



The future of universities and campus sites

Universities used to be considered academic, introverted villages. JUUL | FROST Architects have made it their mission to change that. To design what they believe should be the future, they have studied universities and campus sites around the world for more than 15 years. Their masterpiece is the award-winning project in Örebro, Sweden.

By Nicolai Lisberg | Photos: Felix Gerlach

Örebro University is a relatively young university. Up until 2010, it was considered a typical academic village with no real exchange with the city, its citizens or businesses. The students would take part in the lectures, but it was not a place they wanted to use for much more than that. So when JUUL | FROST Architects

won the right to design the university's new arrival area on campus, they saw the chance to, together with Örebro University, reach out to the outside world and invite the city in through a new arrival situation: a new campus square, a new business school, research and student accommodation and urban functions.

"Before, there was no indication that Örebro was a university city, so we wanted to integrate the city with the university. The aim was to create a joint identity for the two units and make them see that they could benefit from each other. We were given the opportunity to lay out a master plan, where we could think both parties into the project and secure the future of the university," explains Helle Juul, founding partner and CEO at JUUL | FROST Architects.

For a firm specialised in city spaces, landscapes, building structure, research and development, the task at Örebro was

almost a dream scenario, where they could put all these abilities to good use. "This task embraced all of our skills and expertise. Still, it was very important to initiate a dialogue with all stakeholders, as we wanted everyone's input on what they were looking for in a new university and campus site," says Juul.

An unpretentious atmosphere

JUUL | FROST Architects decided to make the open area in front of Örebro University the heart of the place, so it became the new arrival area. Student and research accommodation was created and space was made for restaurants and cafés as well as a bookstore. "We can't design people or build a specific feeling, but we can create the rooms, which will hopefully help to create the atmosphere

we are looking for. We have glass boxes, for instance, where we can see that some of the students come early in the morning to get a spot. The rooms stimulate you and, ultimately, make you want to spend time at the university and campus site," says Flemming Frost, the other founding partner and CEO at the firm.

50 of the accommodation units are reserved for researchers who come to stay at the university for a limited time. The rooms are located right in the middle of everything, with the intention of making the researchers feel welcome and included from day one. "Unpretentiousness is a keyword. No matter if you want to join an activity or sit by yourself, the entire area has been designed with the hope of creating a feeling of belonging.

Örebro University and campus area:
Name: Örebro University and campus area.

Assignment: Campus arrival area: business school, campus square and researcher and student accommodation.

Location: Örebro, central Sweden.

Status: The new arrival area was finished in 2017 – more student accommodation is still in the making.

Surface area: Business School of 9,300 square metres, researcher and student accommodation of 4,200 square metres, campus square 2,500 square metres.

Style of enterprise: Total enterprise.

Amount of enterprise: 500 million SEK

Builder: Örebroporten / ØBO / BEHRN



The rooms are not strict and formal, but open, warm and welcoming. This way, we hope to increase the stimulation of the students,” says Juul.

A dynamic life

The new campus site has changed life at the university. It has gone from an academic and introvert village to a dynamic campus that everyone can be a part of. It is a university where the students also want to spend time outside opening hours, so to speak. JUUL | FROST Architects won the Örebro Municipality’s City Prize for their design as well as a Special Mention Award 2014 from BuildingSMART International for their achievement in demonstrating the tangible benefits of open BIM (Building Information Modelling). However, what matters more is the way the university and campus site has been received by those who use it on a daily basis.

Profile:

- JUUL | FROST Architects is a limited company with its main office in Copenhagen and a daughter company in Sweden, JUUL | FROST Arkitekter AB. The office comprises around 30 employees with different disciplinary backgrounds and works throughout Scandinavia.

- They work with an international, challenging and vitalising approach. Their ambition is to challenge, develop, and be a credible sounding board in all their collaborations.

- Through a holistic approach to projects, the office has, for more than 30 years, developed projects within all scales, from large-scale planning, new city and housing developments,

and urban spaces to educational facilities, office spaces and housing.

- The holistic approach is specifically expressed in specialised development areas:

City + Space + Landscape
Building + Built structure
Research + Development

- Their mission is to create visions: proposals for how people can live together in the future. Whether it is urban, building or landscape architecture, their vision is always based on a pragmatic, thorough and methodical analysis of the present – on a thorough understanding of the clients’ and the projects’ preconditions.

“It has become a place where you can share knowledge. The researchers get involved with the students, who get involved with those who come from the city. Education today is not just learning everything there is to know about your niche; it’s when you meet other people and exchange knowledge that you learn that there are many aspects of your particular field of study. We have created a space where you want to learn – a space where you feel you’re missing out on something if you’re not there,” explains Frost, before Juul adds: “It’s all about having a place you want to go and spend time, so instead of sitting in a café in the city centre you come to the university and take a cup of coffee there, or you go to a lecture or a concert in the auditorium. You can use it as a city, but on the conditions of the university; you know you are a visitor, but no one looks down on you. It’s about creating a dualism between the city and the university, and that’s what we’ve done.”

Web: www.juulfrost.dk
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Current projects:

- At the moment, JUUL | FROST Architects are working on complex planning tasks as well as comprehensive residential and commercial buildings in Denmark, Sweden and Norway.
- In Denmark, housing projects are being conducted at Værløse Air Base, Ørestaden, Amager Strandvej as well as the residential and commercial development area Munkebjerg Park in Odense.
- In Sweden, the architectural firm is developing the ambitious World Trade Centre in Helsingborg with both hotels and offices. They are also working on the housing projects Aktern, Nanna and Roth in Malmö as well as the development projects KungSängen and Årsta Torg in Uppsala.
- In Norway, JUUL | FROST Architects are working on development strategies for Forus Næringspark in Stavanger among other projects.



Photo: JUUL | FROST Architects