

From an office building to the center of life and living: The Hawa Student Award 2023 was dedicated to repurposing

In cities around the world, living space is becoming scarce and square meters are becoming expensive. On the other hand, the demand for office space tends to decline. An opportunity for non-profit housing construction, which Hawa Sliding Solutions AG took as an opportunity to take up the topic for the sixth edition of the Hawa Student Award. Budding architects from Germany, Austria, and Switzerland were invited to find future-oriented solutions for the transformation of an office building into a residential building.

The special challenge of the task was to develop spatial concepts for new living models. This includes an environment that offers more than just living space. People want to live in sustainable buildings that allow for resource-saving lifestyle and form their own microcosm with the appropriate infrastructure. This also includes shops, medical facilities, co-working spaces, communal areas, visitor rooms, or offers for various services, such as childcare, exercise, car, scooter, or bicycle sharing.

Space for a whole life

The starting point for the students' considerations for the Hawa Student Award 2023 was a former office building from the 1960s in Zurich. The participants derived different forms of housing and infrastructure needs from fictitious living and life stories of two couples, a family of three and two individuals. During the fictitious planning, they could act freely; in contrast to previous competitions, no fixed spatial program had to be implemented. The simple structure of the office building with columns and concrete ceilings offered a range of design options. As a result ideas for a flexible and diverse use of the office building, which take into account the different life situations of the people, came about under the title "Space for a whole life".

Winning designs score with respect for the existing building stock

An international jury of six, chaired by Dominique Salathé, professor at the University of Applied Sciences and Arts Northwestern Switzerland, selected three winning designs from 23 submissions in an intensive process that took place in the Architekturforum Zürich. The committee favored projects with high flexibility of use and minimal intervention in the existing building stock.

The first prize, worth CHF 5,000, went to Malin Osterheider and Leonardo Stadler from Leibniz University Hanover. In their "Flexhuus Zürich" project, a new spatial structure is superimposed on the existing supporting structure for resource-saving multiple use. The jury praised the design as a good example of how to deal with the existing building. Jury member Peter Möller, Hawa's Co-CEO who will be leaving at the end of April 2023, was particularly pleased about the use of many sliding doors. They make it possible to separate or connect almost any number of rooms. This flexibility enables space-saving use of the space.

Dao Le and Christian Sternhagen, also from Leibniz University Hanover, received the second prize and CHF 4,000 for the project "S/M/L – Living in three zones". Kevin Wüthrich from the Lucerne University of Applied Sciences and Arts (Lucerne School of Engineering and Architecture) won third prize and CHF 3,000 with "Almost a family – Village in a house". Another six projects made it to the final round and received recognition and CHF 500 each.

The Hawa Student Award

Since 2010, the Hawa Student Award has been one of the advancement award for young architects in Germany, Austria, and Switzerland. Every two to three years, the company Hawa Sliding Solutions invites students specializing in architecture to the ideas competition, which explores future-oriented solutions on a current topic, such as flexible and sustainable living concepts, convertible rooms, temporary living, or Microliving.

At the Hawa Student Award 2023, experts from Germany, Austria, and Switzerland judged the work of the students. Chaired by Dominique Salathé, the jury consisted of: Hans Gangoly, Professor at Graz University of

Technology, Bettina Götz, Professor at College of Fine Arts, Professor Michael Schumacher, Leibniz University Hanover, Professor Andrea Deplazes, ETH Zurich, and Tina Gregoric Dekleva, Professor at TU Wien. Peter Möller, Co-CEO of Hawa Sliding Solutions AG, who is retiring at the end of April 2023, and Anke Deutschenbaur, Project Manager Hawa Student Award, accompanied the panel as professional judges. The total prize money was CHF 15,000.



Caption 1: In 2023, Hawa Sliding Solutions AG presented the Hawa Student Award for the sixth time. The task was to transform an office building into a residential building for new ways of life, while respecting the existing building stock. Photo: Hawa Sliding Solutions AG



Caption 2: On March 2, 2023, the winners of the Hawa Student Award 2023 received their awards at the Museum of Design Zurich. In the photo (from left to right): Jury President Dominique Salathé, Christian Sternhagen (2nd prize), Malin Osterheider and Leonardo Stadler (1st prize), Hawa CEO Ezequiel di Claudio and Kevin Wüthrich (3rd prize). Photo: Hawa Sliding Solutions AG



Caption 3: Hawa CEO Ezequiel Di Claudio (right) congratulates Leonardo Stadler and Malin Osterheider on the winning design at the Hawa Student Award 2023. Photo: Hawa Sliding Solutions AG



Caption 4: In the winning project, "Flexhuus Zürich", a new spatial structure is superimposed on the existing supporting structure. The jury praised the design as a good example of how to deal with the existing building. Jury member Peter Möller, Hawa's Co-CEO who will be leaving at the end of April 2023, was pleased about the use of many sliding doors. Photo: Hawa Sliding Solutions AG

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More than 60 product families form the basis for comprehensive solution competence which also serves the megatrends: Microliving & Fluid Spaces, Building in Existing Contexts, Energy Efficiency & Climate Protection as well as Inclusive Design. Hawa operates in more than 70 countries worldwide, with two production facilities in Switzerland (Mettmenstetten and Sirmach), foreign subsidiaries for North America (Dallas, USA), Asia and the Pacific region (Singapore) and the Middle East (Dubai, UAE), and with more than 200 sales and specialist partners. #Hawa Sliding Solutions AG, Untere Fischbachstrasse 4, 8932 Mettmenstetten, Switzerland – www.hawa.com