

Press release

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New research and development centre for Hankook Tire breaks ground in Korea

A ground-breaking ceremony has been held for the Hankook Technodome, a state-of-the-art new research and development facility for one of the world's leading tyre manufacturers. The new centre is located in Daejeon, at the heart of Asia's 'silicon valley', and will provide an inspirational place to work, with light filled offices, state-of-the-art laboratories and dynamic social spaces to nurture a culture of openness and innovation.

The design of the new centre is rooted in analysis of the organisation. Rather than a conventional arrangement of offices above double-height testing areas, the building is arranged as five fingers, with parallel office and industrial units – this dynamic, integrated arrangement is highly flexible and promotes visual connections and interaction between the offices, laboratories and different divisions. Breaks between each finger draw daylight into the heart of the floor plate.

The research spaces extend from a top-lit central spine, which runs from the restaurant in the south to the accommodation for staff in the north. Glazed oval meeting pods are suspended above the full-height space, which acts as a light well, drawing daylight through the building and into the staff social spaces below. The circulation strategy creates a natural divide between public areas and more sensitive product development zones – visitors will be able to tour the centre and see the large-scale testing machinery in use.

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The different functions are unified beneath a wide silver roof canopy, incorporating louvres for shade, which appears to float over the building. The centre targets LEED 'gold' and integrates a number of sustainable design strategies, for example waste heat from the research and development centre is used to heat the residential accommodation, and a lake at the southern entrance to the site harvests rainwater for use in cooling.

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