



This design studio explores the transformation of existing university buildings into shared spaces for learning, research, and academic residences for the University of Ljubljana, Slovenia. The project focuses on the adaptive reuse of two currently underutilised university-owned sites that will become available following the relocation of the Academy of Fine Arts and Design to a new, consolidated location.

The two proposed sites of design interventions differ significantly in their spatial and urban context. One is located in Ljubljana's city centre, close to key cultural and governmental institutions; the other lies at the city's edge, between a protected urban forest and a major city arterial, within an area encircled by industrial heritage. Despite their distinct spatial and urban contexts, both sites consist of buildings originally designed for a non-academic purpose and today remain significantly underused.

The University of Ljubljana is organised as a decentralised, polycentric campus, a model of spatial development it shares with the city itself, comprising 26 faculties and academies distributed across Ljubljana. While this structure enables a balanced integration of approximately 37,000 students and 7,000 employees within the urban fabric, it lacks shared university-wide spaces that support informal learning, interdisciplinary exchange, and student interaction. Unlike traditional compact campuses, where collective academic life is spatially intertwined, Ljubljana's model requires alternative approaches to creating common academic environments.

To address this challenge, the studio proposes new additions in form of contemporary learning and research centres designed to act as shared hubs within the existing university network. Drawing inspiration from case studies of various international examples, students will explore how adaptive reuse can generate inclusive and interdisciplinary spaces that extend beyond secondary reuse and respond to both local context and broader urban strategies.

Through spatial and programmatic reinterpretation, the two sites are envisioned as emerging university districts that combine learning and research facilities with supporting guest academic residences. Such interventions reinforce the polycentric development model of the University of Ljubljana while introducing new programmatic nodes organically integrated into the city's urban structure.

A key reference for the studio is the renowned adaptation of Križanke complex, designed by Josef Plečnik, an early example of sensitive adaptive reuse in Ljubljana, where educational, cultural, and public programmes are interwoven within the historic urban fabric. This case study serves as a conceptual and spatial framework for integrating academic functions into the city while maintaining a strong public dimension.

Where Students Meet

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Entwerfen • 253.089 • 10 ECTS • SS2026
Excursion • 08.05-10.05 • Ljubljana

Kick-off • 12.03.2026 • 9:00 AM / Thu
Mid-term Review • 20.05.2026 • 9:00 AM / Wed
Final Review • 24.06.2026 • 9:00 AM / Wed

Weekly Meeting • on Thursdays • Room: AC0401
Further information will follow at the Kickoff Event