



SCIENCE ISLAND: A REFLECTIVE BEACON FOR KAUNAS

Posted on June 2, 2025 by Dima Fadel



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SMAR Architecture Studio, led by Fernando Jerez and Belén Pérez de Juan, has completed the Science Island Museum (Mokslo Sala) in Kaunas, Lithuania—seven years after winning the international competition for the site. Occupying 15,000 square meters on Nemunas Island, the museum establishes itself as a new cultural and scientific landmark for the city.

Designed to integrate harmoniously with the island's topography, the museum seeks to strengthen the bond between the urban environment and nature. Its green roof features circular openings that function as public gathering spaces, amphitheater-like seating, and access points, enabling the structure to merge organically with the surrounding parkland.

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The architecture is organized into two primary zones: the “Front of House” and the “Back of House.” Departing from conventional public building layouts, the design ensures that even the typically overlooked back-of-house areas—such as laboratories and administrative offices—are exposed to daylight and park views. This deliberate permeability reinforces the museum's educational mission and its engagement with environmental awareness.

Beyond its exhibition spaces, the museum provides an immersive sensory experience. Visitors are

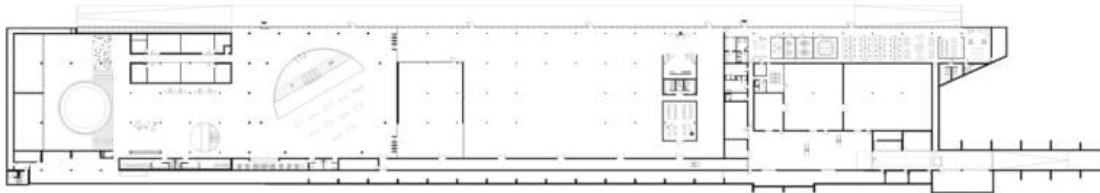
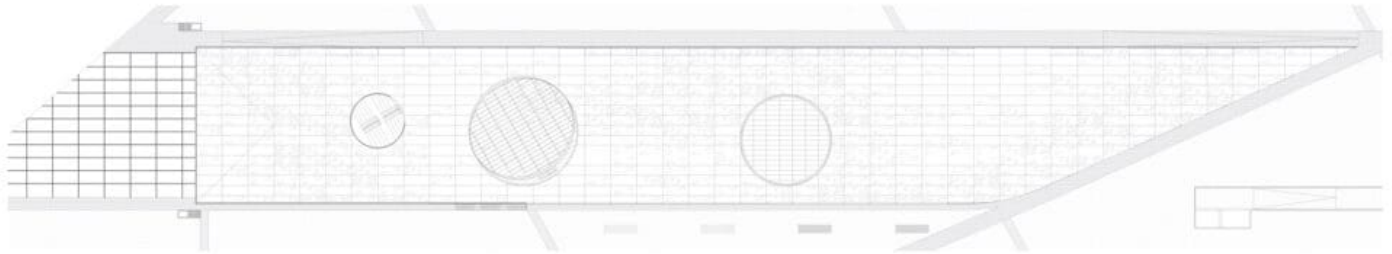
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constantly aware of light, temperature, and seasonal variation as they move through the building, experiencing natural phenomena as part of their journey. This integration of environmental cues fosters a deeper, more intuitive understanding of the sciences on display.

Crowning the building is a sloping, reflective disc planted with native vegetation. Serving both as a visual beacon and a functional element, it reflects daylight into the museum and glows with internal illumination at night—becoming a symbolic "new sun" for Kaunas. This luminous element underscores the ever-active nature of scientific inquiry, casting science itself as a radiant force in the city's future.



Science Museum Drawings © SMAR Architecture Studio

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