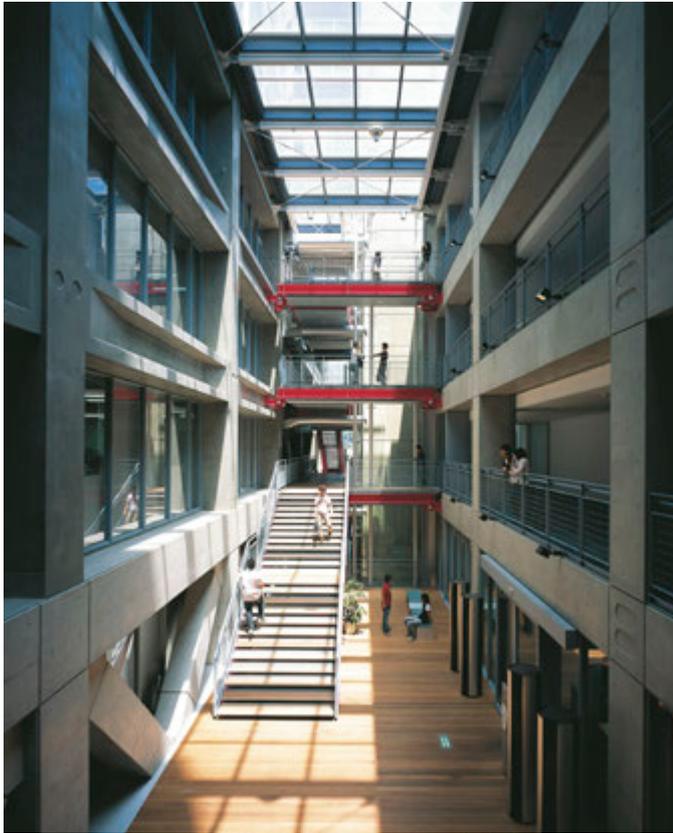




National Graduate Institute for Policy Studies

Tokyo, Japan



The scheme adheres to the prevailing scale of the area by placing the studio underground. The glass prism of the offices gives a strong image above ground.

Location
Tokyo, Japan

Date
1995 – 2001

Client
Ministry of Education,
Culture, Sports,
Science and Technology

Cost
¥9.6 billion
(£50.5 million approx)

Site Area
17,842m²

Building Area
31,925 m²

Co-Architect
Yamashita Sekkei

Structural Engineer
Yamashita Sekkei/BDSP/
Expedition

Services Engineer
Yamashita Sekkei/BDSP/
Expedition

Landscape Architect
Equipe Espace



The National Graduate Institute for Policy Studies (GRIPS) is a graduate school and research institute. GRIPS is an international centre of excellence for the education of future leaders in the policy arena, for the advancement of policy research and for the systematic collection and dissemination of policy-related information. The school is located in the Roppongi district of central Tokyo on a former army base.

The building is made up of two volumes – a 14-storey high-rise block to the west (mostly laboratory space) and a five-storey lower part (workshop space and administration) to the east. The high-rise block steps down towards the north, allowing sunlight to reach the entrance forecourt, while the five-storey block responds to the adjacent housing to the east.

The two blocks are connected by a glazed atrium, spanned by bridges connecting different departments. A multiple-use lecture hall is located on the lower level of the high-rise block. The top level of the lower block has a repeating sequence of angled, east-facing roofs, designed to maximise daylight for the workshop areas.

Panels of aluminium louvres clad most of the high-rise facades. Designed to reduce heat gain, they nonetheless allow users to enjoy excellent views over the green spaces of Aoyama Cemetery and the Shinjuku area beyond. Horizontal brise soleils are attached to the facades of the lower block, while the rest of the scheme's facades are clad with a mix of clear glazing and terracotta panels.

In order to minimise construction time, a pre-cast concrete frame and pre-cast terracotta panels were used. The building is also designed to resist seismic forces – steel K-bracing is expressed on core facades and a lattice of steel members within a circular pipe forms the centre of the concrete structure, increasing the building's ability to absorb seismic force without buckling.