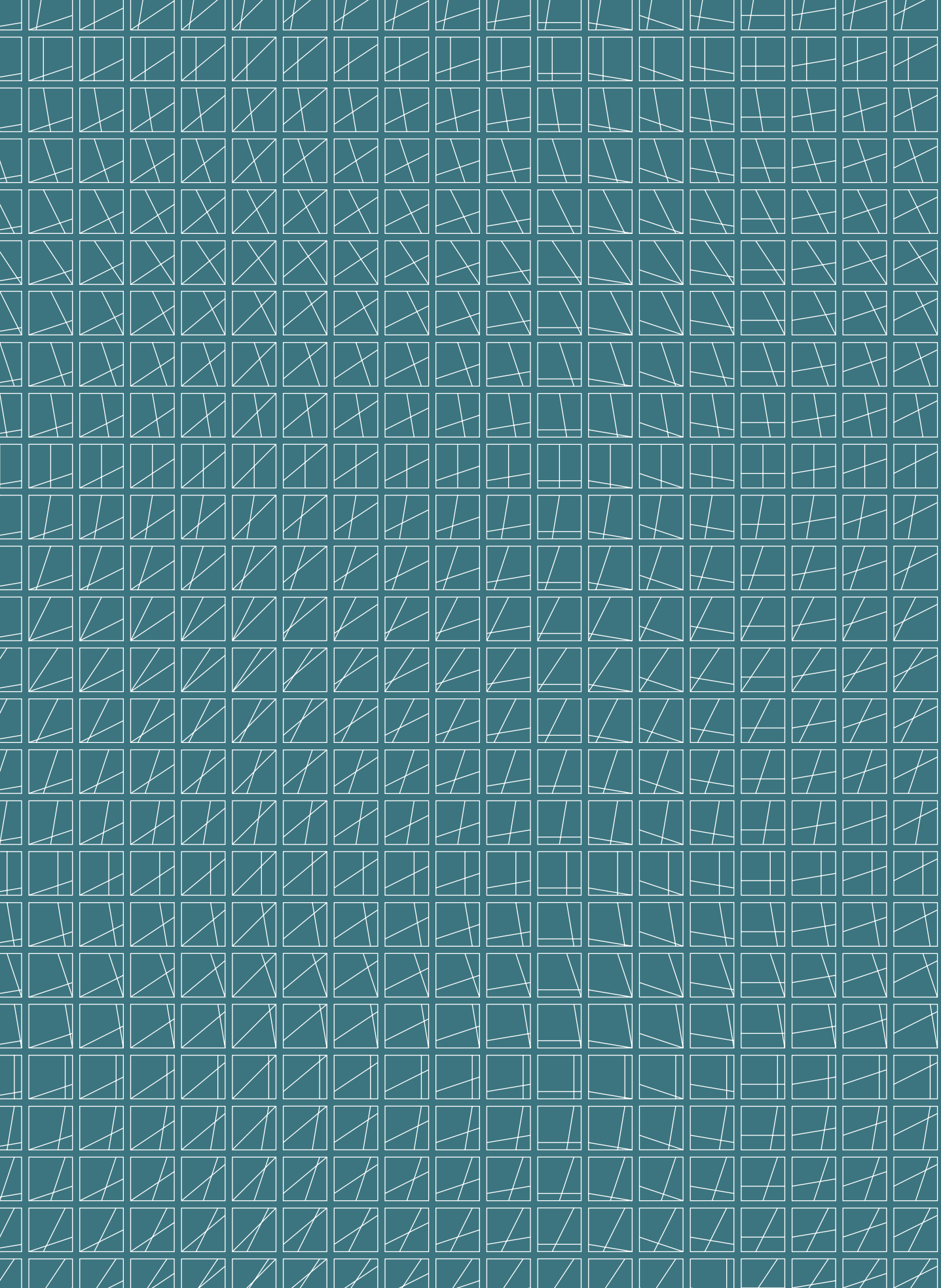
The image shows a close-up, low-angle view of the Nestlé Headquarters building. The facade is composed of a grid of large glass panels, reflecting a bright blue sky with scattered white clouds. The grid lines are dark and prominent. In the lower portion of the image, a series of vertical, teal-colored architectural elements, possibly louvers or fins, are visible, creating a rhythmic pattern. The overall color palette is dominated by blues and teals, with the white text providing a sharp contrast.

Nestlé Headquarters



Nestlé Headquarters

by Park Associati

Client
Brioschi Sviluppo Immobiliare SpA

Tenant
Nestlé Italiana SpA

Address
Assago, Milan

Year
Competition: 2011
On Site: 2012
Realization: 2013

Area
sqm 22.100

Professional Service
Concept
Project
Planning Permission
Architectural Project
Artistic Site supervision

Civil Engineering - M&E
General Planning Srl

General co-ordination, Project Management
General Planning Srl

General Contractor
Milanofiori 2000

Façade
Focchi SpA

LEED Certification
Greenwich Srl

Unexpected office



Far from reflecting the sterile exchange between individual rooms and open spaces that characterised its twentieth-century evolution, today the office is a place where physical and psychological well-being freely relate to one another, where everyone can 'build' their own work models.

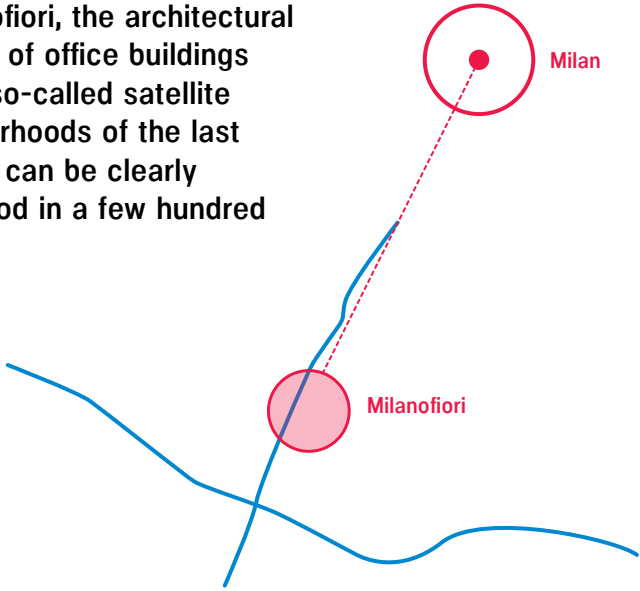


In the last few decades, workplaces have changed radically, spurred by new work systems that, increasingly based on informal exchange, co-operation, and communication. The design of the workplace has also changed: its configuration is no longer dictated by theories, layouts, functions or flows, but – above all – by the real and specific needs of workers. This emphasises that a bespoke, personalised and customisable office is the ideal office, not a standardised one. It was with this concept in mind that the new headquarters of Nestlé Italia were created at Milanofiori, north of Assago. The building gathers the executive offices of Nestlé – formerly spread over three different locations – under one roof. Designed by Park Associati, the new headquarters were made to measure for the group, based on its expectations, its requirements, and the complexity of its universe. Intended as a 22,000-square-metre campus, the entire project – a lightweight and sustainable dematerialised box articulated around a 'secret garden' – is geared towards efficiency, dynamism, flexibility, transparency and communicability, thus conveying the company's working model through its architecture. However, the designers did not simply adopt the client's requests, but they interpreted them, revolutionising the proposed images and returning unexpected headquarters better suited to the company's identity.

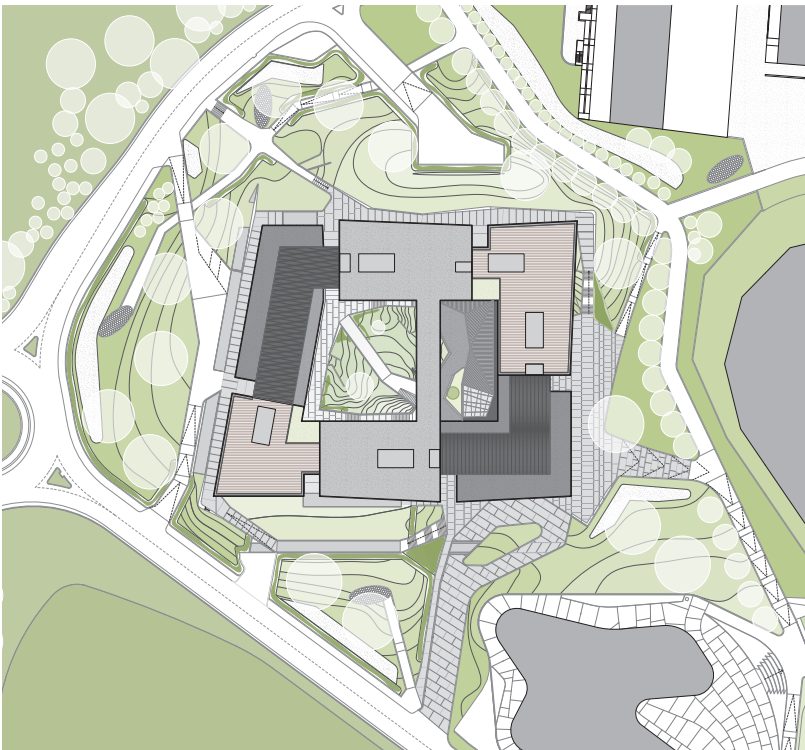
Milanofiori, an evolving district



At Milanofiori, the architectural evolution of office buildings and the so-called satellite neighbourhoods of the last 40 years can be clearly understood in a few hundred metres.



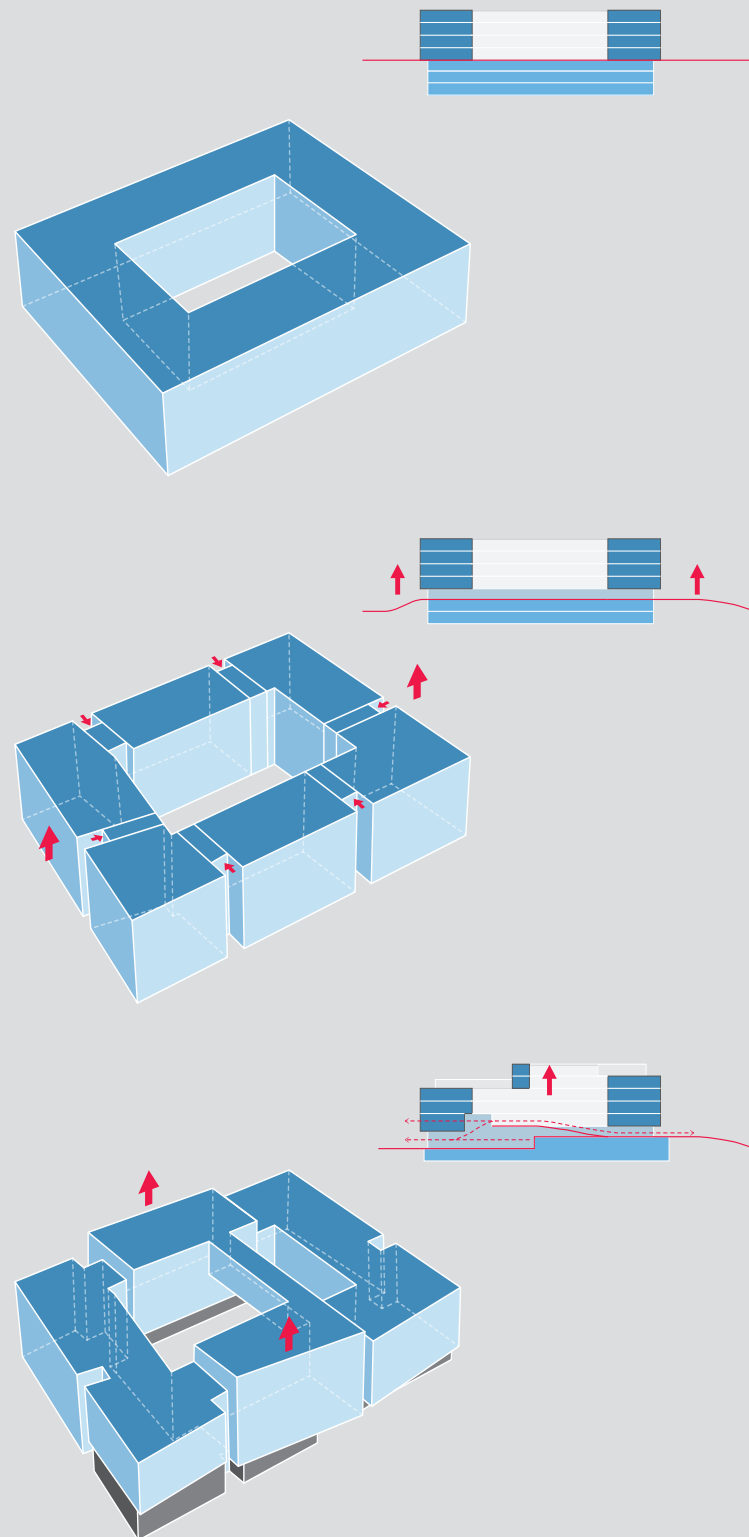
Nestlé Headquarters launches the idea that the work space is not something that needs to be 'filled', but rather a place to 'build' for and around the requirements of a particular client, in effect opening Milanofiori to a new, yet-to-be-written, evolutionary stage.



The first settlement dates back to 1975, when Brioschi Sviluppo Immobiliare Group found the territory of Assago, just outside Milan – a vast agricultural area that could be transformed into a tertiary district. Its position, its planimetric and building development mirror the culture of those years. The area's high infrastructural expansion included the west ring road and the motorway, making it an ideal place where new functions for the Milanese metropolis could be created. The design and layout of the various buildings reflects a faith in the modular network of rational urban planning, while the single buildings aim at architectural standardisation by entrusting their image to curtain walls and constructive prefabrication.

30 years on, Brioschi Sviluppo Immobiliare Group launched the 'Milanofiori 2000' project, marking the district's expansion to the north. The preferred access route is no longer the ring road, but the new underground stop around which the whole masterplan by Erick van Egeraat is drawn. Leaving behind the image of a monofunctional neighbourhood, Milanofiori Nord is an efficient, dynamic and sustainable mix of residences, offices, and commercial structures. Designed by leading Italian architectural practices the buildings are characterised by formal variety. Within this process, the Nestlé Headquarters marks a further stage of development.

An introspective campus



Inclusion and connection with the context were the two opposing requirements that informed the Nestlé Headquarters' architecture.

On the one hand, there was the desire of the client to create some kind of protected and introspective campus, on the other hand, there was the need to root the building to the overall masterplan. While understanding the closed-courtyard plan requested by Nestlé, Park Associati totally altered its geometry, and created a rational yet complex office building.

The rigidity of the 'box' is, in fact, divided into a series of varying heights and irregular levels that generate six suspended glass parallelepipeds of different sizes, arranged around the inner courtyard in an upward movement. Despite being used exclusively by Nestlé employees, the courtyard is connected through the hall to the semi-urban square that acts as the building's entrance, and further on to the main pedestrian access area, which is in turn directly linked to the underground.

The treatment of the glass surfaces also reveals the desire to connect the building to the context

While appearing transparent in some sections due to the light passing through, in other parts, the coating becomes opaque and reflects the surrounding natural environment. On the inside, the outer volumetric structure is reflected by an articulated path, joining the various sections at the different heights.

Flexibility and transparency are the keywords guiding the design of the interior spaces, which are all flooded with natural light.

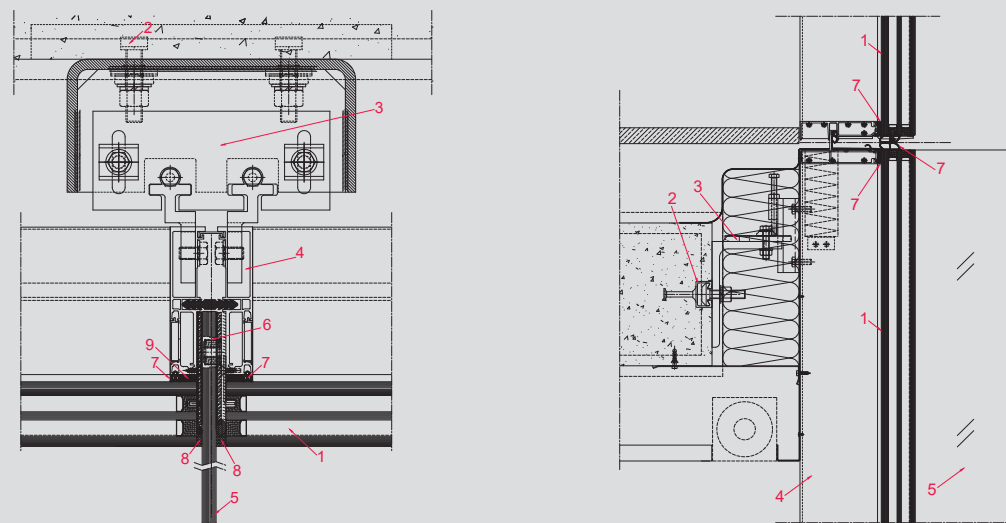
A careful study of lighting, together with a high-performance casing, careful energy management during construction and maintenance, and a reduced water consumption, earned Nestlé Headquarters the LEED for 'Core and Shell' certification in Gold class.



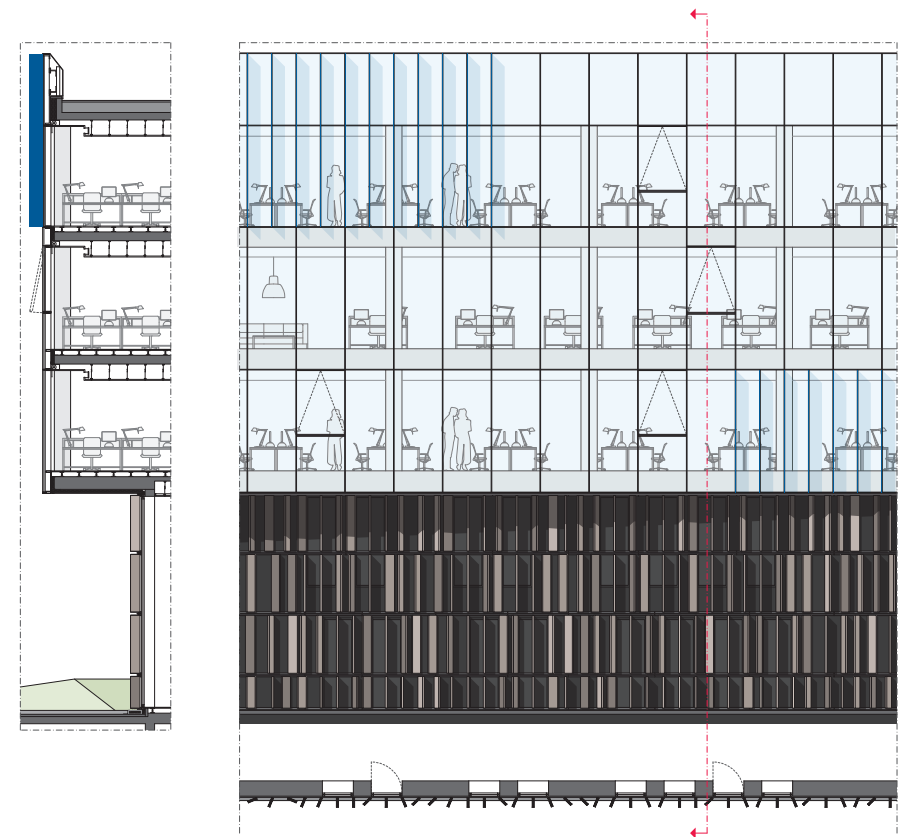




A varied surface, in both orientation and colour



- 1_ 63.5mm. double glazing. 10mm. HP 7039 ipasol neutral exterior glass, 8mm middle tempered glass on the inner side. Inner 6+6mm. laminated glass plates hardened with 4 interposed PVBs. Argon-filled 16mm chambers.
- 2_ Malfen-type profiles sunk in the concrete slab.
- 3_ Anchor bracket for the façade system.
- 4_ RAL-7021 opaque varnished 160x80mm support upright.
- 5_ Laminated glass fin. 400mm. overhang. 6+6mm hardened sheets with 4 interposed coloured PVBs.
- 6_ Nylon bushing.
- 7_ Black EDPM seal.
- 8_ Black silicone.
- 9_ Black structural silicone.
- 10_ 160x80mm. horizontal support cross-beam varnished with opaque RAL 7021.



The treatment of the external surfaces contributes to the overall image of the Nestlé Headquarters, as it helps to impart lightness and complexity to the architectural structure. **The entire cladding plays on the contrast between two different types of material: the terracotta of the raised ground floor and the glass of the 'suspended boxes'.** Partially embedded in the ground, the variable-height raised ground floor is clad with terracotta elements.

Developed in co-operation with Palagio Engineering, the system features tubular rectangular strips in three shades of grey. Characterised by four sides, all in sight, the strips are installed vertically on a horizontal grid of painted aluminium profiles fastened to the masonry. The holes in the battens and four different types of extruded aluminium brackets allow the elements to be placed

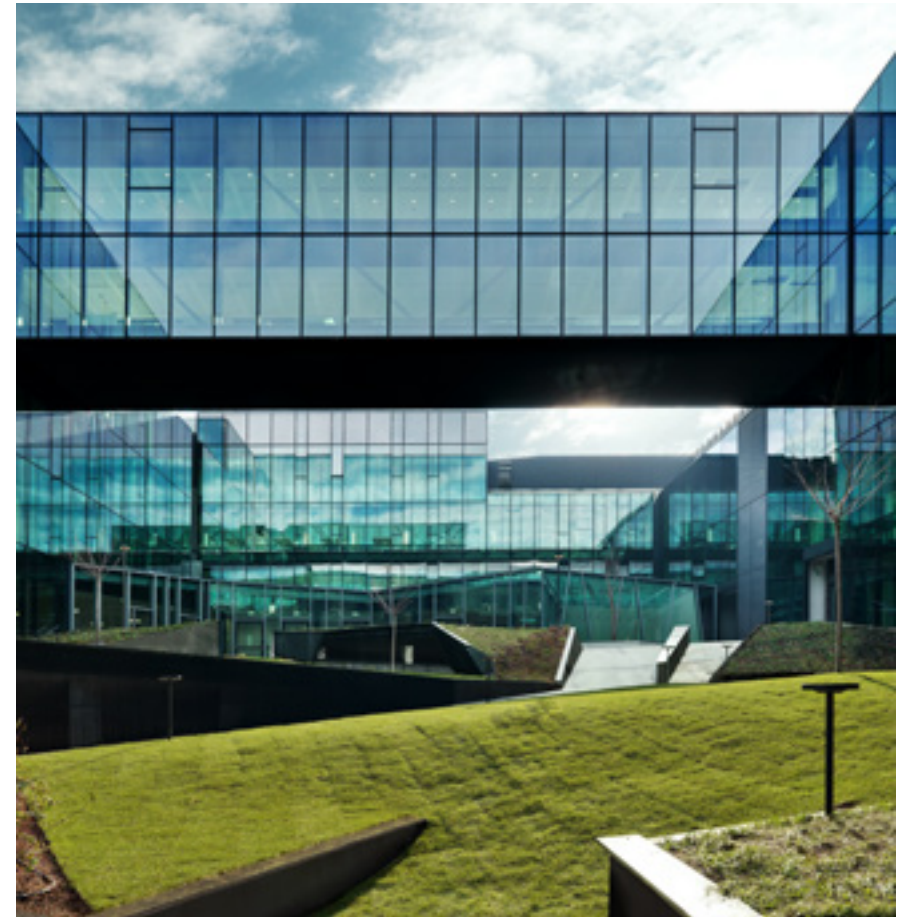
in seven distinct positions. This results in a varied surface, in terms of both orientation and colour, that acquires more or less material compactness, depending on the point of view. The boxes on top are clad with double chamber cellular glass plates specifically made by Focchi, a leading company in the design and manufacture of curtain walls. **Using innovative, high-quality products, the façades feature a varying degree of transparency, which is greater in the north-facing ones.**

While their flat surface is livened at some strategic points by vertical slats of laminated glass in different hues of blue that further break each building's geometry, increasing the general feeling of fragmentation. The result is a complex and varied surface that is by no means superficial.

Fragments of green



The central courtyard is at the heart of the project; a secret garden, featuring sloping green surfaces crossed by straight paths that outline the space, and a suspended, lived-in glazed bridge marking it on top.



This environment is conceived as an outdoor relaxation room where Nestlé workers can benefit – in terms of both comfort and psychological well-being – from direct contact with nature. By providing a direct link between the offices and the first-floor canteen, the courtyard is not just a walk-through space, but rather an area of social contact where people can communicate, relax, or work informally.

The courtyard plays a strategic role, as it embeds the Nestlé Headquarters in its environmental context. The building is, in fact, part of the hilly area designed by Park Associati around the building, which acts as a hinge between Milanofiori built-up environment and the wooded area behind it.

The artificial micro-landscape created both inside and outside the building effectively acts as a connection between the two different south-side levels overlooking the pedestrian paths, and the north side that overlooks the green, as well as hiding the carriageway.

Choosing to create strongly-geometrical, broken-up levels both inside the courtyard and outside the building meets the project's vision.

Similar to the disarticulation of a box into smaller volumes, the plane is also moved and broken up to give an overall highly-dynamic impression.

Matteo Cabassi, AD Brioschi Sviluppo Immobiliare



ADV: Park Associati realised the new Headquarters of Nestlé Italia for Brioschi Sviluppo Immobiliare. Behind its apparent simplicity, this building gradually reveals great compositional and technological complexity. What are, in your opinion, the most interesting aspects of this piece of architecture?

MC: I think it is the journey that led to its realisation. The Nestlé Italia's Headquarters project has, in fact, undergone various changes to adjust to the user's needs, and this required significant variations, by way of either additions or reductions, during the negotiation prior to the drawing up of the contract.

In addition, the tenant wished for a low and compact building, to fit their idea of a 'nest'.

This discussion process lasted a year, and during this time Park Associati skilfully and effectively outlined the various requirements, creating an extraordinary building that perfectly suits Nestlé, yet is also functional in terms of sustaining other working realities in the future.

ADV: Unlike other similar real estate operations, to date Milanofiori's configuration is not that of a set of more or less attractive architectural boxes to be filled later with functions and people, but rather an urban fragment that has been 'hand-sewn' according to the real requirements of those who live in the neighbourhood on a daily basis.

MC: Actually, this is true. Having outlined the neighbourhood's basics – that is, having defined its main functions, its services and its infrastructure system – in the second stage of the project, we elected to follow a tailored development model.

After all, headquarters design is now moving in this direction: companies want buildings that fit their specific requirements and their working models, they don't want to adapt to pre-set spaces. We have respected this trend and we are constructing customized buildings. Whereas this development undoubtedly increases completion times, it also means that there are no spaces left vacant, and that the efficiency and – above all – the quality of space, life, and the architectural product are guaranteed.

ADV: Said quality being, among other things, thoroughly Italian. With the exception of the masterplan, you have essentially focused on Italian architects.

MC: With Filippo and Michele, we immediately established a relationship of mutual trust and respect. What won us over was their ability to adapt to changing perspectives, always succeeding in producing quality. Starting from the inflexible and austere volume of a transparent cube, which was Nestlé's idea, they worked on the façade's details by subtracting, emptying, adding transparencies, and splaying slightly, and proposed a very beautiful building consisting of six elements revolving around the central courtyard.

They were thus able, also by playing with the internal and external public space planes, to disguise the real size of the building, turning it into a lightweight, self-contained structure – as requested by Nestlé – that inside is also totally open and transparent.

ADV: Milanofiori's project marks many years of your involvement in the redefinition of this part of Milan's southern suburbs. How will this area be further developed?

MC: At the moment, we intend to complete the remaining building volume at Milanofiori Nord, by creating new, custom-made headquarters; we already have in mind an expansion project for Milanofiori Sud that should be more residential. And once again we are working with Park Associati. Milanofiori Nord is already attracting a much greater customer base than those who simply work in the neighbourhood. Especially at weekends, the public spaces of the square and the shopping area are much enjoyed. The new expansion aims to strengthen the idea of Milanofiori as a complete urban centre, a small town to be enjoyed 24 hours a day, amid quality contemporary architecture.



Photos:
Maurizio Bianchi
Andrea Martiradonna

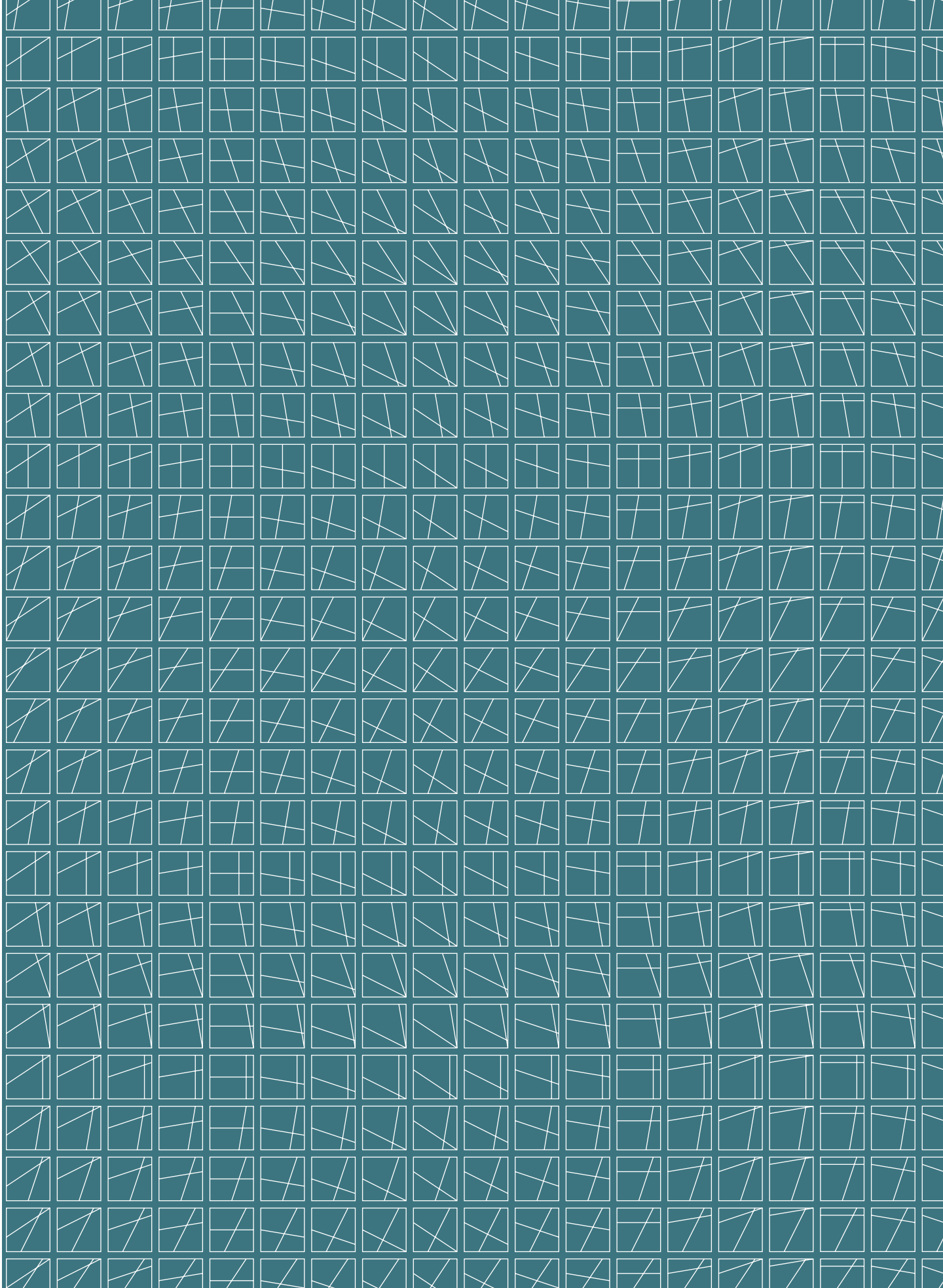
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