

Pioneering research in Predictive and Personalized Medicine of Cancer

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3 IMPPC Building

The IMPPC is located in the grounds of the Germans Trias i Pujol University Hospital, known locally as “Can Ruti”. The City Council of Badalona has generously ceded the third of the buildings in the old Schools Complex to the Institute, an ideal position next to the Teaching Unit of the Faculty of Medicine of the Autonomous University of Barcelona and the Institute for Health Science Research Germans Trias I Pujol (FIICSGT). It is close to other research centers in Barcelona, which allows easy access for scientists sharing technological platforms or attending meetings. At the same time, it is in a privileged position in the “La Serralada de Marina” Park overlooking the coastline.

The company responsible for the design and completion of the conversion of the IMPPC building is Master Sociedad Anonónima de Ingeniería y Arquitectura (<http://www.masteringenieria.com>). The company was chosen for their extensive experience in construction and refurbishment of buildings in Spain and Europe; they have specialized in working on projects for R+D for corporations and universities and have expertise in biomedical installations. Recent projects are for clients such as: the Spanish National Cancer Centre (CNIO) and the Carlos III Health Institute in Madrid, including the National Centers of Alimentation, Microbiology and Molecular Biology. They are also responsible for the design and construction of the ALBA Synchrotron just outside Barcelona.

The architect in charge of the project for Master, Eduardo Talon, explains the main features of the project. “One of the biggest challenges is to build laboratory space that will not only be state of the art for today’s research but also for the research of the future. To achieve this, the building must incorporate maximum flexibility to allow the size and distribution of labs to change as projects develop. Another requirement is for open areas where scientists can congregate



and exchange ideas.” Something that researchers have always known, that some of the best ideas come out of the coffee room, is now being incorporated as a key factor in the design of the scientific environment.

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As it was originally a school, the building’s weight bearing specifications were adequate for adaption for laboratory equipment, but the distribution had to be completely changed. The entrance has been moved to face the Institute for Health Science Research Germans Trias i Pujol, the communal services rationalized and regrouped and an attractive new staircase built on the south west side. This is one of several features to improve the natural light to the whole building: the restoration of the central courtyard as a feature accessed on all floors will allow for light airy informal meeting areas away from the labs. The windows have all been widened and the sills raised appropriately for the installation of machinery and benches. The sections of exterior walls surrounding the windows will be covered in paneling to harmonize with the existing brickwork.

The main objective is to create the best environment for the groups carrying out the research. The ground floor will house the administration, more public areas and the shared technological facilities. The second floor will be reserved for groups undertaking translational research and the third floor for the basic research projects. The architect has worked closely with the scientific team to work out the distribution of each laboratory to allow for maximum bench space within the limits of the specifications of the building while retaining the ability to change the size of individual labs. They have also collaborated on the details that will personalize a building designed to be completely functional for research.

3,300 m² will not feel so large when the IMPPC reaches its full capacity of working scientists. However, Eduardo Talon is confident that the environment will not only be practical for comfortably carrying out laboratory work but the design of the building will also allow all the staff to move around and use different areas for different activities in a pleasant and efficient way. An added advantage will be that they will be able to appreciate the beauty of the natural park “La Serralada de Marina” just outside.