

WU CAMPUS – A SPECIAL PLACE FOR EDUCATION AND RESEARCH

With its present roster of some 23,000 students, the Vienna University of Economics and Business is quite bursting at the seams, which does not make it easy to study, to work and to research. That will change in 2013. There will be space for every student, every professor and every single faculty member. There will be space for communicating, for discussing, for exchanging ideas, for studying, for teaching, for researching, for discovering, for relaxing and for letting go.

The new 91,000 m² location, between Messe (Fair) and the Prater, offers more space and the opportunity to set up a campus with multiple buildings. It is easily reachable via public transport and has direct access to the recreational area of the Prater. A good place arises among great surroundings.

The organizational concept of the Vienna University of Economics and Business places its focus on the departments. Each of these departments is intended to be distinguished by a main entrance area with the capability of providing personal assistance. While there ought to be contact zones for conferences and discussions, there should, at one and the same time, be retreat options, too, especially for the academic staff. Accordingly, an ideal research milieu comes into being.

A Library and Learning Center (LLC) is to connect counselling and library facilities, thus facilitating all aspects of studying in all its functions. A university without books, without a traditional library, is inconceivable; but at the same time a university without the latest technology is not state-of-the-art. Both of these meet and complement one another ideally in the LLC. The LLC stays open for students and employees 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Optimum circumstances for work are thus engendered.

Universities need lecture halls, not large ones, but rather small and medium-sized ones, in which one can cultivate a good style of communication. Break-out zones for work in small groups are also essential, which can once again be redirected into the main gathering. By way of this, an ideal place of study is created.

The Assembly Hall forms the center of communication, stimulating student life. The university, however, also needs a connection with its surroundings and with society. It is a social space where people meet, communicate, study, work and even relax. Attractions on the site and outside of university operations guarantee urban life on campus, while an artistic and intellectual centre for political debate and cultural events – at a reasonable price – can evolve. A new centre of activity space is forged.

The WU Campus is a special place for research and education with a unique atmosphere. This exceptionality shall be reflected in the countenance of its architecture. The university complex shall be a landmark radiating beyond the city limits. Its architecture shall be conceived as a subject of fascination.

The new WU Campus also seeks to be an economic and ecological paradigm, and furthermore attempts to treat the topics of gender mainstreaming and universal access with the utmost care.

MASTER PLAN GOALS FOR THE WU CAMPUS

URBAN DEVELOPMENT ASPECTS

THE WU CAMPUS IS AN ENTITY

The WU Campus site lies hidden away between the *Prater* and the *Messe* Fair exhibition Centre, embedded in a city structure with sufficient open space to develop an urban campus concept. The new WU shall therefore not just function as any other modern university, but shape the options for an active educational landscape.

The Campus shall be a coherent oasis with pavilions in the University 'Garden', its edges featuring green areas and free space. The interior of this very special site must be explored and discovered. Both interfaces to the city are part of this University park concept: one of the entrances to the academic ensemble is via a Sculpture Garden near Messeplatz, the other one via a Garden of Lights near Trabrennstraße.

THE FLOWING SPACE ALLOWS YOU TO BREATHE

The Campus is designed as a "Walk along Park" with different stations and interconnected squares from which the specific areas are accessible through green alleys. Progressing along this sequence of squares, each educational path becomes an adventure path, e.g. from the Sculpture Garden near the Executive Academy between the individual departments to the administrative building and the specialised libraries. Another path progresses from the Garden of Lights between the Lecture Room Centre and the External Service Providers, along the departments and the Lecture Room Centre to the Food Court and the plaza in front of the Library and Learning Centre.and in between you can always catch a glimpse of the Vienna *Prater*.

MASTERPLAN RULEBOOK FOR THE ENTIRE AREA

During the modern era, the Campus concept, which dates back to the Greek Agora and the tradition of the University Campus, has developed as a complex urban entity.

The Campus system is composed of the following principles: balanced proportions, and equilibrium between isolated buildings.

The diversity of independent parts is characterised by their own identity. The open space in between these parts is organised by platforms, parks, ponds and walkways.

The Campus layout is open and integrates nature.

The individual buildings are connected through proximity and proportions.

The composition of these spaces and relationships is defined in the Plot Rulebook. The balanced distribution of cubature across the five plots and equal shares of movement flows are a basic principle of the Campus.

Within this educational landscape the different architects do not compete but complement each other.

The special functions are external to the system and define the character of the plot and the squares.

The departments are variations in the system and confine the open space in a longitudinal direction.

The walkways are free and multi-optional at each point of the Campus.

The meandering structure proposed in the Master Plan invites pedestrians to ramble and discover the Campus.

The Master Plan is to be understood as a definition of an educational gallery in which the open space is the interlinking protagonist. This strong context shows the different types of architecture, square designs as well as artistic endeavour at their best. The result might be what Siegfried Giedion and Le Corbusier presented as their concept at CIAM 6 – that a Campus is a locale for the synthesis of art.

The Master Plan is based on the expectation that the input of different architects will support the model for the WU Campus and will help realise sustainable solutions. Beside the examination of physical and spatial aspects there are other factors which must also be harmonised, such as the function of social spaces and the creation of identity, all of which are reflected in the campus structure and the overall image.

The different handwriting of five architectural teams and the design elements of the various squares by various artists shall create sustained added value to all parties involved in this process.