

Library to Learning Centre

Six years later



Aalto-yliopisto
Aalto-universitetet
Aalto University

Kirsi Heino

18.10.2022

- **Library building designed by Alvar Aalto, built in 1970**
- **Only minor renovations until 2015**



A!

**Aalto-yliopisto
Aalto-universitetet
Aalto University**

**KIRJASTO
Bibliotek
Library**

The birth of Aalto University (and the library)

- **Merger of three universities 2010**
 - Helsinki School of Economics
 - Helsinki University of Technology
 - University of Art and Design
- **Merger of three university libraries**
 - Three campuses
 - Each one had the best possible ways of working (and the others had not)
 - Getting to know each other took quite a while

The beta version

- **Decision (2012) to move all schools and services to the same campus**
- **The library would also have just one location**
- **Good results of an “experiment”**: a student hub within a campus library
- **The *Learning Centre beta* opened 2015, and served as a temporary space during the renovation**

Architects

Three architecture offices were involved in the project

- **Kuudes kerros (sixth floor, now only Kuudes) was responsible for the service design**
- **NRT was main designer**
- **JKKM was interior designer**

Service design

- **The planning of the renovation started as a service design project**
- **200 customer interviews**
- **23 new product ideas**
- **new service concept**
- **customer in the centre, not the collections**
 - “Why do the books always get the best places?”

Changes in the building

- **One of the storage floors removed**
- **Customer service point moved from 2nd floor to lobby**
- **Printed collection reduced from 16 to 5 km**
 - Less space for collections, more for customers
 - Usage of collections reduced >70% from 2002
- **Open multi-purpose space instead of closed collection space**
- **Staff working space: no dedicated rooms or even tables, space can be used by all Aalto staff**
- **Some parts of the building had to be preserved (architect: Alvar Aalto)**

Before: The underground floor



A?

After: The Makerspace



Before: The lobby.

Where do I go from here?



First version of the customer service point



Second version of the customer service point



Before and after: the plans

- **24/7 room: not used very much, now a paper store**
- **Visual Resources Centre: not as popular as expected**
- **no Café at the moment**
- **the cave: very popular**
- **silent reading space: more popular than expected**
- **service point: accessible for customers**

Trends

- **Visitors: 214 000 (2010) -- > 380 000 (2018) (+77%)**
- **Service encounters: 19 000 (2018) (5% of visitors)**
- **Number of loans: -70% (2002-2018)**
- **Use of electronic resources: +600% (2002-2018)**
- **Number of employees has decreased**
- **No new recruitments -- > personnel gets older**

Organizational change

- **Aalto University Library / Learning Centre ceased to exist as an organization 1.1.2018**
- **No library director**
- **Services and 61 employees divided between four units and eight teams**
- **Tasks and duties rearranged**

The effects of change

- **Flow of information has worsened**
- **Service hours shorter**
 - Opening hours longer
 - No negative feed-back from customers
- **The “librarian identity”?**

The future?

- The needs of the customers change.
 - Space has become more important.
 - Printed collections are less important.
 - open science?
 - new requirements for staff competence
-
- Are libraries still needed?