

Büro Ole Scheeren

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NANJING NEXUS: BÜRO OLE SCHEEREN WINS INTERNATIONAL DESIGN COMPETITION WITH OCTAGONAL SUPER-TALL TOWER IN CHINA

Ole Scheeren's design for the 350m Nanjing Jiangbei New Financial Center merges local tradition and culture with a futuristic vision for a mixed-use skyscraper as an iconic symbol of Nanjing's new urban identity.



Nanjing, China's former Capital of the South, is a bustling trading center located on the shores of the Yangze River and holds a pivotal position within the Yangtze River Economic Belt. It is a city with a dual core: Its historic center will be complemented by the new Jiangbei District, a contemporary urban center that integrates culture, tradition, identity, ecology, and nature with the spirit of innovation. Ole Scheeren's Nanjing Nexus was chosen as the winning scheme by an international jury highlighting the design's qualities in creating a future landmark of the city through a relationship between local culture, landscape, and the river. Through its architecture, it aims to connect the past with the challenges and expectations of the future.

FUSING HISTORY AND TRADITION WITH AN INTEGRATED AND RADICALLY CONTEMPORARY ARCHITECTURE

The architectural form of Nanjing Nexus departs from the typical rectangular tower by trimming its shaft into an octagon and carving each facet into a concave bay, harnessing the energy of the context, and embracing the surrounding city. The eight bays are horizontally split and vertically shifted to create offsets and form a skyline, with large Urban Windows opening up to accommodate diverse programs and communicate the activity of the building to the city. Ole Scheeren creates a dialogue between the small scale of a historic village and the large scale of the vertical, contemporary city, uniting them by converging history and modernity in a new whole.

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Abundant vegetation further transforms the Urban Windows into vertical gardens, a contemporary interpretation of the garden culture and pavilions of the Jiangsu province. The integration of specific typologies of landscape in the tower serves sustainability strategies on multiple levels: ecological, social but also historical.

“Nanjing Nexus is a building that explores the question how contemporary architecture can absorb, and in fact amplify, historical context and meaning by fusing the qualities of the past with the requirements of a future-oriented workspace within the verticality of a super-tall office tower. The convergence of past and present is not merely about formal gestures – it is about creating actual experiences and spaces with specific emotive and experiential qualities.” says Ole Scheeren, principal of Buro-OS.



ELEGANT SIMPLICITY

Nanjing Nexus' octagonal form allows highly efficient floor plans and clearly structured programming. Office spaces are zoned into four standardized rectangular Work Clusters, complemented by four diagonally rotated interactive Innovation Bays. At the top of the tower, a hotel exploits multi-directional views and offers a spectacular roof terrace with pool deck, restaurant, and gardens – a public space 350 meters above the city.

The concave surfaces of the three-dimensionally textured facade are designed to optimize the building's solar performance and reduce structural wind loads, while reflecting light in reminiscence of the sparkles and ripples of the Yangtze River's waves.

Nanjing Nexus presents an elegantly simple, economical, and adaptable design that can be further translated to multiple scales and functions. It's immediate neighbor, a 100-meter-tall satellite tower, is conceived as an adaptation of the octagonal figure to create a small-scale version of the super-tall tower. Together, they form a new landmark in Jiangbei's future district of Nanjing.

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