

Foreword

Daniel Vasella

When Novartis decided in 2001 to transform the St. Johann site in Basel, which is also where our company headquarters are located, into a “Campus of Knowledge,” the project met with not only curiosity and interest, but also a reserved wait-and-see attitude.

We consciously refrained from communicating about the development of the Campus for quite some time, but our vision was nonetheless clear. Where machines and smokestacks had once occupied center stage, a location tailored to human beings and their productive well-being was to emerge. Interaction, an openness of communication, and a functional “co-location” would be assigned a special value.

Three historical facts helped in achieving this clarity: moving production out of the city district as a consequence of the fire in Schweizerhalle, the previous lack of long-term planning in the construction activity on the factory grounds, and the recognition that the physical proximity of groups who work together on a project enormously facilitates communication and, thereby, the group’s concentration. In addition, it was becoming increasingly clear to us that the physical environment had a very substantial significance for the people there. An attractive work environment would also have a positive impact on our ability to recruit the best new talent.

The secondary objective is more prosaic: with its many old buildings, the site no longer met today’s standards with regard to safety and the environment.

On the basis of the Master Plan developed by architect and forward-thinking urban designer Vittorio Magnago Lampugnani, Novartis’s headquarters are being successively reconstructed to create a new, avant-garde work environment for our associates. The Master Plan takes a long-term view and addresses not only aspects of urban planning, architecture, aesthetics, and landscaping, but also functionality, traffic management, and sociological factors. Needless to say, the project takes into account the urbanistic and cultural context of the city of Basel.

The Campus is a work in progress. While the project is proceeding briskly, it was never our intention to force the pace when implementing the Master Plan. Thus, only those buildings that have become

obsolete are to be demolished. It was always important to the company that the project remain flexible in its planning, so that future needs can be taken into account. It is therefore not yet possible to determine which of the current development scenarios will actually be realized after 2012.

All the office and laboratory buildings designed by renowned architects conform not only to the specifications of the Master Plan, but also to the specific requirements of the buildings' users in particular. Both the work environment and the largely flexible arrangement of the buildings also support the kind of interactive, project-related cooperation that aims to optimize the innovation process. Openness and transparency facilitate networking, while "multi-space" offices and "collaborative" laboratories foster interdisciplinary interaction. At the same time, parks, avenues, and streets with cafés and restaurants invite people to meet and exchange their ideas and knowledge. The well-being of associates is provided for through the creation of ergonomic workplaces and relaxation zones, and the provision of services, such as shopping opportunities and a fitness center. Last but not least, art also plays a part in helping to shape the Campus's ensemble of architecture and landscape design. As an integral part of the site, a localized collection of modern art and contemporary design is growing in close conceptual accord with the spatial design of the site and is aimed at inspiring unorthodox ideas through the power of analogy and association.

With its new Campus, Novartis is sending a signal to all its current and potential future associates that the core of our corporate culture is that ultimately unfathomable—and hence also never precisely measurable or controllable—thing called human creativity. The Campus places human beings and their well-being at the center, and signals expectations of creativity, diligence, and flawlessness in the work of all concerned through the high standards it demands of its architects, designers, and artists.

Whoever regularly passes through the Campus already senses today that a new kind of work atmosphere is emerging. This is reason enough for me to thank all those who have left their mark, and are leaving their mark, on the Campus project through their expertise and commitment: Vittorio Magnago Lampugnani, Wolfdietrich Schutz and his team, Peter Walker, Günther Vogt, Andreas Schulz, Harald Szeemann, Jacqueline Burckhardt, Alan Fletcher, Kaspar Schmid, and Michael Rock. And, of course, I am grateful to all the architects, designers, and artists involved, to the officials of the city and canton of Basel, who have always supported us, to the Campus team, and to all of Novartis's employees, because it is their work that has made it possible to realize this great project.