the 67-acre Terrasse des Hauts-Fourneaux site and the present. Rising 85 metres and 18 storeys above the ground, the tower, for example, echoes the proportions of the old blast furnaces.

The impression of floating is created by the pre-stressed concrete structures that project out from the second floor of the building upwards. In urban development terms, the Maison du Savoir connects the Place du Saint-Esprit to the north with the empty spaces awaiting development of the library and other university buildings to the south, thus establishing a larger urban environment without sacrificing either its **stand-alone status** or its sculptural character. The double-shelled construction chosen for the façade comprises an inner layer that forms the building's climatic barrier and an outer layer that envelopes it in a steel honeycomb structure, regulating its transparency and so the amount of light admitted. The Maison du Savoir is thus able to provide **premium user comfort** without mechanical ventilation or cooling – only the large lecture theatres being fitted with bespoke ventilation systems. The space allocation inside the building allows for a **variety of potential uses** and its 50,000 m² house several lecture theatres and conference halls as well as staff and administrative offices and catering facilities.