

REYNALDO DOS SANTOS BUILDING 2004-2019, Lisboa – Portugal

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Client Lisbon School of Medicine, University of Lisbon
Engineering Betar (structure), GR Estudos (water, sewage), Joulé (electricity), José Galvão Teles (mechanical installations, air conditioning)
Photography Tiago Casanova

Reynaldo dos Santos Building is part of the Lisbon School of Medicine of the University of Lisbon located near Hospital de Santa Maria's building. The project goes back to 2004 as the winning proposal of a competition promoted by the University of Lisbon. Several changes in the following years helped to specify the functional program as the building houses teaching, research, scientific and laboratory activities. Thus the building should present an innovative image, despite budgetary constraints.

The building's position looked for roots in the slightly winding path of the adjacent roads. Although a single volume with a sculptural presence in which the tops come loose in fringes resulting from a dynamic vertical stratification, the building is formed by two sliding bodies united by an interior passageway. This stratification (the vertical one as well as the horizontal) corresponds to the requested laboratory typology by separating served spaces (laboratories, offices, classrooms, services, etc.) and servant spaces (corridors, infrastructures, etc.) while adapting to the slighted curved geometry of the building.

The functional structure corresponds to a distributive scheme that ensures a clear hierarchy between sectors and floors. In the ground floor are located the foyer and reception as well the administration and common areas. The second floor holds all the teaching activities with several well-equipped laboratories with autonomous access. The classrooms vary in range with capacity for 32-40 students each. Following an identical structure, the third and fourth floors are for research activities, comprising several laboratories with adjacent and interconnected offices. With exclusive access through the corridor are several rooms with specified features for cell cultures and, close to the laboratories, several high-technical spaces, for example, those containing the freezers at -80° , among others.

The longitudinal façades have sparse openings to avoid direct sunlight. A glazed wall between the two sliding bodies reinforces their formal autonomy while bringing a diffused natural light to the interior passageway. The recessed position of the tops of the building allows the "loosening" of the façades forming a set of undulating planes that, due to texture, colouring and luminosity, define that sculptural image of the building. From the adjacent medium-fast roads while driving the car, this image remits to the world of urban art, emphasising the relationship between the institution's innovative character and the city of Lisbon.

