Opening hours building (SQUARE)
Monday - Friday: 07:00 - 21:00
Saturday: 7:00 - 16:00
Sunday and public holidays: closed

Coffee opening hours:
Monday - Friday: 08:00 - 17:00
Saturday: 8:00 - 16:00
Location: If you entry the building directly on the right side.

Location of the group rooms:
The group room is located on the first floor on the left-hand side.

Name of the group room:
The group rooms do not have names, but you will find a screen in front of the group room on which your reservation is visible.

Toilets:
There are toilets in the basement, as well as on the upper floors. (first and second floor of the building). There are no toilets in the ground floor.

Interesting facts about the SQUARE building:
Participants and people involved at the start of construction:
The building was designed by the architect Sou Fujimoto (studio in Paris) and financed by the HSG Foundation as the client and is also owned by the Foundation. It was realised in collaboration with local architects from Burckhardt + Partner AG (Zurich), civil engineers from Schnetzer Puskàs Ingenieure AG (Basel) and the landscaping from ENEA GmbH (Rapperswil-Jona). Overall responsibility for the project lay with PPM Baumanagement AG (St. Gallen), which was commissioned by the HSG Foundation. The didactic concept was developed by Prof Dr Bernadette Dilger and the general contractor was HRS Real Estate AG. A jury headed by Prof Dr Marc Angélil (Zurich) supervised the project. The project team is very broadly based and includes representatives of the client, the university, the users, the students and the architect. The director of SQUARE is Philippe Narval.

Key data on the realisation of SQUARE
SQUARE has been rented and operated by the University of St. Gallen since 1 January 2022. It had a record construction period of 2 years, with the start of construction and ground-breaking ceremony in November 2019 and completion in November 2021. The building opened in February 2022. The plot has a size of 5,520 m2, the floor area of the building is 3,100 m2 and the usable area is 7,800 m2. There are also 770 m2 of landscaped terraces.
The basic idea of SQUARE
SQUARE is intended to serve as a test environment for new teaching and learning formats and has been specially developed to future-proof teaching and learning at the university. The building differs from traditional university buildings in its flexible spatial concept, which enables experimental and intergenerational teaching, learning and working. The building is equipped with state-of-the-art technology and offers all possibilities for digital learning and online communication.

The Learning Centre is open to everyone: students, alumni, lecturers, researchers, staff, friends of the HSG, experts from the field and the general public are all welcome. There is also a public bistro, which is open Mon-Fri from 08:00-17:00 and on Saturdays during the semester from 08:00-16:00. The focus is on joint and mutual learning and teaching through interaction and exchange.
The Learning Centre offers the opportunity for intergenerational and interdisciplinary exchange and inspiring experiences. It is not a "standard university building" and does not offer a traditional library. Instead, it offers a completely new room programme, facilities and infrastructure to enable new teaching and learning formats.

Design of the architectural competition
The "SQUARE" building was planned as a "Learning Centre" as part of an architectural competition in order to offer additional and attractive learning spaces and to create room for experimental forms of teaching. This competition was not an international competition and was held anonymously. A total of 8 architectural firms were invited, including 3 domestic firms, 3 renowned foreign architectural firms and 2 young, international architects. The offices were nominated by a competition jury, selected from a shortlist of around 25 offices. All of the offices approached immediately agreed to take part. At the end of the competition, the architectural team Sou Fujimoto Atelier Paris was able to claim victory. The jury's decision was ultimately quite clear and unanimous. In the jury's assessment, Fujimoto had dealt intensively with the content concept and had also taken into account the aspects of the city of St. Gallen, including its industrial past and the monastery district. In the end, the planned and proposed building could be realised practically 1:1 in terms of concept and design.

Architect Sou Fujimoto and his building concept
Sou Fujimoto is a Japanese architect with offices in Tokyo and Paris and a total of 90 employees. He is a professor at Kyoto University and has already taken part in various competitions in Switzerland, with the "OPEN GRID - Choices of tomorrow" project (SQUARE project title) being his first victory in Switzerland. Communication with the architect took place primarily via the respective project managers and was made more difficult by Corona. The project "Open Grid - choices for tomorrow" by Sou Fujimoto, is a reference to the functioning of a public square. The design of the building is based on the principle of the square and Fujimoto spent two days in St. Gallen to familiarise himself with the surroundings.
In the project "Open Grid - Choices for Tomorrow" by architect Sou Fujimoto, he developed three initial concepts, which were realised in combination in his project proposal:

1. station: The concept of the station stands for clarity and clarity when entering the building. It should be immediately recognisable what is located where in the building.
2nd cloister: The concept of the cloister emphasises the value of spacious areas for lingering and wandering. These areas include the cloister, corridors, etc.
3rd Workshop: The workshop concept focusses on collaboration, idea development and exchange. It should be a place where people can work together and share their ideas, like in a studio.
These concepts were examined in detail and combined in the project proposal in order to achieve a harmonious integration of the building into the landscape and the surroundings.

Costs and financing

The total construction costs of SQUARE amounted to CHF 53 million, of which approx. 63% of the services were provided by companies from the region of Eastern Switzerland. CHF 10 million was earmarked for the start-up financing of the didactic content and the artistic programme of SQUARE during the initial phase. The HSG Foundation will cover 2/3 of the costs of the artistic direction, while the rest must be earned through sponsors, donors and rent. The use of the rent by the HSG Foundation includes the renovation and maintenance of the building.

The SQUARE was financed entirely by private donors. Most of these donors were HSG alumni or individuals, companies and institutions with a strong connection to the HSG. In total, over 1,100 donors were acquired, raising a total of 65 million francs. The first pledges from initial and anchor donors, totalling around 30 to 40 million francs, were important for the start of the planning and approval process. The fundraising target was to collect 63 million francs. Smaller and larger individual donations also contributed to the success. It is important to express our gratitude to the donors, as without them the realisation of this vision would not have been possible.

The operational concept, daily operations and goals of SQUARE

The operating concept of SQUARE comprises three levels: innovative and generally interactive university events (curricular events, seminars, exercises, group work, etc.), an intentional programme that supplements the university events with external guests and events (practical experience, networking, etc.), and a community approach in which everyone can make their own contributions and projects. The building concept supports the objectives with many open spaces and possible contacts with others. External companies and groups can use the building for their own events, as long as they always involve students and the community.

Day-to-day operations are managed by the directorate team. The university deliberately intended to have a non-academic management team (otherwise found in the cultural sector) in order to strengthen the connection with the community, the city and the population.

The aim of the SQUARE concept is to offer an experimental field for new teaching and learning formats. Here, students, alumni, researchers, external practitioners and interested parties can work together and interact with each other in an inspiring environment. SQUARE is intended to act as an open marketplace for critical discourse and exchange and thus also contribute to "enhanced serendipity" outside of the social bubble.

Building concept

The SQUARE is designed as a large notebook and offers flexible rooms and walls, making the building particularly suitable for trialling and experimenting with innovative teaching formats that offer alternative learning methods to the traditional frontal communication of knowledge and information.

The OPEN GRID (OPEN MIND) concept promotes and supports a dynamic and interactive learning environment. The building has a cube structure with a grid of 10x10x5 metre blocks (the individual grids) and some half-height rooms to provide more headroom and create a harmonious silhouette. The ground floor has a floor plan of 5 x 5 m elements and a total of 15 modular rooms. The building heights vary from 3.5 m to 18.5 m.

The exterior appearance of the building is characterised by glass, while the delicate exposed concrete structure dominates the interior. It has three levels/storeys, which are reduced in terms of floor area, room size and volume level towards the top. The large 15 x 20 m atrium is the actual centre of the building and extends over all three floors. In the entrance area, there is a clear view of all floors and no narrow corridors.

The building also has outdoor terraces thanks to the decreasing floor areas of the storeys. The building mass and heights are aligned with the proportions of the surroundings. Each floor level has different primary uses, such as the atrium on the ground floor for public events, the first floor for seminars and events and the second floor for individual work.
The SQUARE building is characterised by a clear structure, both inside and out. The building services are concealed but accessible, such as the drainage of rainwater within the building. The planning concept was very challenging due to the grid structures, but the square floor plans and flat ceilings allow for a variety of different and mixed learning environments.

The building layout is modular, movable and interchangeable, allowing different materials to be used for different uses and applications, such as glass, metal and fabric. All rooms have a connection to an outdoor terrace that can be used for working and studying outdoors. The terraces are accessible and partially planted.
The building façade is made of transparent glass, which makes it possible to experience the flow of daylight and the changing colours of the leaves as the seasons change. The façade offers a healthy climate with daylight and expansive views.
There is a covered connection between the SQUARE building and the library building, the "Gönner-Weg", which was subsequently added at the request of the university. The connection serves both as a logistical link to the library building and to "empty the building" during evening events (noise protection).

Furnishings and infrastructure
The building is designed with performance, functionality and ease of maintenance as priorities. The entire building technology is housed in the cavities of the suspended ceiling and raised floors to enable continuous adaptation of the building's furnishings and infrastructure. The greatest possible flexibility and permanent accessibility to the infrastructure ensure the comfort, safety and functionality of the rooms. On the ground floor there are two larger rooms for teaching events, which are fully equipped for hybrid online events, including cameras and microphones. In principle, every room in SQUARE can be fully utilised for hybrid events.
Most of the furniture is mobile and can be used as required. This flexibility is intended to encourage users to actively move and use the furniture (reference to preparations for curr. events; DIY). An external company created the concept, whereby the architect had a right of veto. The jury report explicitly pointed out that the building should be designed to be more lively in order to achieve the goals of interaction. On the first floor, however, there are some permanently installed pieces of furniture in the Tea House and in the Arena.

HSG attaches particular importance to art in its buildings, although Japanese architects generally do not favour art in construction, but regard the building itself as a work of art. The willingness to incorporate art into the building was an important criterion for participation in

the architecture competition. The SQUARE contains sculptures and installations specially made for the building, which are to be regarded as unique pieces.
1st chain in the atrium: The work "Through the forest of thorns", "a single path" was created by the artist Mai-Thu Perret from Geneva. It was selected in a competition and consists of a 60 metre long chain with a total of 130 brass objects, which were carefully and elaborately produced by the Kunstgiesserei St. Gallen. The work was financed by two Liechtenstein foundations and is located in the atrium. The basic idea is a charm bracelet, and all the objects have to do with learning and teaching, for example the brain, eye, ear and hand. The symbols relate to the natural sciences and antiquity with reference to the Academy.

2nd bronze statue in front of the building: Another sculpture, "Ourea", was created by the artist Sir Tony Cragg. It is a bronze sculpture weighing 4.5 tonnes, which was cast using a mould and has a specially produced patina. The sculpture was financed by alumnus Christen Sveaas on his own initiative

and stands outside in front of the main entrance. The sculpture is a personification of an ancient mountain deity and provides a contrast to the rectangular structures of the building. When viewing the sculpture from all sides, numerous profiles of human faces can be recognised; when viewed from above, it consists of 3 interlocking columns. The sculpture was made by stacking discs of approx. 1.5 to 2 cm in thickness, which are modelled on the outlines of the building.
3. ceiling embroidery: The floral pattern, known as "Entre-Deux", was created by the company Labhard & Co. from St. Gallen. Patterns of the motif were provided by the St. Gallen Textile Museum in order to achieve the desired visual effect. The pattern consists of printed smaller and larger crosses and lines. In the 1920s, Labhard & Co. was regarded as the "queen of embroidered robes" and its embroideries were of the highest quality in terms of technique and design. This visual design is also a strong reference to the roots of our university. It was founded by exponents of the textile industry at the time. This visual design is also intended to emphasise the students' responsibility, not only to the past, but also to the origins of their institution.

History of the University of St. Gallen
The institution was originally founded in 1898 as a commercial academy and taken over by the canton in 1938. In 1963, it was renamed the "University of Business, Economics and Social Sciences" and moved to the Rosenberg. The new HSG building complex, which was realised in the early 1960s, is considered a masterpiece of brutalist architecture and is known as "La Tête". Due to the high number of students, there was already a shortage of space from 1963 and numerous extensions and annexes were necessary. In 1989, the library building was erected, which breaks away from the orthogonal structure of the original buildings and features a postmodern design language.

Heating, cooling technology and energy supply
The building is equipped with high-performance heating and cooling ceilings in every room. The heating and cooling are powered entirely by heat pumps. The heat pumps utilise 65 probes with a drilling depth of around 200 metres. These probes are divided into 2 fields, of which 16 probes are used for heat recovery and 49 probes for cooling. This arrangement enables optimum regeneration of the ground and maximum energy efficiency of the heat pumps.

When it comes to the building's energy supply, particular emphasis is placed on sustainability. The basic electricity requirement is around 150 kWh, while the maximum requirement is up to 350 kWh. To cover the energy requirements, the building's own photovoltaic system with an output of 67 kW was installed. Although this is not enough to cover the building's entire requirements, a proportion of 50-60% can be covered throughout the year. The surplus electricity is fed into the university grid.

Environmental design

Welcome to our guided tour of the building. Our aim was to embed the building in an attractive environment and create a high quality of outdoor space and amenity. We paid particular attention to creating a connection between the interior and exterior spaces.
We used native plants to design the surroundings. The plant framing towards the street consists of a generous wave planting of copper beeches (4,200 in total). Several multi-stemmed, umbrella-shaped ironwood trees serve as signature trees. The overlapping of grass fields with herbaceous fields through a combination of very species-rich tall herbaceous meadows, flower meadows and bands of grasses contributes to biodiversity.
All connecting paths are barrier-free and made of asphalt and meet the requirements of SIA 500, including tactile edging to guide the long cane/blind cane (680 linear metres in total).
On the 1st and 2nd floors there are 6 intensively planted terraces with large concrete slabs as well as grasses, shrubs and wavy planting. The round benches have tubular steel frames and seat supports made of local, untreated wood.

No installations for artificial irrigation were used. The total planted area amounts to 1,700 m2 of ground, 1,300 m2 of terraces, 792 m2 of wildflower meadows and 960 m2 of grass fields. The plants used include 4,500 hedge plants (including 4,200 copper beeches), 49,800 flower bulbs and 2,275 grasses.
The diversity of species is emphasised by 70 different types of perennials and 7 types of grasses. We hope that you will enjoy the landscaping and that you will have a pleasant stay in our building.

Structural engineering facts

The building consists of three systems: the primary system (shell) with a service life of around 100 years, the secondary system (building services) with a service life of around 30 years and the tertiary system (finishing) with a service life of around 10 years. The systems must be able to be replaced independently of each other in order to ensure a long service life for the building.
A total of 6,000 m3 of concrete was used. For this, 2,000 m3 of Holcim Evopact plus (CO_2-reduced in production) and 1,000 m3 of Holcim Evopact ZERO (climate-neutral) were used. Evopact concrete contains recycled aggregate from the region as well as Susteno (mixed granulate from dismantled buildings as an additional grinding material), which means a saving of 10% CO_2 compared to already optimised mass cement.
The spiral staircases, concrete columns and beams are made of exposed concrete (10 x 10 metre grid). The formwork was particularly important in order to avoid pressure points. Holcim Superblanc was used, a high-quality white cement for aesthetic surfaces with a uniform colour.