

LIBER Architecture Group
Seminar changing needs, Changing Libraries
Utrecht, The Netherlands 22/24 March 2006

Session 8. Progresses of architecture competition : Learning Center, the Lausanne example

Point of entry to EPFL, the Learning Center will be a place to learn, to obtain information, and to live. Replacing and improving the old main library, this new building will gradually assimilate all EPFL department libraries collections and services, as they are integrated into a global information system.

Conceived as the place for those who are learning, mainly students, who have no personal working area on the campus, it is designed to adapt itself to the "seasons" of academic life throughout the year (flexibility and modularity of rooms, extended opening hours during exam periods). It will take into account group working habits (silence / noise), changes in the rhythm of student life (meals, working alone, discussions, etc.), and other environmental factors. But of course the needs of EPFL staff and alumni, local industry and citizens have also been carefully considered in the design.

By offering a multitude of community functions, such as bookshop, cafeteria and restaurant services, and rooms for relaxation and discussion, the Learning Center will link the campus to the city. Areas devoted to exhibition and debate will also be included, enforcing its role as an interactive science showcase, in particular for those technologies related to the research and teaching of the EPFL.

During our presentation we will describe the process and steps towards the actual realisation of such a vital public space: from the program definition to the collaboration with the bureau of architects (SANAA, Tokyo) who won the project competition, we will try to show what are the challenges and lessons already taken when working on this major piece of architecture, indeed the heart of the transformation of our technical school build in the (19)70's into a real 2000's campus living 24 hr per day.

Mirjana Rittmeyer
Scientific Information and Libraries

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EXPERIENCE:

- General experience of construction projects
- Specialised in overall planning and financial control.
- Management, organisation and coordination of multidisciplinary teams.

MISSION:

Learning Center:

Representation of the interests of the user groups:

- Constitute, animate and coordinate ad hoc working groups with the objective of determining users' needs and, on this basis, establish a detailed program of the required premises, including their technical and functional characteristics.
- Maintain a constant flow of information with the LC project managers, attached to the Presidency and the DII (Real estate and Infrastructure Domain).
- Supervise and follow up the architectural aspects of the project ensuring that the overall project conforms to the program, notably regarding the needs of the end users.

Management and maintenance of the Learning Center website

Scientific Information and Libraries:

Method Study of Library processes as they evolve:

- Generate feedback from the various services in order to identify problems and propose solutions and possible improvements.
- Coordinate and animate ad hoc working groups who's job it is to propose, plan and realise the transfer schedule of the Central and Peripheral Libraries into the new Learning Center.

BIOGRAPHY:

Mirjana Rittmeyer has been working on the Learning Center project since its inception in 2003 in the capacity of assistant to David Aymonin, the Director of Scientific Information.

She is a graduate of the Architecture Department of the EPFL, the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology in Lausanne and has been a practicing architect for some 20 years. Her speciality during this time was the overall planning and financial management of major undertakings concerning the construction of educational and industrial buildings, notable for both their size and complexity. It should be mentioned here that she ran, between 1982 and 1990, the projection, construction and erection of the buildings of both the Departments of Electricity and of Computer Science as the Head of the project.