

From outmoded storage cylinder to innovative knowledge hub

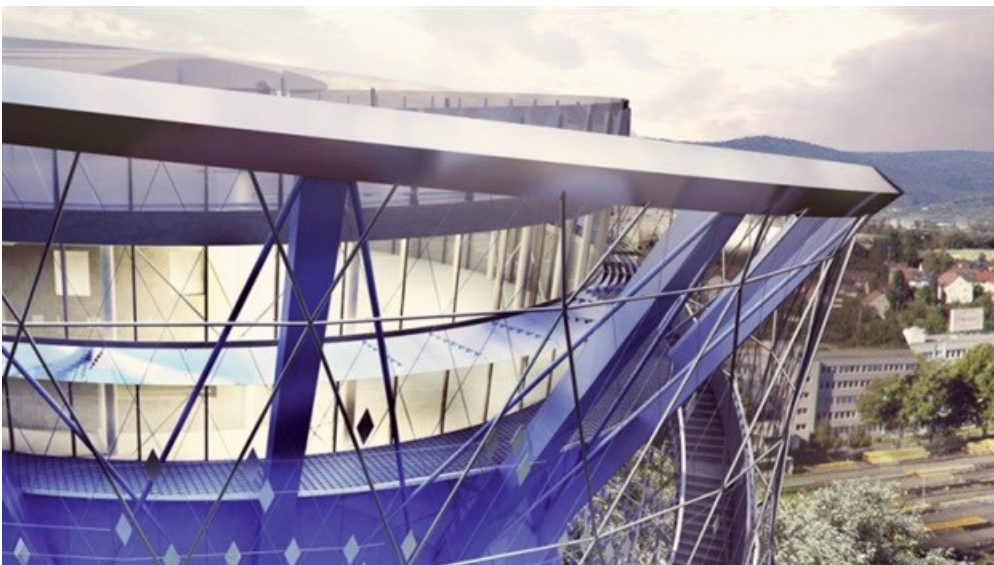
By [Emile Uys](#)

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[LAVA](#), or Laboratory for Innovative Architecture is a cutting-edge design firm with offices based in Stuttgart, Sydney, and Berlin. Known for their nature-inspired approach to geometry and their high regard for efficiency and sustainable solutions, LAVA has recently unveiled plans to replace an old container in the city of [Heidelberg](#), Germany with a new, revitalised landmark.

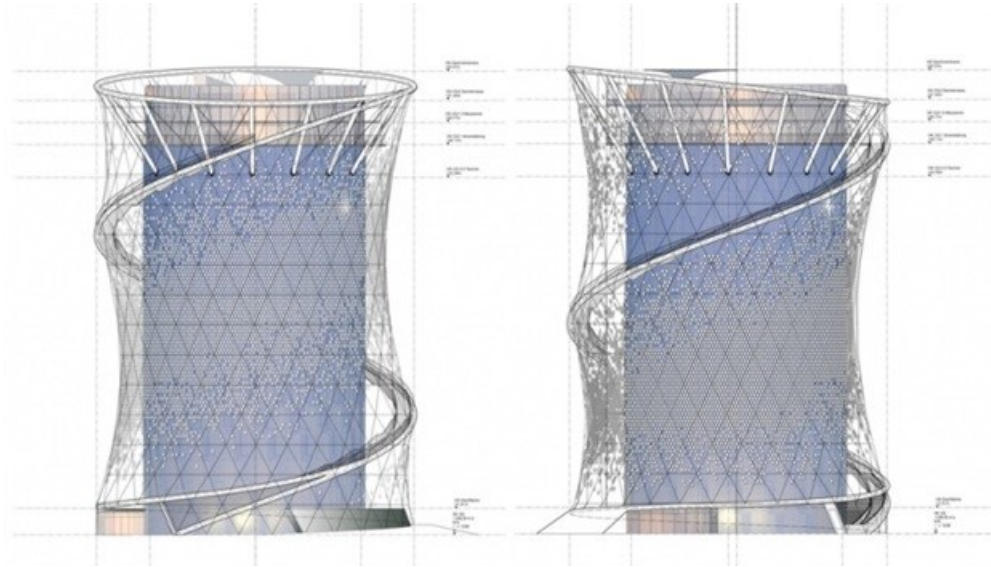


It will be a dynamic sculpture-cum-knowledge centre, complete with a multi-layered façade that moves constantly, and a learning-focused interior that will be accessible to the public. To better reflect modern sensibility and the proliferation of sustainable design (in addition to the library inside), the new building's exterior will be powered by solar and wind energy in tandem, forgoing the need for complex energy technology. The outer shell will consist of a vast network of cables that hold some 11,000 plates of stainless steel that will rotate in the wind for a shimmery, head-turning effect.



The project was commissioned by local energy company [Stadtwerke Heidelberg](#). The revamp is meant to replace the city's outmoded gas tower (which is a remnant of the area's energy management from the 1950s) while providing Heidelberg's

skyline a sleek architectural centrepiece that symbolises the transition towards a sustainable way of living. It is slated for completion in late 2019.



“We use naturally evolving structural systems such as snowflakes, spider webs and soap bubbles for new building typologies and structures – the geometries in nature that generate both efficiency and beauty,” [say the LAVA designers](#) regarding their inspirations. “The complex interplay of movement, light, and shadow [of the Heidelberg tower] is generated by the sun and the wind. Visitors will reach an elliptical entrance level where two elevators take them to a roof terrace with large staggered terraces, event spaces and a bistro.”

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