



Bernard Tschumi and Groupe-6 Complete One of the Largest University Buildings in France

May 2023: Designed by Bernard Tschumi *urbanistes* Architects and Groupe-6, the new Biology-Pharmacy-Chemistry Research and Education Complex for the Université Paris-Saclay is one of the largest educational projects in France. The 74,000 square-meter (800,000 square-foot), €283 million complex is a major scientific center for the university. Located opposite the future Orsay-Gif Metro station on the Grand Paris Express, the building offers an outward face of the new university and the gateway to its world-class science and research facilities.

The complex is made up of three major components—independent educational and research wings linked by a central atrium, or “Cœur de Pôle”—and includes research laboratories, classrooms and auditoria, social spaces, restaurants, offices, logistical areas, and underground parking. Bernard Tschumi *urbanistes* Architectes oversaw the overall urban and architectural coordination as well as the Cœur de Pôle and teaching facilities, while Groupe-6 was responsible for the research units with their laboratories and technical infrastructure. The site will accommodate more than 4,500 people, with 3,300 students and 1,300 teacher-researchers.

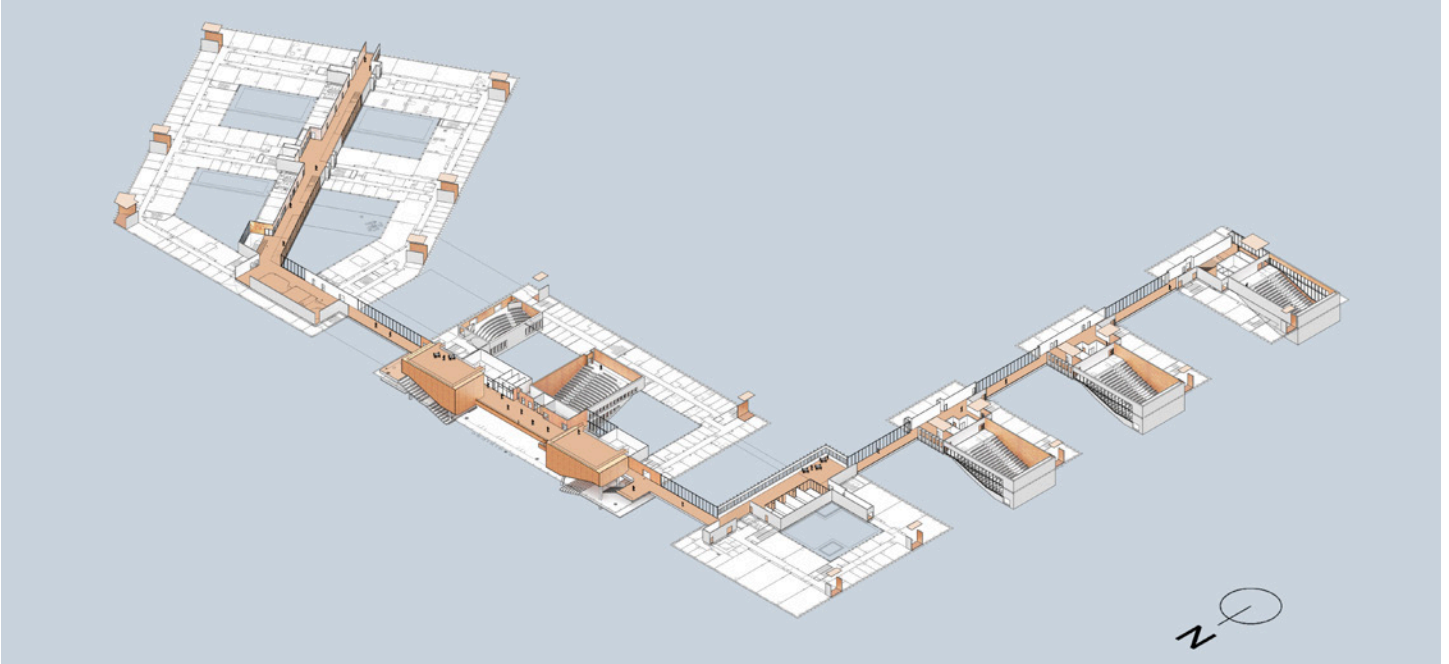
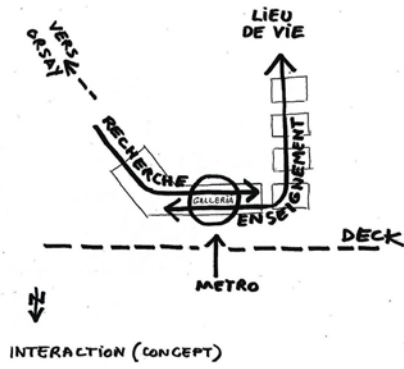


A generator of dynamic exchanges

The Cœur de Pôle is the main entry point as well as a crossroads for the different users of the university. This dynamic generator of exchange is extended through the clarity of circulation and the distribution of spaces along the two continuous internal “streets,” which encourages scientific collaboration by putting research and education in a direct relationship with each other and stimulating interdisciplinary overlaps among the otherwise separate disciplines of biology, chemistry, and pharmacy.





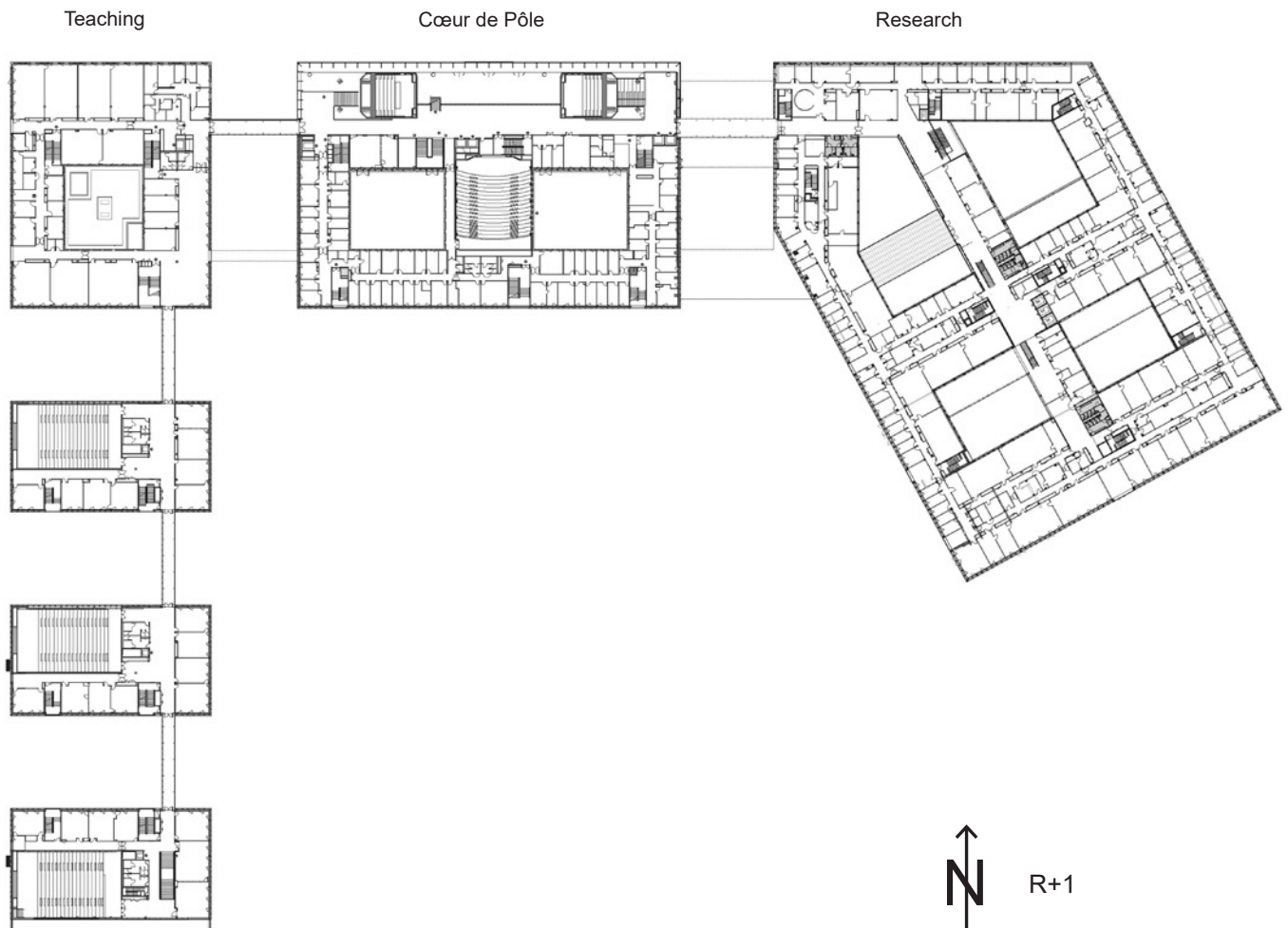


Design Concepts

The architectural and urban strategy, designed by Bernard Tschumi, consists of a chain of six buildings connected to each other by a continuous “street” and glazed pedestrian bridges. The complex spans the vehicular streets below while forming an elevated, nearly kilometer-long artery that serves as a common denominator for the whole. At its center, the atrium of the Cœur de Pôle links the two wings. To the west, along the Rue de l’Enseignement, are teaching facilities and the southern access to the site, also designed by Bernard Tschumi *urbanistes* Architects.



The Research area, designed by Groupe-6, opens to the east of the atrium. The Rue de la Recherche hosts state-of-the-art laboratories, workspaces for researchers, and pleasant meeting places. The openings between floors visually connect the building and its four patios. The research street is open 24 hours and free to access, unlike laboratories whose entry is strictly controlled.





A showcase for scientific excellence: facades, context, and materials

The urban siting of the project determined two principles for the project's facades. To the north and along the main campus avenue, the architects chose a fully glazed façade—a “vitrine” capable of showcasing activities of exchange and encounter without requiring significant protection from sunlight. To the south, east, and west, the white precast concrete ribs articulate the building's mass. The verticality of the structural concrete is echoed in the large glass surfaces of the windows punctuating the white facades and reflecting the surrounding landscape.

The intentionally sober expression of glass, light, and white surfaces is offset by perforated acoustic OSB wood panels that are used throughout the project to deliver visual warmth through a low-cost, sustainable material. Internal gardens are dispersed throughout the complex at ground level, and the external landscaping features Apothecary Gardens planted with medicinal herbs and grasses. The complex is linked to the University's energy grid via geothermic wells and has been certified as conforming to France's High Quality Environmental standard of green building, with an advanced level of energy efficiency.



The Henri Moissan site, named after the Nobel Prize-winning French chemist and pharmacist, was inaugurated on April 18, 2023. A priority of the new university is to respond to emerging social challenges by encouraging innovation in the fields of energy and health. It concentrates many of the Grandes Écoles, such as the École Normale Supérieure and École Polytechnique, and national research institutions from the Paris region. Planning and construction were led by Bouygues Construction as part of a public-private partnership following a two-and-a-half-year international competition.



For more information on the Biology-Pharmacy-Chemistry Center, Paris-Saclay University, please contact Greg Barton at press@tschumi.com

CREDITS

Bernard Tschumi *urbanistes* Architects and Groupe-6
Biology-Pharmacy-Chemistry Center, Paris-Saclay
University, 2015-2022
Paris-Saclay, France

SCHEDULE

Preliminary design: 2015; Competition Winner: 2018;
Completion: 2022

SIZE

74,000 m²

CLIENT AND CONTRACTING COMPANY

Paris-Saclay University / Bouygues-Construction

TEAM

Bernard Tschumi *urbanistes* Architectes

Architect: Bernard Tschumi

Project coordination and supervision: Véronique Descharrières,
co-director and partner Bernard Tschumi *urbanistes* Architectes
(BTuA), Paris

Competition and Schematic Design: Joel Rutten, co-director,
Bernard Tschumi Architects, New York
(Cœur de Pôle and teaching spaces, Urban and architectural
coordination)

Group-6

Associate architects: Alain Eyraud, Denis Bouvier

Project director: Nathalie Pierre
(Research spaces and laboratories)

PHOTOGRAPHERS

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