

UFRGS Cultural Center is open to community



Old building of the Institute of Industrial Chemistry was revitalized and now has multipurpose rooms, exhibition spaces, auditoriums and studios

In August, 2018, the Cultural Center of UFRGS, a newest space of culture and art, was presented to the community of Porto Alegre and Rio Grande do Sul. Located where the former Institute of Industrial Chemistry (Campus *Centro* - Building 12,109) used to be, the new cultural complex launched activities last September, after a period of restoration and revitalization between 2015 and 2018. The execution of the restoration work was made possible with the aid of resources from the Rouanet Law, through the Project "Rescue of the Historical and Cultural Patrimony of UFRGS". UFRGS Cultural Center is devoted to host projects related to visual arts, theater, dance, music, literature, education and humanities.



The inauguration was attended by UFRGS President Rui Vicente Oppermann and UFRGS Vice-President Jane Tutikian, former UFRGS Presidents Carlos Alexandre Netto and José Carlos Hennemann, Porto Alegre Municipal Secretary of Culture, Luciano Alabarse, director of the Memorial of Rio Grande do Sul, Dilmar Bosco Portela, and other authorities. The UFRGS President thanked mainly the promoters of the work. In his words, the delivery of the building refurbishment work in view of new use ratifies UFRGS' public nature and broadens the integration of the university with society: "The new space, with its multipurpose features, plays an important role in the necessary relationship between UFRGS and the city of Porto Alegre," states Opperman.

During the inaugural event, UFRGS Superintendent of Infrastructure Edy Isaias Junior explained the process of restoration, from its conception to its conclusion, mentioning historical aspects of the building constructed between 1922 and 1924, as well as wishing the community a good experience with the building, "*as it has already been over the years*". Executive Vice President for Community Outreach Sandra de Deus praised the importance of the cultural center as an area in which art and culture are studied, discussed and created. For her, the continuity of actions depends on three factors: "Serenity to overcome obstacles; courage to see beyond narrow limits; and boldness to cope with complex times," she said, encouraging the university community to seek for self-reinvention. During the ceremony, there was a presentation of the UFRGS Orchestra of Cellos and the Ballet Group.

Historical rescue

The Rescue for Cultural and Historical Heritage Project is currently receiving donations for the Accessibility Program of the University Radio. The Project is coordinated by the Historic Patrimony Sector of the UFRGS Office of Infrastructure. It is supported by the Federal Culture Incentive Law, also known as the Rouanet Law, which enables companies and citizens to use a portion of their Income Taxes in favour of cultural actions.

The Cultural Center is created with the objective of offering the community a full schedule of events – comprised of initiatives promoted by UFRGS and external actors – that stimulate and preserve culture and art, in their most varied manifestations, also promoting the circulation of knowledge and the debate of ideas, valuing diversity and plurality. The space has specific rooms to hold corporate and academic events, exhibits, fairs, lectures, debates, workshops, courses, soirées, rehearsals and artistic presentations, as well as educational events and special projects. The coordinator of the Center is Carla Bello.

The Cultural Center's three floors, totaling 3,089 m², have spaces in various formats, all having high ceilings and large windows, providing natural lighting and a privileged view to the Farroupilha Park. The multipurpose rooms, the auditoriums and the recording studios have acoustic insulation, a climate control system and accessibility for people with disabilities. The space is also designed to host corporate and academic events, as it offers four auditoriums (with capacity for audiences between 60 and 165 people); seven multipurpose rooms (accommodating between 15 and 80 people); rooms for exhibits; a hall with supporting countertop and terrace overlooking the park, perfect for holding autograph sessions, exhibitions and social gatherings.

Building history

The construction of the Institute of Industrial Chemistry building was finished in 1924 and officially inaugurated in 1926 by the then President of Brazil, Washington Luis. In the 1940s, due to the need for more physical space, the building underwent its first refurbishment. In 1981, with the moving of the Institute of Chemistry to Campus do Vale, the building began to be used by administrative bodies, for multipurpose teaching activities and by some laboratories. Because there was no specific priority of use, interventions occurred in response to functional requirements that altered the original configuration and spatial organization of the building, disqualifying its architectural value.

In 1998, UFRGS started the project "Recovery of the Historical and Cultural Patrimony of UFRGS", with the objective of refurbishing its historical buildings, such as the former Institute of Industrial Chemistry. The project received donations from individuals and legal entities through direct cash entries and transfers or funded by the Rouanet Law. The refurbishment of the building started in 2015 and ended in May, 2018. In total, R\$ 11,559,622.59 were invested.

Translated by Lucas Desimon Mello, under the supervision and translation revision of Elizamari R. Becker (P.h.D.) – IL/UFRGS.

Universidade Federal do Rio Grande do Sul

Av. Paulo Gama, 110 - Bairro Farroupilha - Porto Alegre - Rio Grande do Sul
CEP: 90040-060 - Fone: +55 51 33086000

Directions

