



Scuola di Architettura

Università degli studi di Firenze

FLORENCE

School of Architecture



The University of Florence is one of the largest universities in the Italian higher education system, with around 55,000 students.

Among its most distinguished academic structures is the School of Architecture, which has a long and prestigious history. Officially established in June 1930, its origins can be traced back to the founding of the Accademia delle Arti e del Disegno in 1563, initiated by Cosimo de' Medici under the guidance of Giorgio Vasari, where architecture was already taught. The academic profile of architectural studies in Florence began to take shape in 1907 with the establishment of a Special Course in Architecture. In 1927-28, the Scuola Superiore di Architettura was created to meet the city's cultural needs. In 1936, it was formally incorporated into the University of Florence as the Faculty of Architecture. In 2010 the Faculty was reorganized into the Department of Architecture (DIDA) and School of Architecture. They integrate all disciplines related to the built environment: architecture, design, urban planning, landscape architecture, restoration.

Studying architecture in Florence means receiving high-level training in one of the world's most beloved cities – a place rich in artistic and cultural heritage that has, in recent years, become an important cosmopolitan center and a hub of economic and entrepreneurial innovation.

Campuses

Florence - Santa Teresa



The site's history dates back to 1620, when Maria Francesca Guardì donated land within Florence's 14th-century walls, in the Santa Croce district, to found a monastery dedicated to St. Teresa. The church and convent were designed by architect Giovanni Coccapani.

In 1808, the convent was suppressed by the French government, later reopened, and partially used as a municipal school. It was permanently closed in 1865 and converted into a remand prison. Between 1866 and 1897, three additional buildings were constructed, including prison cells and workshops for carpentry, shoemaking, and mechanics.

The prison remained in use until 1984–85, when inmates were moved to Sollicciano. The site was then granted to the University of Florence and, in 1992, successfully repurposed as an educational complex, thanks to its ample, adaptable spaces.

The most recent renovation, led by Professor Alberto Breshi of the University of Florence, aimed to clearly distinguish the old from the new. For example, the original office and faculty rooms were preserved, while a new building section with markedly different proportions was introduced: a triple-height connecting volume that spans the full height of the existing structure.

Florence - Santa Verdiana



The history of the Santa Verdiana complex begins in 1395, when Florentine notary Niccolò Manetto di Buonagiunta acquired the former monastery of the Vallombrosan monks to house a community of nuns. By 1400, the building and adjoining church were completed and dedicated to Saint Giovanni Gualberto and Blessed Verdiana, a 13th-century anchoress from Castelfiorentino.

In 1460, Cosimo the Elder expanded the complex, enclosing the garden with walls and adding a cloister supported by octagonal pillars with acanthus-leaf capitals – still marked today by a Medici coat of arms on Via dell'Agnolo.

After centuries of change, the convent was definitively closed in 1865 and converted into a women's prison, which altered its historic spaces. When the new prison in Sollicciano opened in 1983, Santa Verdiana was transferred to the University of Florence and assigned to the Faculty of Architecture.

Since then, the complex has undergone major restoration by Roberto Maestro and Domenico Cardini, to recover its historical and architectural identity. In 2023, a new entrance was opened onto Largo Annigoni, reconnecting the site with the city.

The church of Santa Verdiana and the cloister remain accessible and are regularly used for exhibitions and student activities.

Florence - Palazzo Vegni and Piazza Brunelleschi



The building, now part of the Faculty of Architecture, is named after its last owner, engineer Angelo Vegni, co-founder of Officine Galileo. Originally built in 1292 by Gherardino Gianni through the merger of three family homes into a house-tower, the structure underwent major changes when Vegni redesigned the façade, removing many medieval features. In the late 1980s, it was carefully restored and adapted for university use.

The campus at Piazza Brunelleschi was originally the Camaldolese Monastery of the Angels, founded in 1295. After serving healthcare functions from 1867, the site began its transformation for university use after World War I, with major works completed post-World War II, including the current Faculty of Architecture building with its materials and structural testing labs.

A standout feature of the square is the Rotonda, designed by Brunelleschi in 1434, which currently hosts the Museo de' Medici.

Calenzano - Design Campus



Inaugurated on October 23, 2012, the campus stands out in the Florentine industrial plain, an area rich in companies that are leaders in the Made in Italy sectors. Between solid and empty volumes, glass walls, and metal cladding—highlighted by the unmistakable red color of the façade—the word “Design” appears prominently. The cornerstone of the building, placed at the entrance, comes from the paving of the popular school founded by Don Lorenzo Milani in San Donato. The architecture originated from a proposal by Elio Di Franco, developed into a project by Galileo Pacini, with interior design by Alessandra Rinaldi.

Inside are laboratories, classrooms, an auditorium, a rooftop garden, a design café, residential and service areas, and the Design Museum dedicated to the history and evolution of Italian product design (a project supported by the Anna Querici Foundation), covering a total of 4,500 square meters. In addition, the Mini Car Design Museum is located within the same complex. Established as a teaching tool within the Car Design Laboratory led by Professor Massimo Grandi at the Design Campus in Calenzano, The exhibits highlight themes such as aerodynamic research, mass motoring, the birth and development of Italian Style, and the contributions of brands like Porsche and Ferrari.

Not just a center for teaching and research, but a true “cittadella del design.”

Prato - PIN



The PIN – Prato University Campus was founded in 1992 as an initiative of the Municipality of Prato, the Province, and the Chamber of Commerce, with the goal of bringing university education directly into the Prato area, historically known for its textile and manufacturing district. The aim was to foster the development of human capital and to establish a stable bridge between academia and the local production system.

In 1997, the University of Florence officially joined the consortium as the majority stakeholder, strengthening the academic foundation of PIN and integrating regular university courses more firmly into the city’s educational landscape. This marked a major step forward, enabling the launch of degree programs and research-related academic activities. In 1999, PIN changed its legal status to become a limited liability consortium, opening up participation to new partners, such as banks, trade associations, and other public and private institutions. This broadened the base of stakeholders and reinforced PIN’s role as a hub connecting the university with the region.

Over the following years, PIN expanded beyond undergraduate and graduate programs, developing a wide range of master’s degrees, executive education programs, and applied research activities through numerous laboratories and competence centers, which have become key reference points for businesses and institutions alike.

Library and DidaLabs

Library of Architecture - San Clemente palace

The library was established alongside the founding of the Faculty of Architecture in 1936. Although it incorporated the book collections of the institutions that preceded the Faculty (the Royal Higher School of Architecture and the Higher Institute of Architecture), it initially consisted of a modest collection housed in a single room at the via Ricasoli 56 location.

The library's early decades, up to its "rebirth" after the 1966 flood, can be explored through the virtual exhibition "A River of Books".

Today, the collection—specialized in architecture—is the most comprehensive in all of Tuscany. Starting from a core of classical texts, it has been expanded with works on the history and criticism of architecture, urban planning, the history of cities and territories, building technologies, interior architecture, design, and fashion. There is also a particularly rich section dedicated to contemporary art. An important collection of architectural sources has also been developed over time through research in the antiquarian book market. It holds, through donations, numerous archival collections from the 20th century of significant interest for the study of decorative arts and architecture.

The Architecture campus is also home to the School's thesis archive.

Laboratory of Architectural survey

Scientific Coordinator
Stefano Bertocci

Santa Verdiana
Piazza Lorenzo Ghiberti 27
50122 Florence

The laboratory provides support for regular teaching activities by offering equipment and technical staff for the preparation and execution of survey operations and data processing. These services are available for degree programs, internships, workshops, and post-graduate training.

Laboratory of Architecture Restoration and Conservation

Scientific Coordinator
Susanna Caccia Gherardini

Santa Teresa, via della
Mattonaia, 8
50122 Florence

The Laboratory for Architecture, Restoration, and Conservation [LARC] is involved in the development and implementation of knowledge-based projects and diagnostic plans aimed at assessing the state of preservation of artifacts. This includes on-site and laboratory investigations intended to inform the restoration project design.

Materials and Structures Testing Laboratories

Scientific Coordinator
Mario De Stefano

Piazza Brunelleschi, 6
50122 Florence

The Official Laboratory for Materials and Structural Testing offers students and researchers at the University of Florence the opportunity to carry out experimental investigations on both traditional and innovative construction materials, structural components, and full-scale or scaled structures (such as vaults, arches, domes, panels, etc.).

Mediterranean Living Technologies Laboratory

Scientific Coordinator
Paola Gallo

Santa Verdiana
Piazza Lorenzo Ghiberti , 27
50122 Florence

This LAB is a facility dedicated to research, education, and the transfer of knowledge focused on a new construction culture rooted in sustainability principles tailored to the Mediterranean environmental, social, and economic context. TAM operates in the field of integrated technological development for Mediterranean living, developed within the ABITA Interuniversity Research Centre (of DIDA).

Laboratory of models for Architecture

Scientific Coordinator
Antonio Capestro

Plesso di Santa Teresa
via della Mattonaia 8
50121 Florence

The Architectural Model Laboratory was established to provide theoretical and scientific support to students, faculty, and researchers on the subject of architectural modeling. Within the laboratory spaces, those wishing to create a scale model of their project can find all the necessary equipment to develop their ideas. Wood, resin, and concrete are just a few of the materials that can be shaped.

Laboratory of models for Design

Scientific Coordinator
Gianpiero Alfarano

Design Campus
via Sandro Pertini, 93
50041 - Calenzano (FI)

The Design Model Laboratory is a scientific and educational facility that provides the opportunity to acquire the skills needed to create three-dimensional models, allowing for real-world verification of the volume and proportions of objects. It supports the study of their placement in actual space, giving tangible form to project presentations..

Laboratory of Architecture and Self-Construction

Scientific Coordinator
Leonardo Zaffi

Santa Teresa
via della Mattonaia, 8
50121 Florence

The LAA is a facility dedicated to research, education, and knowledge transfer within the Department of Architecture (DIDA), and is part of DIDALABS, the laboratory system of the Department of Architecture. The Laboratory of Architecture and Self-Construction aims to promote, disseminate, and support the development of methodologies and the culture of self-construction in architecture.

Laboratory LIA-BIM

Scientific Coordinator
Carlo Biagini

Santa Verdiana -
Piazza Lorenzo Ghiberti n°
27 - 50121 Florence

The Architectural Computing Laboratory – Building Information Modeling (LIA-BIM) offers students and all DIDA staff a comprehensive system of IT services for architecture, design, graphics, and BIM. It also features a fully equipped printing center dedicated to the production of high-quality, large-format outputs.

Useful tips for you exams

Where to print

Professors generally prefer reviewing projects on printed paper, so bringing a printed copy is recommended. For exams, students usually need both printed project boards and a physical model made from materials like foam board, balsa wood, or via 3D printing. A list of nearby copy shops and university printing services follows.

Services offered by UniFi

- **LIA - University Print Office**
To print at LIA you have to book an appointment. LIA has discounted prices for students.
- **Laboratory models for architecture**
Please note that a valid safety course certificate is required to access the lab facilities.
- **Laboratory for Design**
The laboratory offers discounted rates for students.

Copy shop and* Stores near Florence Campuses

Copisteria Universale Ghiberti

Copisteria Universale offers print services. It is right next to Santa Verdiana and a 2-minute walk from Santa Teresa.

- **Dr Plot**
Dr Plot offers print services. It's right next to Copisteria Universale.
- **Charteus Shop**
Charteus is a well-stocked stationery shop that also offers materials for model making. It also holds a collection of class notes and study materials gathered over the years.

Copy shop and* Stores near Calenzano Campus

Erre Pi Centro Copie

Centro Copie is a print and copy shop located in Calenzano, just a short walk from the Design Campus of the University of Florence. It's a convenient spot for students needing fast, reliable printing services.

Copy shop and* Stores near Prato Campus

Pratocopy - Print and graphic

They offer an online printing service and are among the most affordable options around the Prato campus.

Where to study

Study Rooms at the University Campuses

The university campuses offer several spaces where students can study and meet with group members for studio projects. Below is a list of study rooms available near the main architecture buildings:

- **Aula Gronchi (Room 5)** – Santa Teresa campus
- **Study room, corridor** – Santa Teresa campus
- **Room 12** – Santa Verdiana campus
- **Cloister of Santa Verdiana** – a open-air space ideal for group work
- **Library at Palazzo San Clemente** – offers reading rooms and reference materials for architecture students

Study Rooms in the City

In addition to the university facilities, Florence, Prato and Calenzano offer several public and semi-public study spaces where students can read, work, or meet for group projects. Here are some of the most popular ones among university students:

- **Biblioteca delle Oblate**
Florence, Via dell' Oriuolo, 24
The Oblate Library is a public library located in the historic center of Florence, just a few steps from Piazza Duomo. It is housed in the 14th-century complex of the Oblate, from which it takes its name. The study area is situated on the top floors, where there is also a café offering a magnificent view of the Duomo.

- **Biblioteca Nazionale**

Piazza dei Cavalleggeri, 1

The National Central Library of Florence (BNCF), is one of the most important libraries in Italy and Europe. Along with the National Library of Rome, it serves as a central national library.

It holds approximately 8,999,667 printed volumes, including 2,703,899 pamphlets, 25,311 manuscripts, 4,089 incunabula, 29,123 16th-century editions, and over 1,000,000 autographs. As of 2024, the shelving in its storage facilities covers 138 kilometers of linear space, with an annual increase of over 1.5 kilometers. Registration is required initially, but afterward, it allows free access.

- **Biblioteca Lazzerini**

Via Puccetti, 3, Prato

The origins of the library date back to 1836. It was founded on the private collection of Alessandro Lazzerini (1766–1836), a high-ranking Roman prelate of Prato descent, who bequeathed his library to the city of Prato. For more than a century, various circumstances prevented the creation of a true public library from Monsignor Lazzerini's collection, which included over 8,000 volumes, primarily on legal and ecclesiastical subjects.

It wasn't until the 1970s that the municipal administration decided to establish a large public library designed to meet the reading and information needs of all citizens, with materials available in the main European languages. In 2009, following the expansion and renovation of the former Compolmi textile factory, the new headquarters of the City Library was officially opened.

- **CiviCa – Calenzano's Public Library.**

A place for meeting and socializing, a vibrant cultural hub open to everyone. It's a point of reference for gathering, studying, reading a book, borrowing a movie, catching up on the news, doing homework, attending a performance, joining a course, watching a film, or browsing the internet for free.

Useful tips for your freetime

Where to hang out

Florence is a lively student city with plenty of opportunities to go out and make friends, especially for Erasmus students. The Sant'Ambrogio neighborhood, where the two architecture campuses are located, is one of the liveliest areas for nightlife, along with Santo Spirito and San Frediano (on the other side of the Arno River). Below, we list some areas particularly popular among architecture students.

Although Prato is primarily a manufacturing city rather than a university town, it also has a vibrant nightlife, especially in its historic center. In Calenzano, while more off the beaten path, there are still a few popular gathering spots.

Meeting point • Murate Art District and Murate Plaza in Florence

The complex, owned by the municipality, includes the former 15th-century monastery that was converted into a prison from 1883 to 1985. It is arranged around two squares—Piazza delle Murate and Piazza della Madonna della Neve—separated by Via delle Vecchie Carceri, along with the Chapel of the Madonna della Neve. MAD – Murate Art District is located within the old convent and spans three floors. It houses the *Carcere Duro*, a powerful testament to the Resistance carried out by the founding fathers of the Italian Republic during the Fascist era.

In addition to hosting numerous art and photography exhibitions and cultural events—such as theater and



dance workshops, lectures, and conferences—it is also home to the Café Letterario, a restaurant and bar where students often gather to study in the afternoon and enjoy live music in the evening.

- **Via Borgo la Croce and Sant'Ambrogio Square**

Borgo la Croce is the street that connects Piazza Sant'Ambrogio to Piazza Beccaria. Before the city walls were demolished under the urban plan by Giuseppe Poggi, it was one of the main routes linking the city to the surrounding countryside. Perhaps due to its marginal position relative to the historic center, it has preserved its lively, local character, untouched by mass tourism. The street is home to numerous restaurants, wine bars, and venues that serve as a hub for architecture students' evening life.

- **Largo Annigoni**

Largo Annigoni is a large urban open space overlooked by the Santa Verdiana campus. It hosts the Sant'Ambrogio Flea Market, which found a permanent location here after being held for many years in Piazza dei Ciompi. Around the square, you'll find several restaurants and a long-standing spot for the Architecture faculty—I Macci, a place where you might even see some professors lingering over project reviews. Largo Annigoni also provides access to the Sant'Ambrogio underground parking garage, a convenient option for those coming to the city center by car.

In the summer, the square often comes alive with street performers and spontaneous singing, adding to its vibrant, informal atmosphere.

- **Lungarni**

It's during the summer that Florence truly comes to life. Starting in May, the *lungarni*—the streets along the Arno River—fill up with various temporary venues. The ones closest to the university campuses include Habana 500, where you can relax to Latin American music or join a game on the beach volleyball courts; il Molo and La Toraia, featuring a variety of street food stands; il Fiorino and Il Tempio, the perfect spot for a lemonade or a drink

Meeting point in Prato

- **Via Settesoldi and Santa Maria delle Carceri Square**

Piazza and Via Settesoldi are the heart of Prato's nightlife. Located just a short walk from the PIN campus and the Prato Porta al Serraglio train station, the area is home to numerous bars and pubs, perfect for an aperitivo or an evening out. Especially lively on Fridays and weekends, it attracts not only university students but also many young people from outside the academic community.

Meeting point in Calenzano

An evening in the historic center of Calenzano is a pleasant and relaxing experience. While the town is quiet and peaceful, it offers a variety of charming restaurants and cozy spots where you can enjoy local cuisine and unwind in a welcoming atmosphere.

Usefull services

Where to EAT

- **Market of Sant' Ambrogio
Florence**

<https://mercatosantambrogio.it/>
Piazza Lorenzo Ghiberti,
50122 Florence FI

The market takes place every morning (except on public holidays), partly outdoors with clothing and food stalls, and partly indoors, offering other types of food and dining options.



- **Mensa - Montedomini
Florence**

<https://www.dsu.toscana.it/web/ard-su/-/montedomini>
Via dei Malcontenti, 6,
50122 Florence FI

Opened Monday to Friday 12:00 pm -
14:30 pm.



Café partnered with ARDSU - *Regional Agency for the Right to University Education*: it offers discounted meals and is within walking distance from the university campus.

- **Café Buonamici
Prato**

<https://www.dsu.toscana.it/web/ard-su/-/caff%C3%A8-buonamici>
Via Bettino Ricasoli, 3/5,
59100 Prato PO

- **Sarni restoration center**

<https://www.sarniristorazione.it/>
Via di Prato, 145, 50041 Calenzano FI

Sarni is a dining center partnered with the Design Campus in Calenzano. It offers a wide variety of options and is open every day until 9 PM.

CLA - University Language Centre

The CLA (University Language Centre) provides high-quality services in the field of language skill acquisition, equipping students with the tools needed to successfully meet the growing challenges of advanced university education and an increasingly globalized job market.

Each year, the CLA offers hundreds of courses in various foreign languages to thousands of UNIFI students who must pass language proficiency exams as required by their degree programs. It also provides a wide range of courses at different levels in the main foreign languages.

By its very nature, the CLA has a strong commitment to inclusion, serving as an ideal environment where the diverse linguistic and cultural perspectives of both teachers and students can come together and enrich one another.

<https://www.cla.unifi.it/>

Via degli Alfani, 58 -
50121 Firenze

C.U.S. – University Sports Centre

https://www.cus.firenze.it/?page_id=22

The C.U.S. operates at three facilities:
University Sports Arena
Via Vittoria della Rovere 40
– 50141 Florence
Athletics Facility
Via delle Montalve 21 –
50141 Florence
Val di Rose Sports Facility
– Scientific Campus – Sesto
Fiorentino
Via Lazzerini 217 – Sesto
Fiorentino (FI)

The C.U.S. – University Sports Centre of Florence – is a non-profit amateur sports organization that has been organizing and promoting sports activities among university students in Florence for over 60 years.

The C.U.S. is affiliated with FederCUSI (Italian Federation of University Sports). As part of its institutional role, the C.U.S. organizes recreational and promotional activities, competitive and non-competitive events, interfaculty tournaments, national and international matches with teams from other universities, as well as introductory and pre-competitive courses in various sports, along with participation in official competitive events at the federation level.

International Relations Office

School of Architecture

via della Mattonaia, 8 – 50121 Florence, Italy
Phone: +39 055 275 5422 - 5428 - 5397
Email: [archint\[AT\]unifi.it](mailto:archint[AT]unifi.it)

Office Hours (in person):

Wednesday: 10:00 AM – 1:00 PM

Online Appointments:

Student bookings at <https://u.garr.it/x14ld>
Thursday: 10:00 AM – 1:00 PM

Student Services Offices

They provide administrative support for student academic careers:

Email:

Send an email including your personal details and the reason for your request. You will receive a response to your inquiry or be offered an appointment either on-site or via Google Meet.

If you are already a Unifi student, you must use your institutional email address: [name.surname\(AT\)edu.unifi.it](mailto:name.surname(AT)edu.unifi.it)
Email subject must include: your student ID number, School and Degree Program, and the reason for your request.

Phone contact (Contact Center):

055 0986499 | Toll-free number 800 931390
(landlines only)

Available: Monday to Friday from 9:00 AM to 6:00 PM,
and Saturday from 9:00 AM to 12:00 PM.

University Service Center for Psychological Counseling, Psychotherapy, and Clinical Psychology (CeCoPs)

The University Service Center for Psychological Counseling, Psychotherapy, and Clinical Psychology (CeCoPs) aims to provide, organize, and enhance continuous support services for teaching, research, and administrative activities, offering services specifically designed for students enrolled in degree programs at the University of Florence.

CeCoPs offers psychological counseling and intervention programs aimed at addressing personal and relational difficulties.

Access to the services is through registration with CeCoPs, which is FREE for all students School.

To register and book an appointment, it is necessary to fill out the appropriate form.

<https://www.psicologia.unifi.it/vp-111-centro-di-servizi-di-ateneo-di-consulenza-psicologica-psicoterapia-e-psicologia-clinica-cecops.html>