

## Grade A Architecture: The World's Most Spectacular University Buildings

25 FEB 2014  
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Lecture halls at dizzying heights, libraries with glass-domed roofs or crooked seminar rooms with slanting walls – it is not just in the field of learning that universities have plenty to offer, but on an architectural level, too. From the historic Universitätsbibliothek KU Leuven of 1928 to the enormous glass sphere of the Philologische Bibliothek in Berlin to the brand-new, tent-like Campus Luigi Einaudi in Turin: Emporis, the international provider of building data, has compiled a selection of the most spectacular university buildings from around the world.

All students set their sights high, but for the 30,000 enrolled at Lomonosov Moscow State University, this is meant literally as well as figuratively, since their main building, dating from 1953, is the world's tallest university building at 240 meters in height. Over its 36 stories it contains everything one could expect from an educational institution, including a 1,500-seat library, a computer lab, a concert hall and a planetarium. In other words, it's not just a university, it's a city. In Frankfurt am Main, where February 2, 2014 saw the demolition of the AIE-Turm. In the largest inner-city controlled blasting Europe has ever seen, the high-rise at the Johann-Wolfgang-Goethe-Universität, dating from 1972, was destroyed in a matter of seconds.

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Biblioteca Central. Image © Luis Ibáñez

### Biblioteca Central (1953)

- Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México | Mexico
- Architects: Juan O'Gorman, Gustavo Saavedra, Juan Martínez
- Before the library moved into its current building, it was located in the Mexico City Center for 60 years.
- The library holds about 400,000 books.



Bradfield Hall. Image © John W. Cahill

### Bradfield Hall (1969)

- Cornell University | USA
- Architect: Ulrich Franzen & Associates
- Bradfield Hall was named for Richard Bradfield, Professor Emeritus, who was head of the Cornell Agronomy Department between 1937 and 1955.
- The building was designed without windows on the first ten floors since most laboratories are climate-controlled.



### Campus Luigi Einaudi (2013)

- Università Degli Studi Di Torino | Italy
- Architect: Foster + Partners
- The whole Campus consists of two buildings and houses the faculties of Law and Political Science.
- The Campus is designed to house 5,000 students.



Faculty of History. Image © John Levett / Flickr

### Faculty of History (1968)

- Cambridge University | UK
- Architect: Stirling & Gowan
- The building was the result of an architectural competition. The completed building only shows minor adjustments from the winning design.
- The building was awarded the Royal Institute of British Architects Gold Medal in 1970.



Graduate Centre. Image © J Haeske / Flickr

**Graduate Centre (2004)**

- London Metropolitan University | UK
- Architect: Daniel Libeskind
- The building won the RIBA Award in 2004, and the Building of the Year Award – Royal Fine Arts Commission Trust – Jeu D'Esprit in 2005.
- The building acts as a gateway to the London Metropolitan University on Holloway Road.



Lomonosov Moscow State University Main Building. Image © Igor Butyrak

**Lomonosov Moscow State University Main Building (1953)**

- Lomonosov Moscow State University | Russia
- Architect: Lev Vladimirovich Rudnev
- When completed in 1953, the building was the 7th-tallest skyscraper in the world, and the tallest outside New York City.
- The University in its entirety covers more than 1.6 square kilometers.



Mode Gakuen Cocoon Tower. Image © Mathew Shaffer

**Mode Gakuen Cocoon Tower (2008)**

- Tokyo Mode Gakuen, HAL Tokyo, Shuto Ikô | Japan
- Architect: Tange Associates
- The design has been nicknamed "The Giant Cocoon".
- This is the second-tallest educational building in the world, surpassed only by Lomonosov Moscow State University Main Building.



Philologische Bibliothek. Image © David Auserhofer

**Philologische Bibliothek (2005)**

- Freie Universität Berlin | Germany
- Architect: Foster + Partners
- The library is part of the Rostund Silberlaube complex. Even though it seems as if the library is part of the existing buildings, it is conceived as a single building.
- There is enough space for 800,000 books.



**Run Run Shaw Creative Media Centre (2011)**

- City University of Hong Kong | China
- Architect: Daniel Libeskind
- In 2012, the building was assigned a BEAM Platinum sustainability rating.
- The building houses the School of Creative Media.



Sharp Centre for Design. Image © Andriena Schoeberlein / Flickr

**Sharp Centre for Design (2004)**

- OCAD University | Canada
- Architects: Alsop Architects, Robbie/Young + Wright Architects
- The Sharp Centre for Design is perched 26 meters above the ground on 12 stilts representing giant pencils.
- Five legs out of the six multi-colored pairs are painted black to give an illusion of slenderness, especially at night when the black legs seem to disappear.



Swanston Academic Building. Image © RMIT / Flickr

**Swanston Academic Building (2012)**

- RMIT University | Australia
- Architect: Lyons Architects
- RMIT invested a total of \$600 million in this building and the new RMIT Design Hub.
- The building has obtained a 5 star Green Star rating from the Green Building Council of Australia (GBCA) due to its environmental sustainability.



The Roland Levinsky Building. Image © Alan Coates / Flickr

**The Roland Levinsky Building (2007)**

- University of Plymouth | UK
- Architect: Henning Larsen Architects, BDP
- Thanks to numerous cafés and galleries, the building has become a cultural meeting point in Plymouth.
- Roland Levinsky was Vice-Chancellor of the University of Plymouth until his death in 2007.



Universitätsbibliothek KU Leuven. Image © Michiel van Dijk

**Universitätsbibliothek KU Leuven (1928)**

- Katholieke Universiteit Leuven | Belgium
- Architect: Warren & Wetmore
- The building is designed in neo-Flemish Renaissance style.
- During the Second World War the building and its 900,000 books burnt down. It was rebuilt according to the original design of architect Whitney Warren.