



UNIVERSITY OF AMSTERDAM
Library

Turning the Page:

*Transforming Challenges into Triumphs
with UvA's New Library in a Historic
Former Hospital*

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O Hello, everyone. We are from the University of Amsterdam and happy to be here. I'm Lucille, the Communications Officer for our exciting new library project

O And I'm Marloes van Wagtenonk, Project Manager

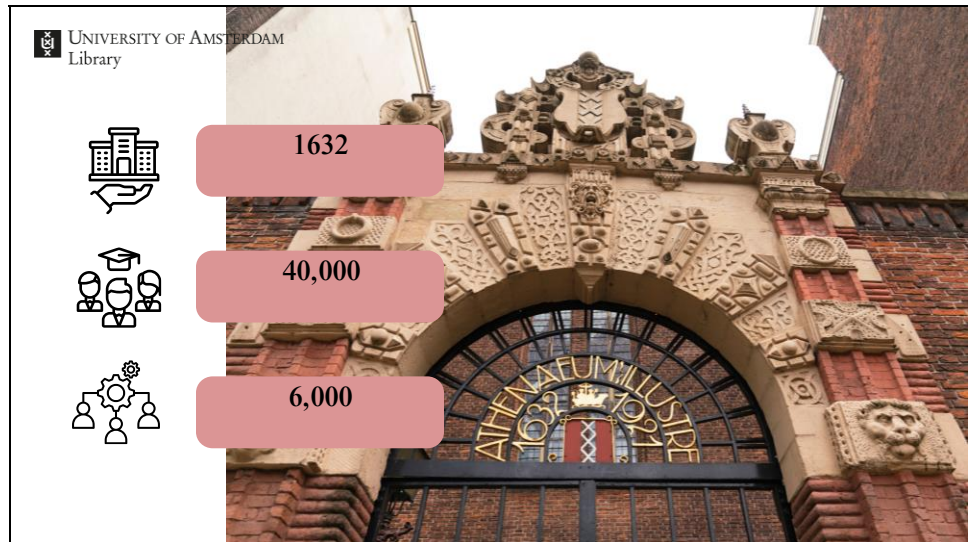
O Today, we are presenting the development of the new University Library of the University of Amsterdam. The building consists of a partial conversion of a former hospital and a new part. It is currently under construction.

O It is a complex project with many delays. The building will open in September 2025, 6 years later than planned. The construction will take 6 years in total.

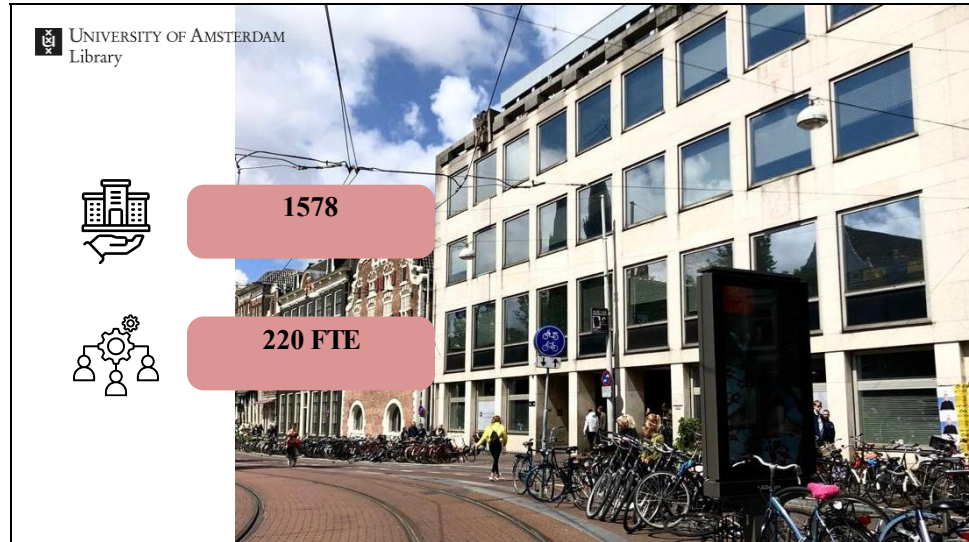
O Because of the delay the costs doubled to 133 million euros.

O Despite these hurdles, the UvA remains committed to creating an inspiring learning environment.

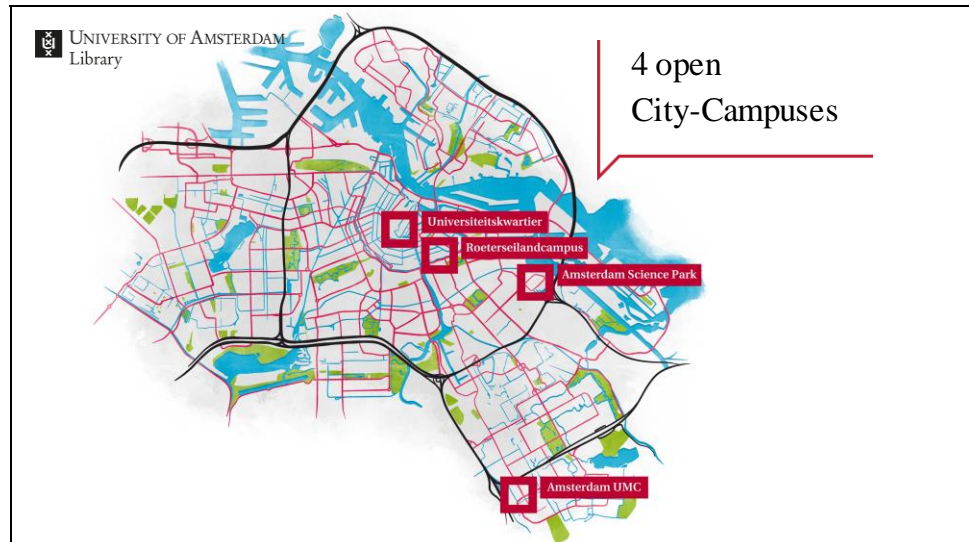
O We'll take you on a journey through the past, present, and future, with the building as the focus. We'll share with you our biggest challenges and how we have addressed them.



- O What you see here is the agnieten chapel, where the UvA was founded in 1632
- O Now renowned as the largest public research university in the Netherlands.
- O We offer over 200 programs across various faculties.
- O We are the home to more than 40,000 students and 6000 staff members.
- O 35% of our students are international students.



- The predecessor of the current library, the library of the City of Amsterdam, was founded even before the university, in 1578.
- Located in the attic of the Agnietenchapel, in the nowadays University Quarter.
- The library moved from the Agnietenchapel to current location, Singel in 1881 and became the University Library.
- The library has one of the largest book collections of the Dutch libraries.
- The library has a staff of 220 FTE's
- We are an academic research library, a college library and we have a large special collections, including the University Museum, The Allard Pierson.



- Previously scattered across over 100 buildings, the university has been working on centralization since the 1990s.
- The UvA's campus policy focuses on consolidating education and research facilities into four main areas (humanities, economics/law/society, science and medicine).
- Each campus is equipped with its own library.
- The new to build Library will be the central library and will house the Humanities collection.

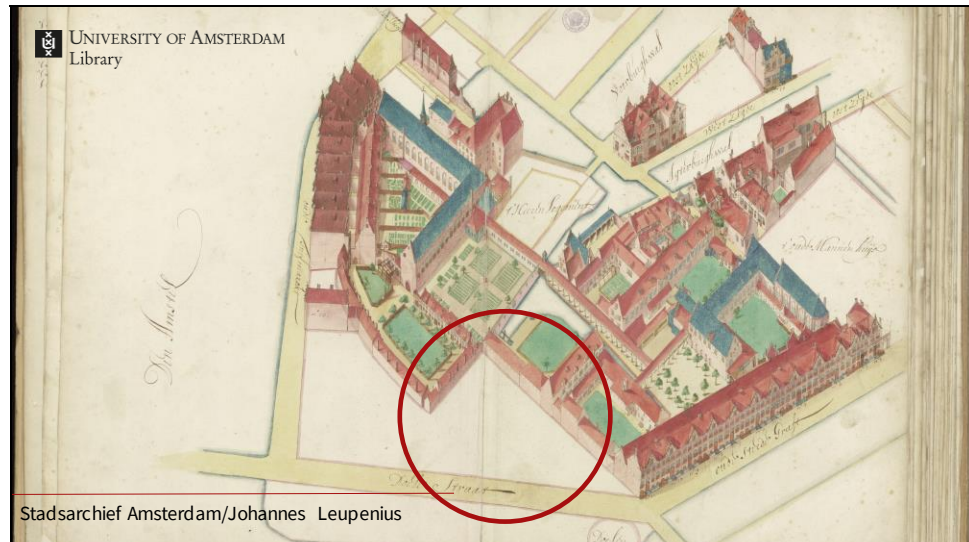
University Quarter



O Currently, the final campus, The university Quarter, is being developed in the oldest part of the city, facing additional challenges, such as dealing with monumental buildings, complex building conditions, and the central location in the center of Amsterdam and neighbouring residents.

O The University Quarter is the home base for the Faculty of Humanities. The Allard Pierson Museum (former library) and the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences (KNAW) are also located within the University Quarter.

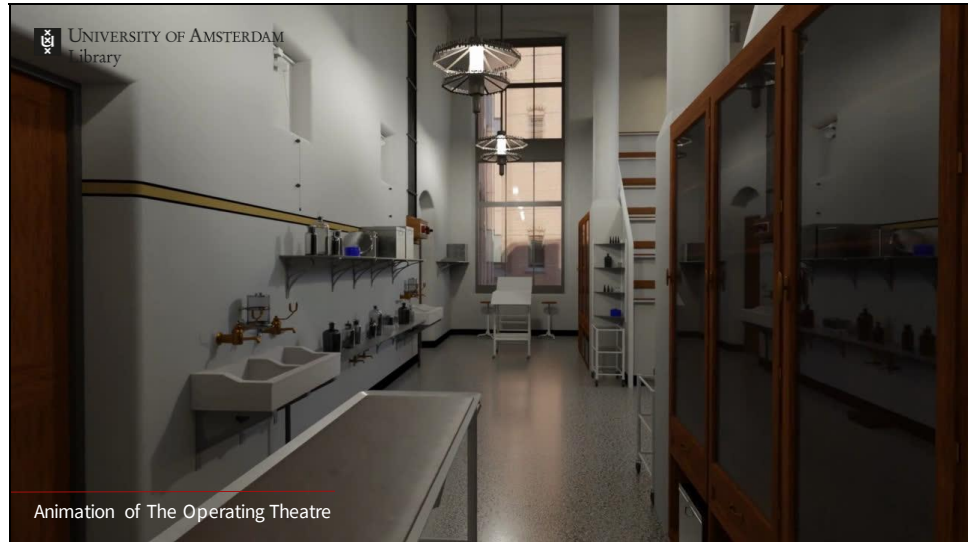
O It is also in the University Quarter where the Agnietenkapel is, the birthplace of the UvA.



- O Since the Middle Ages the site of the University Quarter was an area of monasteries and hospitals
- O The site of the new Library was a nun's monastery in the 14/15th century
- O From the 16th until the 19th century the monastery transformed into various hospitals



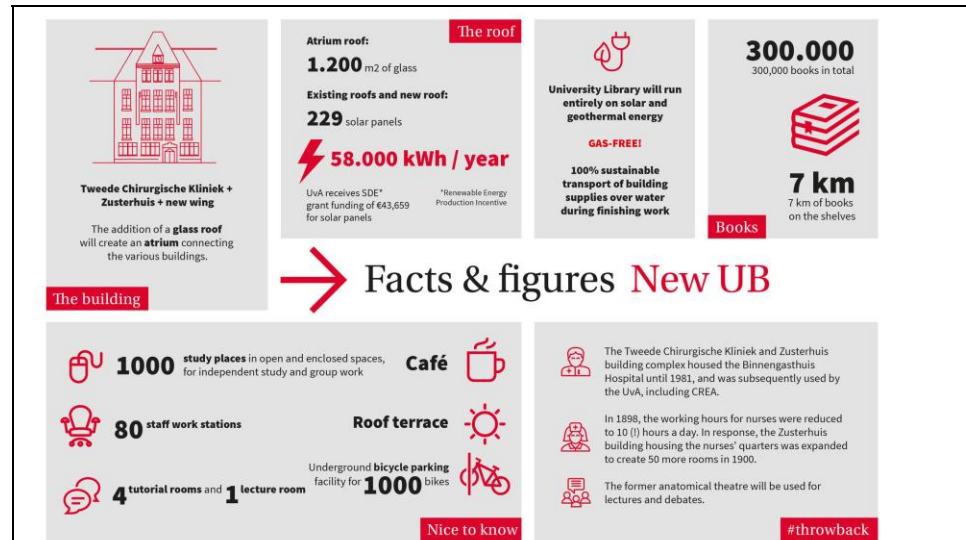
- The last hospital on this site was the Binnengasthuis hospital, built in 1897 and it is in this building the Library will be located.
- The binnengasthuis was an academic hospital.
- It became too outdated and small for the expanding city of Amsterdam and moved to the outside of the city at the beginning of the 1980's.
- On these images you can see the transformation of the courtyard during the lifespan of the hospital.
- Patients were placed on the balconies for a bit of sunlight and fresh air.



- This animation is made by the 4DResearch Lab, which is part of the humanities faculty.
- They research historical sites and collect loads of information on how certain buildings and objects were used and how they looked like.
- With detailed descriptions of medical devices, furniture, and lamps, they were able to recreate the operating theatre, which is still situated in the building.
- This room was used to perform live surgery, whilst students would watch from the gallery and the surgeons every move.
- In the library this monumental room will be used for lectures and as a cinema.



- this animation, which was also produced by the 4DRL, shows an overview of the building.
- The building was originally designed by the architect Poggenbeek.



O The new library will have over a 1000 study places. These study places offer a great variety. From a study booth, to collaboration in a large room and everything in between.

O We will have about 7 kilometers of books on our open shelves.

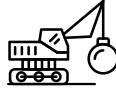
O Over 100 employees will work in the building, divided over 80 shared workstations, and lots

O De building will be the largest gas-free monument in the Netherlands, the climate is regulated by a geothermal energy storage system.

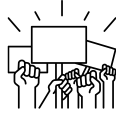
O Overall, the building will have lots of opportunities to meet and interact in one of the many spaces: the atrium, the café and the roof terrace overlooking Amsterdam.



1990



2000



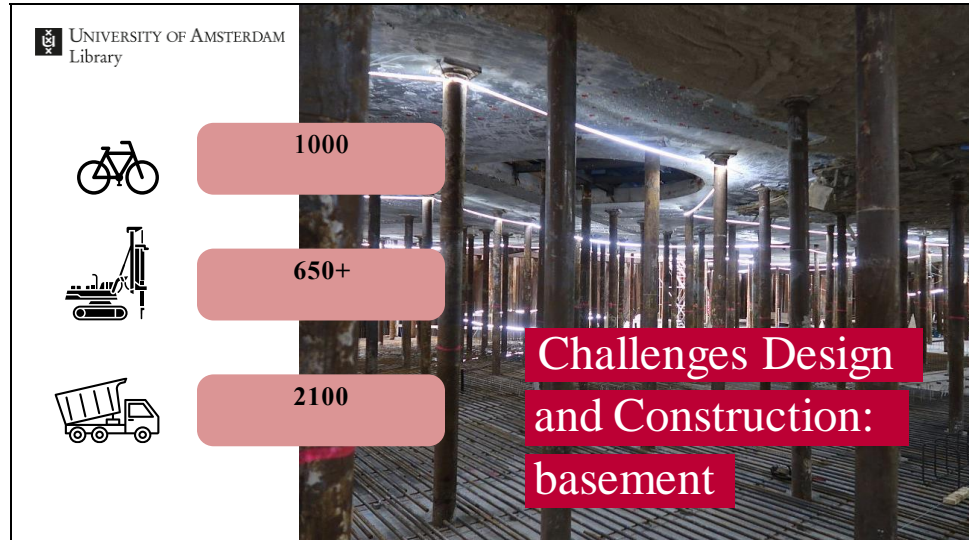
2010

Proces of design
and construction

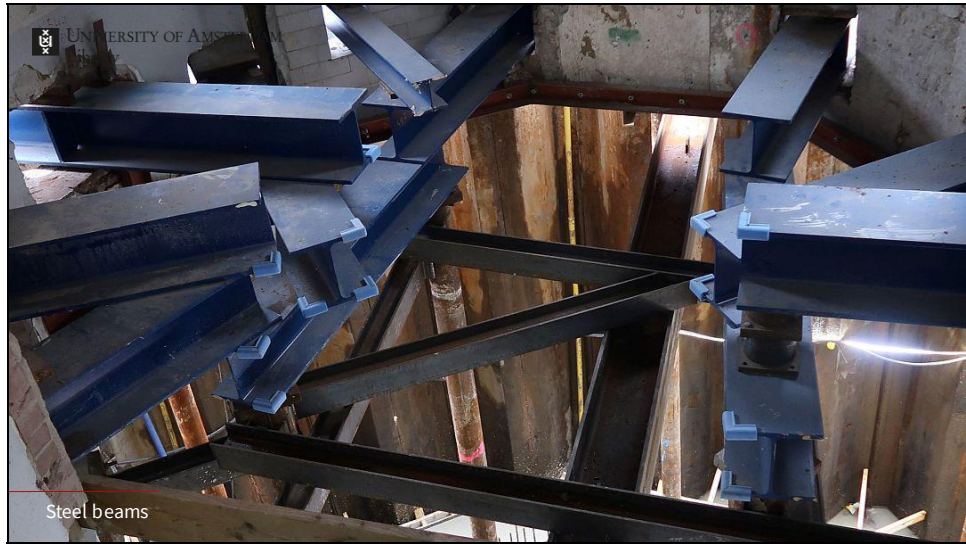
- The process of establishing a new library took us over 35 years. Before unveiling our new design, we wanted to understand the journey leading up to this moment.
- Since the 1990's the University Library has been searching for a new building. Our current building is outdated back then, and very hard to renew.
- After considering over 20 options, we selected the site of the hospital building as the final location.
- around 2000 we made plans to demolish the hospital building and create a new construction on the visual right here.
- but around 2010 the neighbors protested demolishing the building. A final legal procedure declared the building as monumental. And therefore, it had to be preserved.
- The architect who was among the protesters, was selected to renovate the building. His specialty is the renovation of monuments, so he paired up with another architect who was responsible for the new design.

- In the upcoming clip, our architects will present the design and vision for the new library.

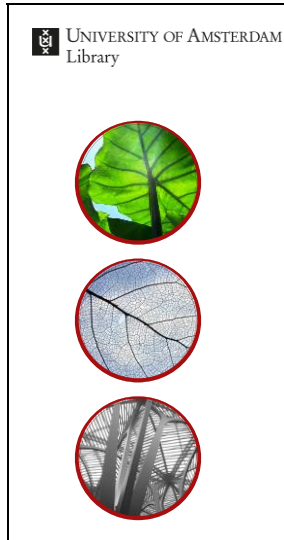




- Since we are situated in the densest and most historic part of the city, we had to meet additional requirements from local authorities, such as parking space for 1000 bicycles within the building.
- Therefore, the construction of a basement became a necessity. However, installing a basement under a monument over a century old, founded on wooden piles in a moist soil, was a major challenge.
- To address this, we installed over 650 new concrete piles, each of 23 meters long, and removed 2100 of soil.
- After that we lifted the building from its original foundation onto the new one.
- And finally, the 1,400 existing wooden piles had to be removed.



The entire building was put onto steel beams to prevent it from collapsing.



- But with the addition of the basement, we still couldn't fit our entire program into the building.
- The architect came up with the idea to span the courtyard with a glass roof, combining the spaces into one.
- With the creation of this Atrium, a central square was added. This was just what the current central place where people could meet and interact.
- Overall, our new library should be a people library, rather than just a book library. And this was a requirement of our program.
- The architect found his inspiration in nature, with the roof resembling a leaf, and the structure resembling a tree.



- We embraced this idea from the very beginning, and the tree and leaf became one of the icons of the building.
- We still needed space for study places, an expedition, part of the collection and a café and restaurant. Luckily, we were able to add an extra wing to the building.
- Because this wing is only meters away from the neighboring apartment building, we needed a solution to get enough light into the building, but also keep the privacy of our neighbors in mind. We designed an extra screen in between the glass façade of the study rooms and the street, thus creating an additional façade.
- We collaborated with the faculty of humanities to come up with a design for the façade screen. A famous Dutch poem was translated into 24 languages, all languages taught at our University. Yours?

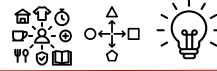




- For the interior design, we turned to students for advice. We consulted them in many ways.
- First, we made a survey, called 'Study spot-tinder' where they could swipe study places with a phone. That way we could see how popular some of our ideas were.
- After that, we organized focus groups, together with the interior designer to specify the ideas and concepts.
- In the final stage of the design process, students helped us select the furniture, we put the furniture in the current library for them to test and rate.

The students were very clear about a few things.

- The building should have a great variety of rooms, so everyone will be able to find their favorite.
- The building must support their study needs.
- And above all, The library should be inspiring.



6 Focus Points for the Interior Design



To be surrounded by books



To Contemplate in Silence



To Interact



To be in Nature



To Exercise and Move

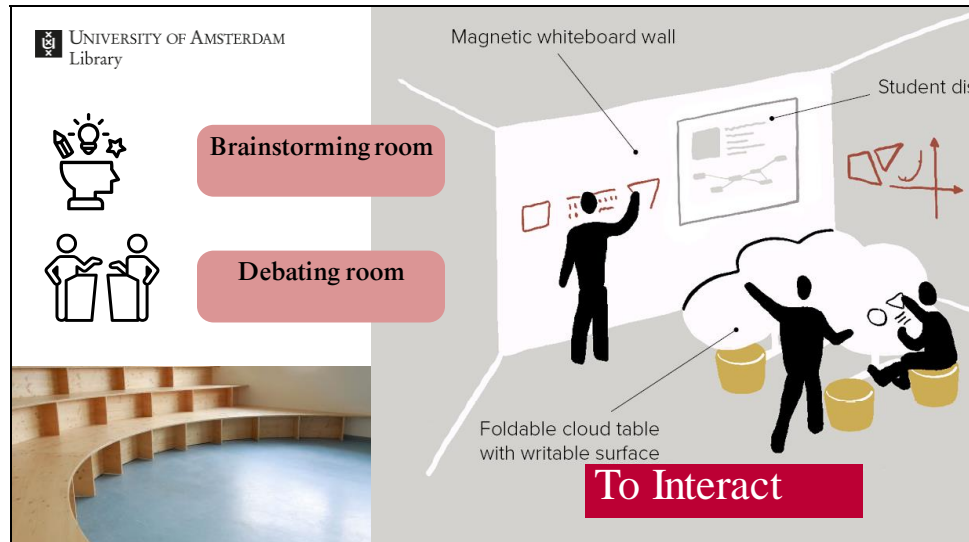


Art & History

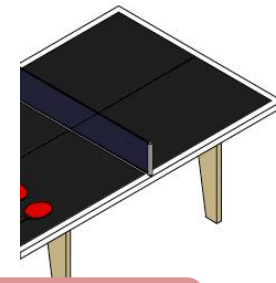
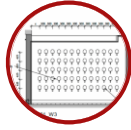
- We deep dived into the concepts of Variety, support and inspiration
- For our students, it comes down to these 6 focus points, that we constantly considered while
- For every focus point we developed a room or concept of rooms.
- I'll quickly discuss a few highlights of the interior design to show how we've incorporated th



- We chose the hospital rooms with high ceilings, as collection rooms.
- The addition of the entresols allowed us to place the books against the walls, using the height from floor to ceiling, so our students can sit in the middle.
- We added some colorful and illuminated shelves in every room, to highlight specific books and make them stand out forward.



- We encourage our students to not only get their knowledge from books and online sources.
- but also inspiring them to discuss their ideas with each other, because we believe that is one of the characteristics of a people's library.
- To support that, we developed a brainstorming room, where all surfaces are writable. We also have a debating room, where discussions on academic topics can take place.

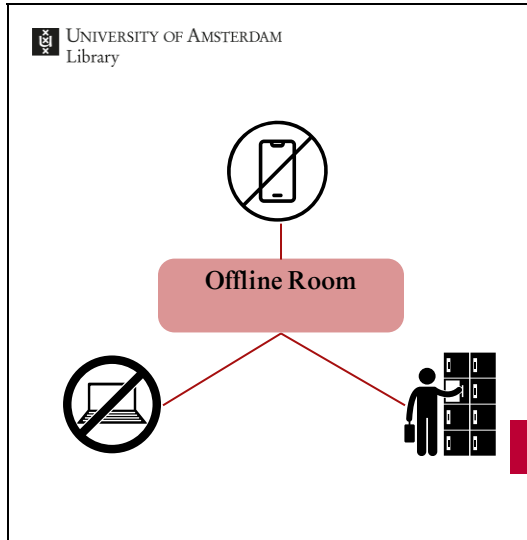


Sports Room

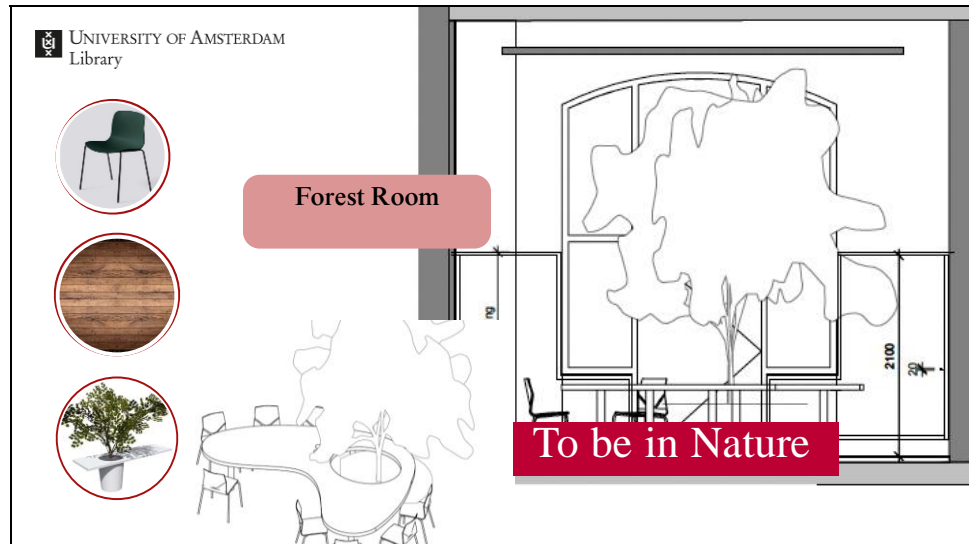


To Exercise
and Move

- Students expressed their need of being able to do some light exercise during their study break.
- In one of the project rooms, the meeting table is a table tennis table, and the walls are covered with bats, from floor to ceiling.
- Students can play a game and focus better after that.



- Most of our study places are fit for focused studying in silence.
- But for a part of our students, this isn't silent enough. They longed for a room where even the hum and beeping noises of devices were absent.
- For them, we created the offline room. A complete silent room, to read and contemplate.
- They can store the devices in the lockers right outside the Offline room.



- Students have expressed that being surrounded by nature is not only inspiring but also enhances learning
- While our building already has some references to nature, we've also designed a forest room
- The centerpiece of this room is a table constructed around a living tree



- And last but not least, Art and history
- To bring art and history alive within the building, we've strived to make its rich heritage and accessible to all. I'll highlight 3 examples of that.
- First, In the main staircase, we will install an artwork by sculptor Lynne Leegte titled "The Residents" which features books emerging from the staircase wall.
- Second, We collaborated with students and staff to gather stories, images, and items related to the area. These were used to craft multiple tours throughout the building, allowing visitors to find inspiration through QR tour routes.
- And finally, All meeting rooms are named after significant Dutch women in medical science, who worked in the building during its time as a hospital.



Questions?

- We are very much looking forward to the opening of our inspiring, sustainable, and future-proof library. We welcome you all to come have a look once it's finished in September 2025.
- We could only show you some of the highlights during this presentation but we are very happy to answer your questions, now or during the conference.