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A NEW ACADEMIC GATEWAY: UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO REVEALS DESIGN FOR THE TEMERTY BUILDING

An interdisciplinary research hub on King's College Circle that integrates Indigenous design principles, flexible lab environments, and a porous public realm to support collaborative discovery.

Toronto, ON April 23, 2026 – The University of Toronto has unveiled the design for the new Temerty Building, a 9-storey, 388,000-square-foot academic and research hub by Diamond Schmitt and MVRDV, in collaboration with Two Row Architect. Positioned at the heart of the St. George campus on King's College Circle, the building brings together the Temerty Faculty of Medicine and the Faculty of Arts & Science's Department of Cell & Systems Biology within a shared environment designed to support collaborative, interdisciplinary research, and discovery.

Conceived as a connective framework linking disciplines, landscapes, and knowledge systems, the new Temerty Building redefines how research and learning intersect within one of Canada's most historically significant academic precincts. The design balances institutional presence with permeability, introducing a new gateway to the university's Front Campus while reinforcing

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architectural continuity with the surrounding campus fabric.

"*The Temerty Building's design is about bridging worlds,*" says Diamond Schmitt Principal Don Schmitt. "*It prioritizes functionality and durability but also ensures the building will be warm and inviting. Its lower floors form a crossroads for the wider university community and opens to the surrounding landscape for the first time in 50 years. The building will support deep focus, as well as foster greater connection, with an emphasis on spatial clarity and natural light, while fitting seamlessly into the iconic context of King's College Circle*."

Located on the site of the existing Medical Sciences Building's west wing, the Temerty Building mediates between the openness of King's College Circle to the north and the density of its urban context to the south. Its massing steps down toward the Circle, aligning with the scale and material language of adjacent heritage buildings while shaping a distinct civic presence alongside Convocation Hall. A rhythmic façade of curved vertical elements echoes the neighbouring colonnade, creating a shared architectural language. Mullions clad in natural stone strengthen this continuity while introducing a contemporary expression within a campus shaped by layered architectural histories.

"*Not only does the design provide excellent research and learning facilities, it offers generous and stimulating communal spaces for people to forge connections and exchange ideas — creating the productive friction that characterises many of the best research institutes*," says MVRDV founding partner Nathalie de Vries. "*While thoughtfully integrating with the rest of the Medical Sciences Building, the Temerty Building brings a new atmosphere to this portion of King's College Circle: it is transparent, open, and welcoming to all, allowing campus life to thrive at the heart of the university*."

The design is informed by Indigenous design principles, guided by Two Row Architect, which are woven throughout the building's form and function. Grounded in *Mino-bimaadiziwin* and shaped through Talking Circles with the Indigenous Advisory Circle, the building responds to its location, history, and place. "*We are designing with*

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the land, not on it, guided by the original laws and teachings that shape how we live and care for one another," notes Two Row Architect's Erik Skouris. Its terraced massing references regional geological formations, including the Niagara Escarpment and historic shoreline of Lake Iroquois, embedding the building within a deeper understanding of place. Green roofs and the landscape incorporate plantings associated with the four sacred medicines—cedar, sage, sweetgrass, and tobacco—offering spaces for healing and reflection. These landscapes embed Indigenous knowledge and practices within the daily life of the building, while connecting to the medical research activities it supports.

At grade, the building extends the campus landscape through a series of meandering pathways inspired by Taddle Creek. These routes shape movement across the site, guiding pedestrians toward primary entrances. Complemented by Indigenous plantings and diverse vegetation that frame views across the site, the landscape establishes an immediate sense of invitation at grade, reinforcing the building's role as a shared space and academic threshold.

The primary west entrance opens into a double-height atrium conceived as the social heart of the building. Designed as a crossroads for gathering for the entire university, the space supports both daily interaction and large-scale events like convocation receptions and alumni reunions—creating an active and porous ground floor that animates King's College Circle and Road. Extensive glazing creates transparency, bringing natural light deep into the interior, while wood-clad surfaces introduce warmth and tactility, reflecting Indigenous placekeeping values and a connection to natural materials.

Above the first two teaching floors, seven floors of laboratory and research space are organized to support flexibility and collaboration. Open-plan wet labs are accompanied by shared support spaces and adaptable infrastructure that can evolve with changing research needs. Transparent edges and glazed corners maintain visual connections across the campus while revealing the activity of the research teams within.

A highly sustainable facility that aligns with the University of

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Toronto's Climate Positive plan, the Temerty Building is supported by high-performance mechanical systems and a new district energy Nodal Plant that will provide heating and cooling to the new building and surrounding facilities contributing to the university's goal of achieving climate positivity by 2050, including 10% local renewable energy generation.

The new Temerty Building will create a synergy between research, learning, and public life, and will be a unifying hub for U of T and the city's greater biomedical community. Embedded within its cultural and environmental context, the building maintains cohesiveness with the campus and city while establishing a new campus landmark—supporting interdisciplinary discovery and the evolving needs of the university and the communities it serves.

"*This is more than a building — it's a home that will serve our entire community and beyond*," says Lisa Robinson, Dean of the Temerty Faculty of Medicine and Vice Provost, Relations with Health Care Institutions. "*It will connect disciplines, strengthen partnerships with our world-class hospitals, and provide our faculty and learners with the tools and spaces they need to innovate and lead. And as a proud U of T alumna, I'm especially excited that it will also serve as a venue for convocation and other celebrations — places where students and their families will create memories that last a lifetime*."

The new Temerty Building at the University of Toronto is designed by Diamond Schmitt and MVRDV, in collaboration with Indigenous firm Two Row Architect. The project is enabled by a historic $250-million gift from James and Louise Temerty in 2020, supporting strategic investments to strengthen discovery, collaboration, innovation, equity and learner well-being across Temerty Medicine and its hospital partners.

In addition to the new Temerty Building, Diamond Schmitt and MVRDV are working on the Myron and Berna Garron Health Sciences Complex at the University of Toronto Scarborough Campus with Ellis Don which is scheduled for completion later this year.

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Project Info

Project Name: Temerty Building
Location: Toronto, Canada
Year: 2022–
Client: University of Toronto
Size and Programme: 37,000 m2 Higher education: Laboratories, Classrooms, Shared space

Project Team
Architect: Diamond Schmitt + MVRDV
Diamond Schmitt Principals: Donald Schmitt, David Dow
Diamond Schmitt Design Team: Graeme Reed, Walton Chan, Harvey Wu, Martin Kristensen, Mojdeh Vali, Nadia Mulji, Timothy Birchard, Dejan Mojic, Jamie Li, Thilani Rajarathna, Daniel Sebaldt, Shane de Faoite, Inma Casero Fuentes, Victor Lima, Brandon Griffin

MVRDV Founding Partner: Nathalie de Vries
MVRDV Partner: Frans de Witte
MVRDV Design Team: Fedor Bron, Vanessa Kassabian, Mick van Gemert, Matteo Gramellini, Fouad Addou, Thiago Maso, Loreta Lukoseviciene, Gabriel Perucchi, Nicolás Garín Odriozola, Chantal Besteman, Sofia Elisavet Gkegka, Xiaohu Yan, Martyna Maciaszek, Alberto Canton, Diego Lopez Quintana, Fabian Koppers, Nick Boer, Dominika Bednarek, Jixuan Li, Leyla Godfrey, Mateusz Semak

In collaboration with: Two Row Architect
Two Row Design Team: Erik Skouris

Project Partners:
Contractor: Graham Ball
Landscape Architect: Michael Van Valkenburgh
Structural Engineer: RJC
MEP: Smith & Andersen
Cost Calculation: Graham Ball
Building Physics: RDH
Environmental Advisor: RDH, RWDI

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About Diamond Schmitt
Diamond Schmitt designs transformative, highly sustainable architecture that empowers people, communities, and organizations to harness change for the greater public good. Through a collaborative research process, the firm creates bold designs renowned for their exceptional performance and meticulous craftsmanship. With offices in Toronto, Vancouver, and New York, Diamond Schmitt has designed leading academic and research environments, including McGill University's Life Sciences Complex, the University of British Columbia's BioSciences Complex, and the Peter Gilgan Centre for Research and Learning at the Hospital for Sick Children—all known for their excellent laboratories, versatile planning, and striking design. The firm is currently working on the McGill Sustainability Park—the new home of Sustainability Systems and Public Policy programs at McGill University—and the Clinical Support and Research Centre at St. Paul's Hospital in Vancouver.

For more information please visit: dsai.ca.

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