2020 Laureates
Yvonne Farrell and Shelley McNamara
Ireland

Image Book
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Situated at the edge of a cluster of university facilities, the Urban Institute of Ireland (UII) at University College Dublin brings together engineers, planners, architects, geographers, economists and scientists to find innovative ways of tackling the challenges of sustainable development. Designed to encourage integrative discourse, “a balance was sought between the academic tradition of the solitary scholar and the urgent need for interdisciplinary engagement if contemporary urban issues are to be addressed in a realistic way.”

Terracotta tiles, red brick and granite plinths form the “crafted skin” of this sustainable structure to create a visually interesting building through changes in materials. The building features a double-height ground floor that is comprised of laboratories and research rooms, stratified in an east-west orientation, while the upper level skylights feature north-west alignment, creating a contrasting grid and giving rise to a surprising and interesting degree of spatial complexity.
Urban Institute of Ireland
2002

Dublin, Ireland

Photo courtesy of Ros Kavanagh
Urban Institute of Ireland

2002

Dublin, Ireland

Photo courtesy of Ros Kavanagh
Located in the small town of Milford, in County Donegal, the Loreto Community School serves over 700 students and features four main components—a dining/assembly area which is surrounded by a technology wing, classroom block and athletic hall. The building’s undulating zinc roof echoes the sloping dramatic landscape of the site and “light and air are drawn in between the folds of this undulation.”

The different wings are positioned as a pinwheel and create multiple outdoor “rooms” that are protected from winds and can be used in numerous ways by students, faculty and staff. The teaching areas, which vary in size and volume, allow light to enter from different sources. Using natural light to animate spaces, reflect the passage of time and connect the exterior and interiors is constant in the work of Grafton Architects.
Loreto Community School
2006
Milford, Ireland

Photo courtesy of Ros Kavanagh

Photo courtesy of Ros Kavanagh
Loreto Community School
2006
Milford, Ireland

Photo courtesy of Ros Kavanagh
Loreto
Community
School
2006

Milford, Ireland

Photo courtesy of Ros Kavanagh
Universita Luigi Bocconi
2008
Milan, Italy

Occupying an entire city block, the architects have created a building which feels more like a campus of pavilions and courtyards with a vertical rather than horizontal configuration. The conference halls, lecture theaters, offices, meeting rooms, library and café are designed to house 1,000 professors and students, creating a feeling of community from within and sitting easily in the city that surrounds them. Throughout the building, the generous and diverse open spaces invite spontaneous encounters and exchanges.

The winner of the World Building of the Year 2008 award, the massive stone-clad construction can be thought of as having three distinct parts: the sunken volume, which houses, among other things, the impressive aula magna, the ground floor of flowing spaces and the more functional boxes “floating” above. The aula magna occupies the main frontage and provides a symbolic presence. The use of large openings and multiple vistas means that light filters throughout the building and visitors are drawn into the life of the interior.
Universita Luigi Bocconi
2008

Milan, Italy
Università Luigi Bocconi
2008

Milan, Italy

Photo courtesy of Federico Brunetti

Photo courtesy of Alexandre Soria
The Offices for the Department of Finance are located on a challenging site in the center of Dublin, informed by the public park of St. Stephen’s Green, the Huguenot Cemetery and the 18th-century Georgian street context. “The new building belongs to a tradition of buildings in Dublin, where significant buildings negotiate dramatic changes in scale at junctions in streetscape throughout the city.” The new Department building is six stories plus a basement and brings the Department of Finance staff together in a single location.

The careful choice of materials grants elegance and solidity to the building, especially reflected in the handcrafted bronze entrance gate and the Irish limestone for the exterior. Inside, the main staircase, positioned near the Merrion Row facade, eases the harsh sunlight and mitigates city noise. Exposures on all sides of the building, atypical of the architecture in this city, offer panoramic views and changing light conditions from each window, thus connecting those inside to the city outside.
Offices for the Department of Finance
2009

Dublin, Ireland

Photo courtesy of Grafton Architects
Offices for the Department of Finance
2009
Dublin, Ireland

Photo courtesy of Dennis Gilbert
Located on both sides of the River Shannon, the Medical School at the University of Limerick is part of a continuing northward expansion of the institution. Connected to the existing campus by a pedestrian bridge, the newer facilities include a series of three red brick residences, also designed by the architects, as well as an open public space intended to serve as a new focal point.

The exterior limestone wall, referencing material native to the area, is “folded, profiled and layered in response to orientation, sun, wind, rain and public activity.” The four-story building includes a double-height atrium and a wide, open staircase, allowing occupants to view all levels below and above.
Medical School, University of Limerick 2012

Limerick, Ireland

Photo courtesy of Dennis Gilbert
Medical School, University of Limerick
2012
Limerick, Ireland

Photo courtesy of Dennis Gilbert
Medical School, University of Limerick
2012
Limerick, Ireland

Photo courtesy of Dennis Gilbert
Situated on a difficult site with a busy motorway to one side and the low-rise urban edge of the city on the other, the University of Technology and Engineering, UTEC Lima, is a vertical and layered building inspired by the cliffs of its city. "The north side of the building serves as a 'new cliff,' while the south features cascading gardens and open spaces that seek to integrate with the lower urban scale of this part of the district."

The architects have created a muscular building with raw concrete finishes, some say reminiscent of brutalism. Structure and architectural spaces work together to form a new circulation landscape. The section naturally creates numerous spontaneous and humane gathering spaces throughout the building.

Larger scale volumes are located close to the ground, with the teaching, administration and teacher office areas staggered at higher levels. In the upper levels near the roof is the library with panoramic views of the city and the sea. In summary, this is a distinctive vertical campus structure responding to the temperate climatic conditions and referencing Peru’s terrain and heritage.
University
Campus
UTEC Lima
2015
Lima, Peru

Photo courtesy of Iwan Baan
University Campus
UTEC Lima
2015
Lima, Peru
University
Campus
UTEC Lima
2015

Lima, Peru

Photo courtesy of Iwan Baan
Located at a turning point of the Canal de Garonne, the site of the new School of Economics is important for the university and the city. The new building, with seven stories above ground and two basements, is, according to the architects, “a composition of the re-interpreted elements of Toulouse: the buttresses, the walls, the ramps, the cool mysterious interiors, the cloisters and the courtyards.”

In order to provide places of research and education which are pleasurable to work in, the architects have devised a building strategy to maximize natural air, light and ventilation to each space within the building from offices to seminar rooms to terraces. This allows them to position larger volumes with very little fenestration to act as a “deep wall,” controlling light, shadow and shade.
Université Toulouse 1 Capitole, School of Economics
2019

Toulouse, France

Photo courtesy of Dennis Gilbert
Université Toulouse 1 Capitole, School of Economics 2019

Toulouse, France

Photo courtesy of Dennis Gilbert
This 46,200m² building is home to Institut Mines Télécom, Télécom ParisTech and Télécom Sud-Paris in Palaiseau and serves a community of scholars, professors and students. The generous placement of open spaces, windows, glass curtain walls and exposed ceilings allow natural light to filter through a passage of rooms, creating impressions of light through large and small spaces and within the interlocking areas that comprise its five courtyards and quadrangle. “The master plan proposes streets, squares and boulevards with the poetic integration of landscape and ecology, as it refers to the legacy of the great tradition of educational institutions with their lawns, quadrangles, cloisters and courtyards.”
Institut Mines Télécom
2019
Paris, France

Photo courtesy of Alexandre Soria
Institut Mines Télécom
2019
Paris, France

Photo courtesy of Alexandre Soria
The new facility seeks to bring together the university and the local community and act as the university's front door and a gateway to Kingston upon Thames. The Town House Building includes a learning resource center, dance studio, covered courtyard, café and is developed alongside a new landscaping scheme across the front of the campus. The six-story building of open-plan interiors is unified and enveloped by the stone colonnades that form the facades of the building.

The interior is composed of large, interconnected halls and double and triple-height spaces that overlap—physically and visually. The entrance lobby extends almost to the full height of the building, with staircases suspended from floorplates, adding a sculptural touch and physically weaving the layers of the building together. The architects have said, “University projects are miniature cities. There are three layers—administrators and professionals, lecture facilities, and then there is the city.”
Town House Building, Kingston University 2019

Kingston upon Thames, United Kingdom

Photo courtesy of Dennis Gilbert
The Pritzker Architecture Prize 2020 Laureates Yvonne Farrell and Shelley McNamara, Town House Building, Kingston University, 2019, Kingston upon Thames, United Kingdom
This 8,000m² building, designed to serve the 1.2 million population that makes up the Greater Dublin Area, is expected to receive 3,000 visitors daily, as the existing nearby Dublin Central Library, which opened in 1986, can no longer support the public’s evolved requirements for learning and sustainability. The library will be housed in six restored four-story-over-basement Georgian houses at 23-28 Parnell Square with two other houses at 20 and 21 Parnell Square. Additionally, there will be a large new build behind. The architects have said the library “renews wonderful 18th century houses with their beautifully-proportioned rooms and it creates a memorable 21st century addition, weaving the historic and the contemporary together in an exciting way.” The tiered, multi-level facility features oversized openings, allowing light to flow into all areas. In addition to providing traditional library services, the City Library will house a digital collection and offer a music hub, workspaces, recreational areas, exhibition spaces, conference facilities and cafés to encourage its occupants, spanning all ages, to learn, explore, collaborate and network.
Located on the dense urban campus of the London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE) at Lincoln’s Inn Fields, at the intersection of three distinct and contrasting boroughs, The Marshall Building will house several business-related academic departments, a performing arts facility, multi-purpose halls, a café and more. The Great Hall, which will be the main point of entry into the building, is a vast public space of about 800 square meters of flexible, civic space intended to be used by hundreds on a daily basis and to provide a perfect setting for large-scale events such as exhibitions, talks, dinners and open days. “As the building will contain the Marshall Institute of Philanthropy and Social Entrepreneurship, the ethos of the building and the spaces should represent a vision of diversity, openness, inclusiveness and a love of humanity.”
London School of Economics and Political Science
Under Construction
London, United Kingdom

Rendering courtesy of Grafton Architects

The Pritzker Architecture Prize 2020 Laureates Yvonne Farrell and Shelley McNamara, London School of Economics and Political Science, Under Construction, London, United Kingdom