



Use: Amenity building

Size: 68,000 square feet

Certifications: WELL Building Gold (pending), LEED v4 Gold

Key health and wellness features: Daylight/extensive glazing, ventilation/improved air quality, primary health care center, fitness center, active staircase, marketplace services, career lab, nursing mothers room, Zen garden, energy-cued color palette, art exhibits

Cost: Not provided

Value added: Increased use of healthy building services, improved employee recruitment/retention, higher employee engagement/satisfaction, industry leadership

Genentech Building 34—the Hub

Building 34, the new doughnut-shaped building on Genentech's South San Francisco campus, is helping the biotech firm meet sustainability goals and set high standards for its healthy workspace and lifestyle efforts.

Nicknamed “the Hub,” the 68,000-square-foot, four-story campus community center is located in the center of Genentech's 200-acre U.S. headquarters campus. In collaboration with Genentech's site services team, the building was designed by Chicago-based Perkins+Will architects and built by San Francisco-based DPR Construction. It was certified LEED v4 Gold in August 2017 and is in the building performance verification stage for WELL Gold certification, anticipated in 2018.

“We are dedicated to the rigorous pursuit of science for all areas of our business,” says Carla Boragno, vice president of site services. “We liked the way WELL was scientific and evidence based, complemented LEED certification, and took sustainability to the next level.”

Genentech began planning Building 34 in 2013 by identifying specific goals focused on environmental sustainability and employee well-being. One stood out: to further differentiate Genentech in South San Francisco as a great place to work and to enhance the company's ability to attract and retain employees.

“Building upon our strong commitment to environmental sustainability and LEED certification, we recognized the impact that a healthy campus and building design have on the health of people who spend time there,” says Hub project team lead Marlene Kosinski, who is responsible for Genentech's on-site health and wellness and ergonomics programs. “Our employees are the company's number-one asset, and we believe we can impact 100 percent of our workforce, helping them to be at their best by making it easy to make healthy choices.”

Genentech's business case for healthy building certification included alignment with the project's four pillars—sustainability, well-being, community, and innovation—for the building and the company's culture. The company thought being an early adopter of WELL certification would position it at the forefront of innovation in the sustainable and healthy building movement. It also believed that achieving WELL certification would add measurable value to the health, well-being, productivity, and happiness of its employees. Leadership was reassured of the potential of healthy buildings to improve human health and wellness by the CogFx studies from Harvard University's T.H. Chan School of Public Health, which found that office workers in certified green buildings had higher scores for cognitive function, better environmental perceptions, and fewer health symptoms than those in high-performing, noncertified buildings.

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—Carla Boragno, vice president of Genentech site services



The Hub at Genentech's offices provides active fitness areas and quiet, meditative spots to help promote health and wellness on campus.

Health and Wellness Design Features

Genentech's healthy-building approach was developed to complement its strong environmental sustainability and health and well-being culture and policies. Most of the healthy and sustainable features of the building were not evaluated as individual line items only, but were integrated into decisions made throughout the design and construction process. That process focused on using healthy building materials: all were screened using the Perkins+Will precautionary list. The design team used universal design guidelines to create a welcoming and inclusive environment and employed active building guidelines to encourage movement.

Building 34's key healthy architecture, design, and program features include the following:

- A doughnut-shaped, glass-walled building that provides abundant natural light
- Views of San Francisco Bay and the campus
- Primary care and occupational health center, with physical therapy, chiropractic, and acupuncture
- First-floor marketplace with healthy food options, company store, bank, IT services bar, ergonomics showroom

The Value of Healthy Building

Genentech looked for value on investment (VOI) as the measurement of success for healthy building features in the Hub, particularly through use of building services. During the first year of operations, impact ranged from a 22 percent increase in use of the career lab to a 153 percent increase in use of the health center by employees compared with their previous locations on campus. The company expects that its commitment to employee health and well-being will

- Filtered water throughout the building to encourage employees to drink more while reducing waste by using reusable water bottles
- Natural ventilation with a three-story atrium
- Manual windows for employee access to fresh air
- Central active staircase that encourages employees to get up and move throughout the day
- 35,000-square-foot fitness center with an NCAA-regulation basketball/multisports court
- Zen-like meditation roof garden providing quiet space for employees to get fresh air
- Rooms for nursing mothers
- Career lab offering career consultation services
- Curated art exhibits throughout the building
- Color palette on each floor determined by "energy level," with highest red/orange energy level for the first-floor marketplace and calmest blue/green energy for the fourth-floor health center.

help it attract and retain talent, support employee engagement, and contribute to better worker health and lower health care costs.

Genentech also anticipates returns such as strong employee engagement scores, post-occupancy surveys that show high satisfaction levels, and greater use of services—especially the fitness center, health center, ergonomics showroom, and career lab.