

## Study Visit to Imperial College London's White City Campus (formerly Imperial West)

26<sup>th</sup> April 2022



The excellent team at Imperial College London set up a highly inclusive and broad ranging tour of this new and innovative campus for the University Design Forum and a fortunate group of its Trustees and members. An early start on a beautifully clear morning started in the Molecular Sciences Research Hub with welcome refreshments and lots of early questions emerging in the tall and stepped social reception of the building. The space has views both inside to the high specification lab spaces and out to the campus's public realm creating an all-weather heart to the campus.

The tour covered three of the primary buildings on the North campus with sunny strolls between them, and then moved South under the iconic Westway flyover to the innovative community hub, Scale Space.

Professor Neil Alford, (Associate Provost for Academic Planning) introduced the group to the facts, figures, objectives and proud achievements of the campus and its wider expansion plans.

The inquisitive tour group sought more insight in the Q and A, reflecting the natural knowledge sharing the Forum encourages and has long been exploring through its varied higher education design journey.

Within the Hub we were permitted to access key exploratory spaces with short talks by department leaders, including the NMR Lab with Peter Haycock, a basement volume much appreciated by its team for the stability and agility it affords extremely delicate testing, and the Agilent Suite with Dr Tony Cass, an externally invested facility testing samples from around the globe.

Next we were in the recently completed Sir Michael Uren Hub to visit the Musculoskeletal Lab and the Environmental Research Group, particularly relevant for the built environment visitors. The talks by the researchers and support teams on their activities were enlightening as to the benefits of flexibly designed and well serviced spaces.



From there we went to the I-Hub still on the North Campus, and straight to the 10th floor for spectacular views across London. Space here is provided for a mix of academic and industry tenants, encouraging interaction and public private innovation.

Lastly we passed below the Westway and into the new facility for scale-ups on the South, Scale Space. Intended as a short term but highly innovative environment, the place was buzzing like an entrepreneurial tech space, with an energy and enthusiasm amongst the people working there and the branding displays. An introductory talk in a pitch space was followed by lunch and lots of chats about life science building design.

Many thanks those who attended with some excellent feedback on the quality of the tour and design of the campus and buildings, as well as the state-of-the-art life science facilities.

**Thanks:**

Thanks again to the Imperial organising team of Prof Neil Alford and Amna Siddiq, along with Aukett Swanke who were the Master Planners of the White City Campus North and the architects for both the student accommodation Grad Pad, and the Molecular Science Research Hub, with BMJ on the Laboratories and Shepperd Robson on the interiors.

**Event Sponsor:**

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