

Atelier van Berlo  
Innovation Powerhouse

## INNOVATION POWERHOUSE: AN INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX TRANSFORMATION

*Posted on September 4, 2019 by martabuges*



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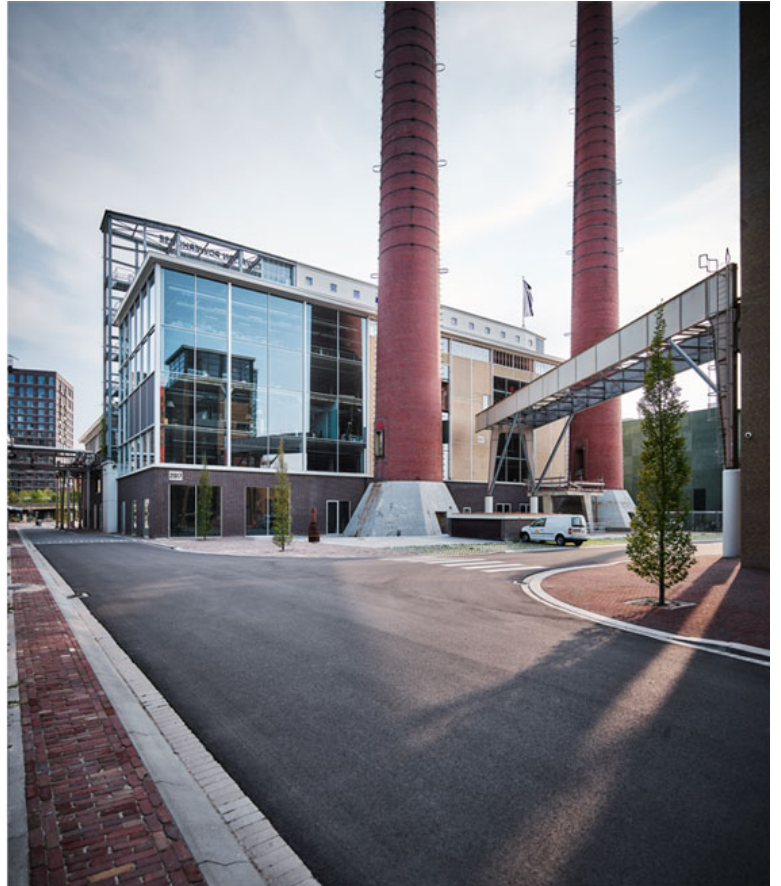
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Innovation Powerhouse: An Industrial Complex Transformation

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A former power plant becomes the multi-tenant Innovation Powerhouse, in a transformation from a pure, brute, raw and heavy industrial complex – completely unsuitable for office use in size and volume – into a comfortable, breathing, spacious, fresh and young work environment.



The Innovation Powerhouse is an ecosystem for the innovative industries, a center for creativity, a hyper-modern, multi-tenant building where different companies meet, inspire and stimulate innovation. Situated on Strijp-T, the former power plant is an iconic building, a landmark of Eindhoven. Built in four stages, from 1953 to 1972, the power plant used to provide Philips factories with power through coal, gas and later oil.



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The design-driven innovation agency van Berlo initiated the transformation, while in search of their own new headquarters. They envisioned a unique working space: an open ecosystem focused on collaboration; something more than just their own new headquarters. It would be an ecosystem for different innovative companies, universities, partners, clients, and visitors to work together and create the innovations that would shape the future.

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The two main points of departure for the design were to maintain the building's innate architectural qualities and to incorporate this vision of open innovation. Throughout the design, this idea of connectives was essential. The architects wanted the companies to constantly meet, to create an almost effortless atmosphere of inspiration for one another, which was translated into a vibrant

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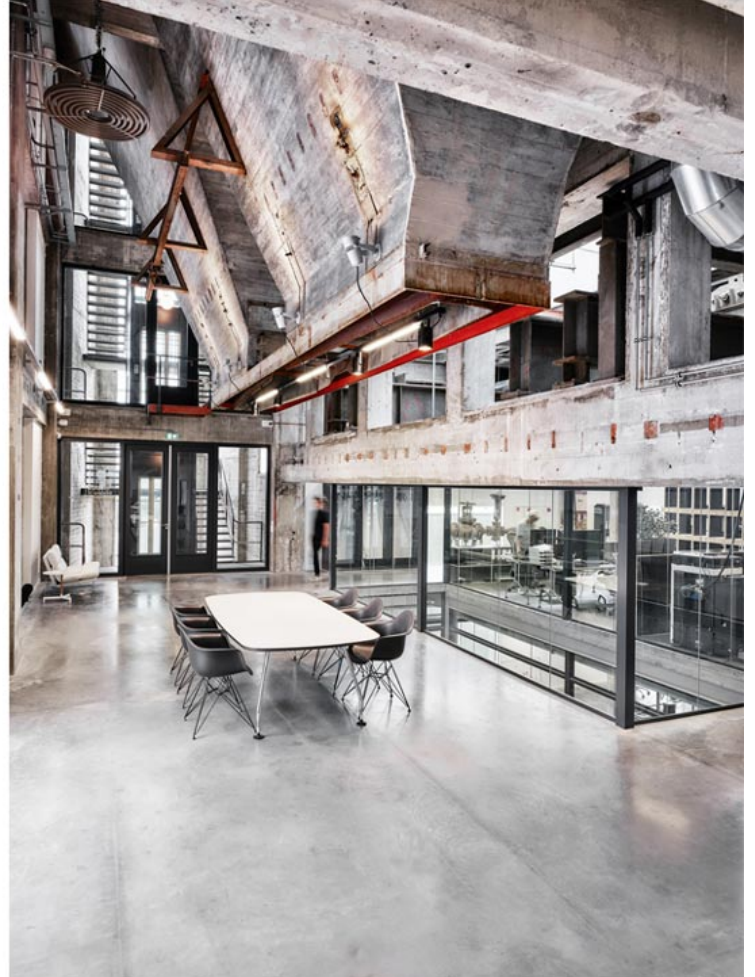


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center.



To create this vibrant center, the architect created a clear cut in the building, a straight line through the heart, spanning, among other things, the original central backbone, a 5-meter-wide high-rise where the coal chutes still hang at a height of 28 meters. Next to this central backbone, there is a skylight in the roof, spanning its full length, bringing light into the otherwise dark center of the building and revealing the magnitude of the old heavy concrete structure. In addition, this skylight offers a peek at the façade, allowing everyone to view the sheer height of the midpoint.

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Due to a change in power fueling, the original design was never finished. Since there was no longer a need for coal chutes, the 5-meter wide high-rise was never finished. Inspired by the original drawings, the architects added a steel vertical garden to the central high-rise, giving the building its originally intended symmetrical look. This vertical garden, with meeting rooms, a glass elevator and emergency exits, follows the lines and rhythm of the original architecture. The open, transparent and green appearance hints at a new sustainable green energy production.

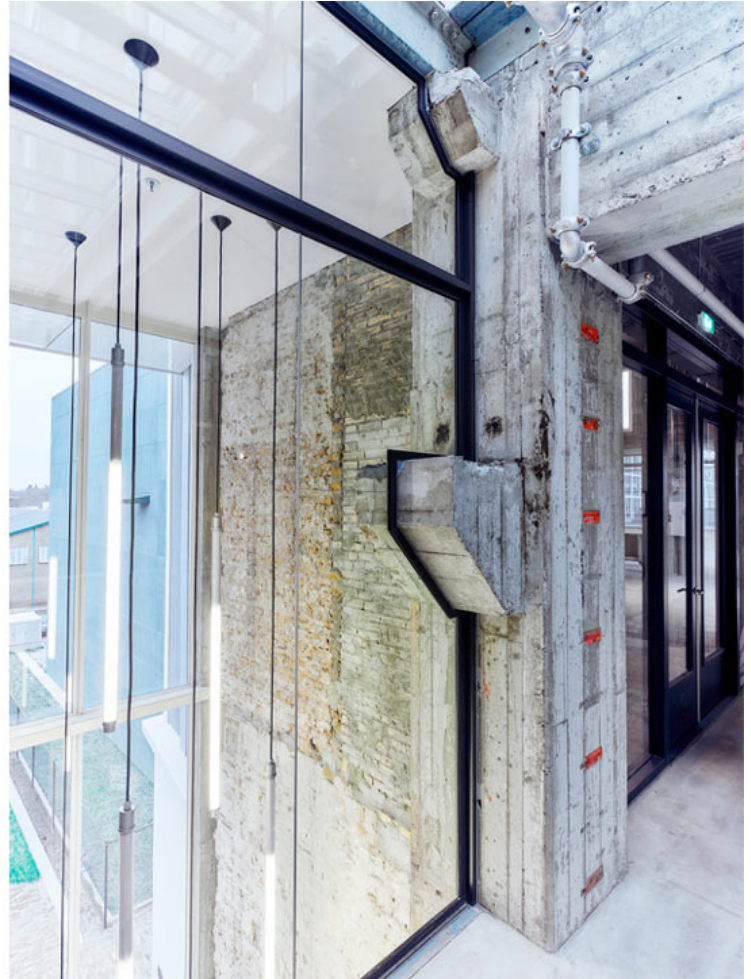
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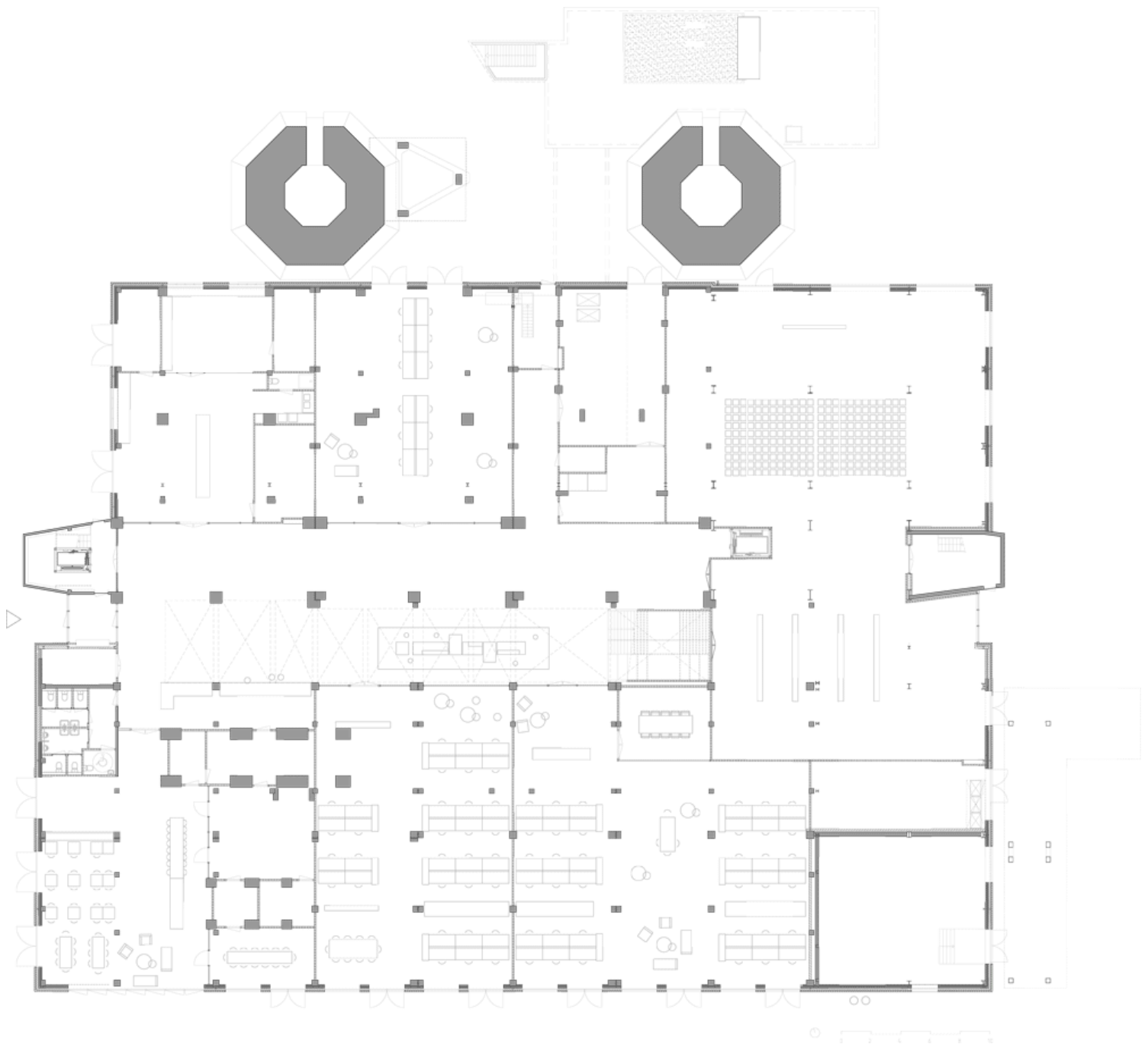
The symmetrical look is finished by a glass extension at the back of the building. It follows the lines and of the existing building, but, through minimalistic detailing and modern materials, it clearly indicates a new phase for this impressive complex.

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The other interventions, such as the small windows for bringing light into the offices and the main

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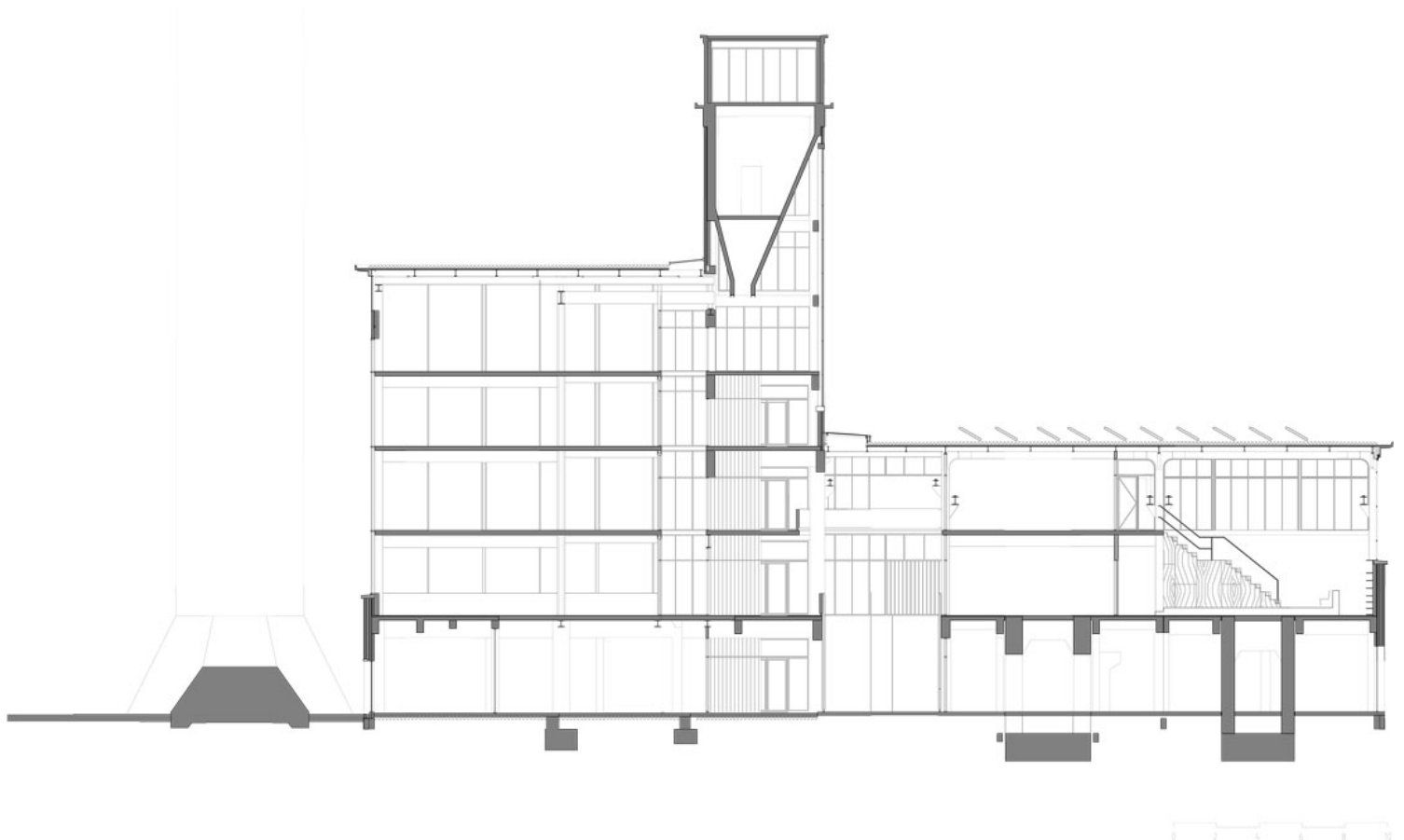


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entrance, are kept small to ensure that the monumental industrial character of the building stays visible. With the renovation, there was also great attention to sustainability. Due to HR + glass, solar panels, and newly insulated walls and roofs, the building now has an A+ energy label.



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