The Jerusalem Brain Sciences Building will provide a state-of-the-art research and teaching facility for the Edmond and Lily Safra Center for Brain Sciences.
Building the Future of Brain Sciences

The Suzanne and Charles Goodman Brain Sciences Building

The Edmond and Lily Safra Center for Brain Sciences at The Hebrew University of Jerusalem is a pioneering research facility for the scientific exploration of the brain. Physically, the building acts as a gateway between the university campus and city - its dynamic social spaces and laboratory facilities are designed to attract exceptional scientists, as well as to foster an interest in the centre's research activities within the wider community.

The building is arranged as two parallel wings around a central courtyard. The upper levels house twenty-eight highly flexible laboratories linked by social hubs, which are conceived to encourage interaction and the exchange of ideas between students and staff. At ground floor, there are teaching facilities, a 200-seat auditorium, a library, café and a publically accessible gallery for the display of brain art. The courtyard at the heart of the scheme unites these different functions, establishes new circulation routes through the campus and draws the greenery of the surrounding landscape into the building. Planted with citrus trees and with a water feature along its length, the courtyard forms a quiet, reflective space and a cool microclimate, which can be further mediated by a retractable ETFE roof.
The centre’s progressive environmental strategy makes use of passive techniques to naturally reduce energy use. Local materials, such as Jerusalem stone, are utilised where possible, and the building is orientated east-west to reduce solar gain. The upper three levels are shaded by a perforated metal screen, with a pattern derived from the neurological brain structure. Further passive cooling of the building is provided by translucent ETFE canopies to the west and east, which form distinctive markers for the main entrances.

Sunset Effect

In addition to The Edmond and Lily Safra Center for Brain Sciences center, the Hebrew University have also completed two additional modern architectural projects. The first project is the Rothberg Family building for Engineering and Computer Sciences. The second one is the Jack, Joseph and Morton Mandel School for Advanced Studies in the Humanities. These three modern architectural projects of the Hebrew University are a symbol of how Jerusalem -one of the ancients’ cities of the world, is becoming a modern-era symbol for advancement, innovation, entrepreneurship and top-notch architecture.
About the Architect
Foster + Partners, led by Founder and Chairman Norman Foster, is based in London with offices worldwide.
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Images from the design process.
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The Building Project Team
Design Architect Foster+Partners Local Collaboration Architects Baer, Shifman-Nathan Architects
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$30 Million Second Stage Development Gift to ELSC
Mrs. Lily Safra and the Edmond J. Safra Philanthropic Foundation Make $30 Million Second Stage Development Gift to the Edmond and Lily Safra Center for Brain Sciences (ELSC) at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem
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Construction status June 2015
As of now, the pouring of the ceiling of the first floor has been completed.
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Cerebral design for Hebrew University's new brain science building
This week the cornerstone will be laid for the building, designed by Fosters + Partners, which will be sheathed in cast aluminum netting shaped like a network of neurons. But the London firm’s Spencer de Grey explains why one can’t design an iconic building in advance.

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