

Georgetown University

Washington DC,
United States

Comfort and advanced technology for a unique amphitheater in an historic Faculty of Medicine

Georgetown University is one of the most prestigious universities in the United States. Located in Washington DC, it has one of the most important schools of medicine in the country. Recently, the faculty inaugurated the renovated amphitheater in which lectures are held, renamed as W. Proctor Harvey Clinical Teaching Amphitheater in honor of the cardiologist Dr Harvey. It is a lecture hall which cost a total of \$10 million, of which \$ 8.5 million were donated by former students of the institution.



Technical details:

Name: W. Proctor Harvey Clinical teaching Amphitheater - Georgetown University

Location: Washington DC, United Kingdom

Architecture and Design: Smith Group

Construction: Patner Construction Inc.

Property: Georgetown University

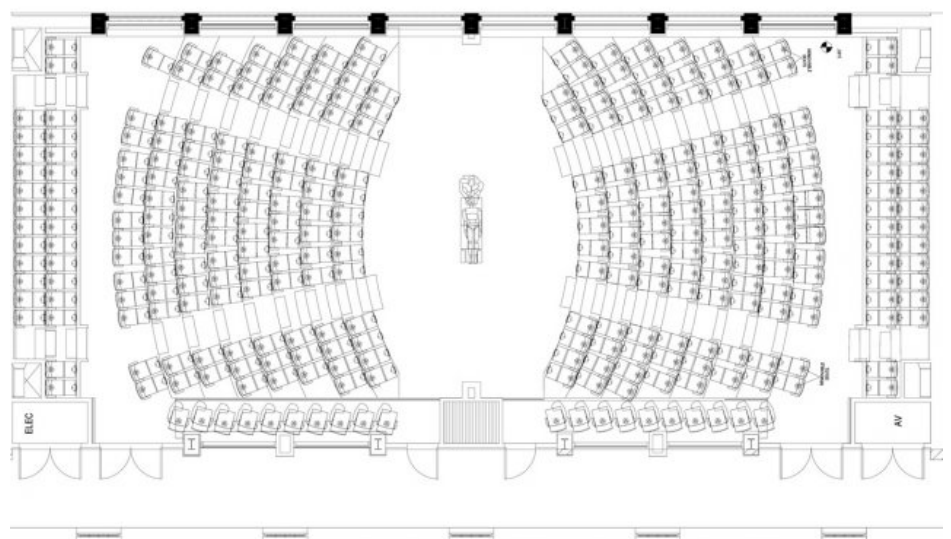
Total Surface Area: 6,600m²

Capacity: 308 seats

Product: 5071 Minispace + table F45

Photography: Prakash Patel

The project is unique, given that it has managed to convert a historic hall of a faculty built in 1930 into an amphitheater of the future equipped with the most advanced technology. The room is designed so that it can be divided into two, through an electronic sky wall which disappears at just the touch of a button. In this way, the capacity of the room can go back from holding an audience of 300 to 150.





Challenges and solutions

The main challenge of the architects was to understand and respect the history of Medical & Dental Building, a unique building that has undergone several renovations throughout its history, restoring the original amphitheater and equipping it with modern functionality and advanced technology, without losing its original spirit. To do this, it was essential to understand the geometry of the room and its function and carry out the necessary procedures which would result in a better interaction between teachers, students and the patient.

The interior architecture was designed to allow maximum acoustic quality and the best visibility. The use of advanced technology, with a multitude of screens which allow the student to capture all the details of a procedure, the inclusion of warm natural materials to create a cozy atmosphere, letting in previously covered natural light and with the possibility of splitting the amphitheater into two theaters thanks to a moving panel. All this made the desired transformation a success.

There have been several challenges to overcome with regard to the installation of the seats, since the amphitheater has a very sharp angle radius and each narrow tier has a different width. This fact, coupled with the steep gradient of the stands, hindered the configuration of the room to allow the best line of sight from each seat. In addition, given the technological equipment

needed for each seat, a large amount of cabling was necessary and this had to be completely hidden to the eyes of users.

Product supplied

In order to successfully implement this project, the Figueras USA team recommended the installation of the compact and comfortable MiniSpace seat, a folding chair, accompanied by the F45 work table. Figueras' experience as an engineering company was a key factor in dealing with this project successfully, since it had to use the design and its experience in technical solutions to modify a standard product, adapting it to the peculiarities of the room. The angle of the stands was taken into account when deciding the distribution of each seat and the experience of Figueras was essential in designing the project so that it didn't give an impression of having empty spaces in the rows of seats.

Given the height of the stands and the small space between rows, the back support of this compact seat was configured in a fixed position; normally this model has simultaneous movement between the seat and back support. For the same reason, the F45 tables were installed with an 87° tilt, much more vertical than usual. To adapt the seats to the tables, all seats are higher than usual. Each seat has its own internet connection and electrical supply. There is a small upper balcony which is also equipped with the same model, but given the little space available, a small lectern was recommended instead of a table in order to optimize the space.