

BLIJ-DA

Healthy and creative workspace for future Breda.

Future work aims for life, health, and fun.

In the nineteenth century, after the establishment of CSM sugar factory, 't Zoet became a crucial source of prosperity and employment for the city. During that period, working meant dedication, hard work, and sacrifice. CSM not only brought sweetness to the city with its candy production but also resulted in a nauseating smell during the annual beet campaigns.

Today, after the demolition of the old factory, the site has transformed into a unique identity of 'rawness' through various activities. It has evolved into more than just a 'working' environment. People seem to gradually embrace the presence of this post-industrial recreational space along the Mark in the city centre, in addition to the existing historical and cultural elements.

Simultaneously, the dilemma of balancing life and work presents several challenges. Individuals face health issues due to the relentless pursuit of pure efficiency, enduring mental stress, and struggling to find a harmonious work-life balance. The growing trend of remote work, while offering flexibility and eliminating commutes, raises concerns about the blurred boundaries between professional and personal life, potentially leading to social problems as people isolate themselves in digital bubbles, lacking real-life interactions.

The future of Breda aims to become the international hotspot of Applied Technology and Creativity (TT&C). Young and talented individuals are flocking to the city, in search of living and working spaces that cater to the demands of the future. In this context, 't Zoet holds immense potential to define the city as the 'working cathedral,' blending working with recreational identity, symbolising a vibrant hub for innovative and creative endeavours.

The prevailing working environment often revolves around the spatialization of familiar processes, and production patterns, and operates as a mere production unit. However, we firmly believe that a working environment should go beyond merely serving work-related programs and actively contribute to the urban environment. Attracting young talents in the creative industry demands an innovative space that sparks inspiration. The openness of the building will foster unintended social interactions. A dynamic and mutually beneficial working environment will establish a symbiotic relationship with the urban landscape, promoting both individual well-being and the overall enrichment of the community.

In 't Zoet, we envision the future of workspaces to be open, green, inclusive, versatile, calm, relaxed, and enjoyable, which is unlike any other in today's world.

Within the building environment, we want people:

Work in a healthy manner: In today's fast-paced and anxiety-ridden working life, well-being is of utmost importance for everyone. Our aim is to create a work environment that prioritises the maintenance of both physical and mental health. By offering active sport place and relaxing meditation spaces within the workplace, we seek to alleviate stress and release pressure, enabling employees to flourish and thrive.

Work through interaction: Sharing, communication, and collaboration among individuals ignite fresh ideas and inspirations within the creative industry. Different users, with diverse backgrounds, contribute to 'BLIJ-DA' creating infinite inspiration and possibilities for the future.

Work in an 'unknown' space: Creativity thrives on freedom in the workplace. In 'BLIJ-DA' besides the multifunctional workspace, we still maintain a significant amount of 'undefined' open space that doesn't restrict the program. Users (residents and workers) should be the ones defining their own usage, enabling free access to spaces and facilitating spontaneous displays and exchanges on multiple levels.

At the bigger scope, 'BLIJ-DA' should bring about:

A working and living space in a healthy manner: 'BLIJ-DA' expands upon the leisurely and relaxed ambiance to the north of the city's train station, establishing a fresh cultural and recreational destination for the city. The 'Working Cathedral' directly integrates with the city's green spaces and recreational systems, promoting a positive ecological impact. Furthermore, it offers a plethora of activities in vertical spaces, such as rooftop events and small-group gatherings, a green slope featuring intriguing wandering routes and delightful sculptures, as well as a natural riverbank and a floating deck on the water.

Public-oriented and inclusive location: The future 'Working Cathedral' will be a multi-functional building designed to accommodate various users, ranging from individual artists to start-up and scale-up offices in the creative and innovative industries. Through a diverse array of programs, it will attract a wide range of individuals to come together, interact, and draw inspiration. Furthermore, 'BLIJ-DA' will be open to everyone, inviting all to engage and find inspiration within its premises. It will serve as a dynamic indoor and outdoor event space, fostering various-scale pop-up activities and exhibitions that appeal to people for different reasons.

Iconic and representative of the city's spirit: it will serve as a recognizable symbol for Breda, acting as a landmark in a non-traditional manner. The branding here revolves around a place brimming with possibilities, yet not entirely confined to a single definition. It symbolizes the fusion of Breda's history, present, and future through various elements: the green slope represents the history of the marshy grassland area at the very beginning, the usage of the existing foundation reflects the city's old industrial identity, the incorporation of small scattered buildings pays homage to Breda's historical building pattern, and the inclusion of multi-program spaces showcases a promising future for Breda.