

S A R O

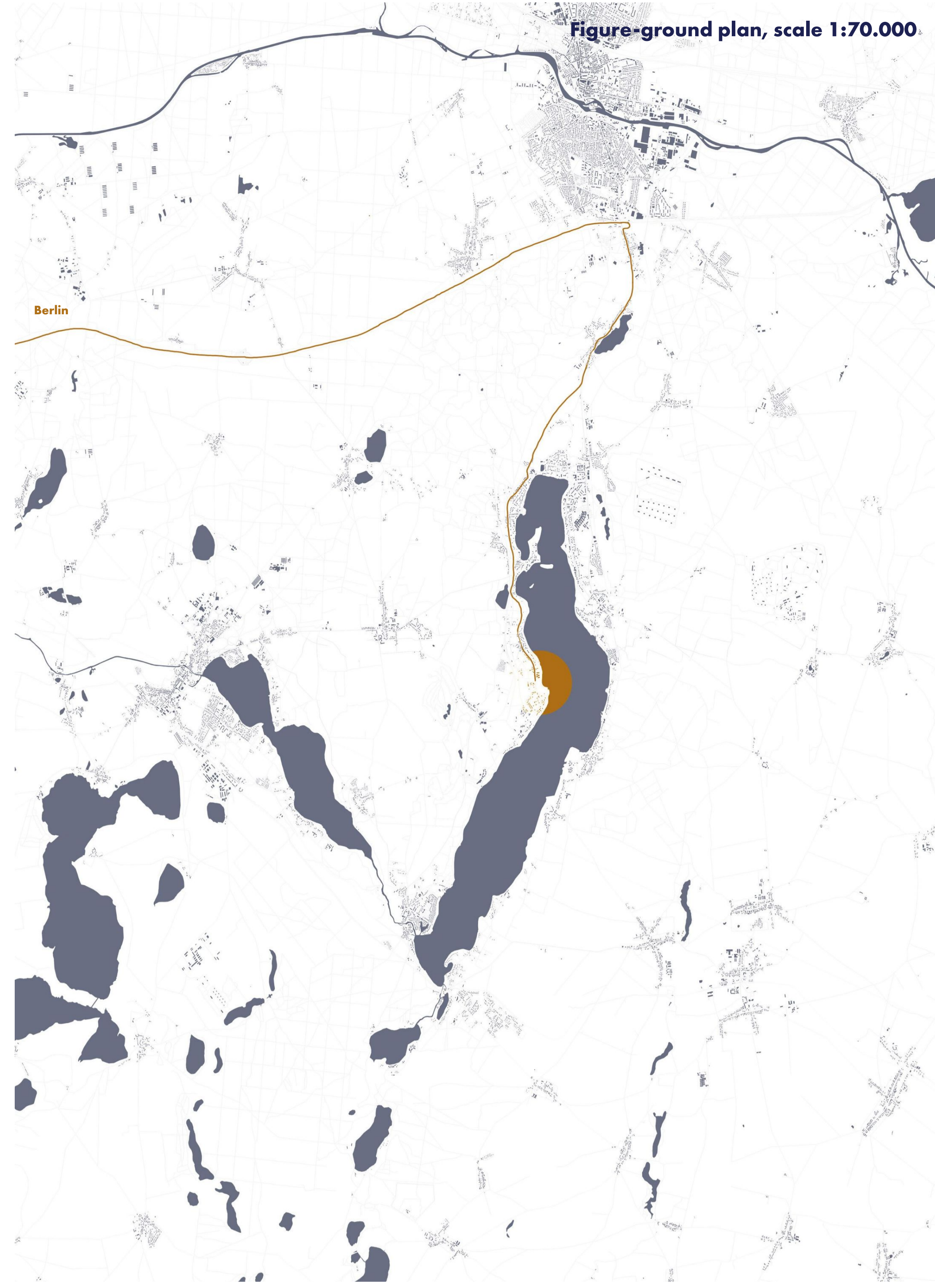
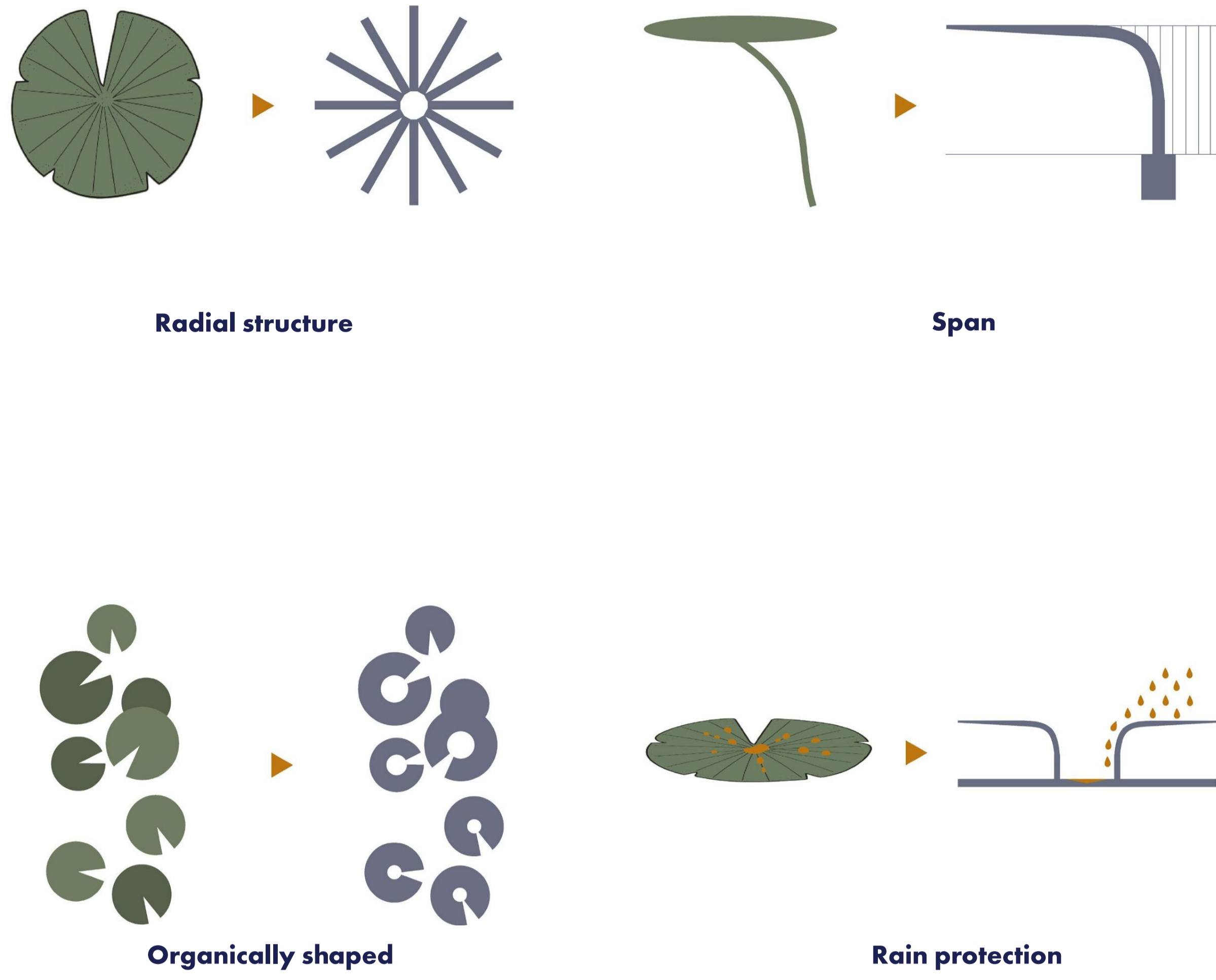
Living. Working. Showing.

Jade University of Applied Sciences Oldenburg
Department of Architecture

Inspire! Awards 2026

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Form Development



1. The Need
Artists need retreat, but not isolation. They need places where work, everyday life, and exchange come together.

2. The Idea
SARO: living, working, exhibiting, and meeting in one place.

SARO is a place for artistic work at Lake Scharmützel, near Berlin. The design emerges from the calmness of the site: from its proximity to the water, its distance from everyday life, and the special atmosphere between forest, shore, and open landscape. The complex is not understood as a single building, but as a small campus. Several independent building volumes are loosely placed in the terrain, forming intermediate spaces, paths, and courtyards, responding to the openness of the site.

The **basic idea** of SARO is simple: artists need retreat, but not isolation. They need spaces where they can work with concentration, but also places where exchange, publicness, and encounters can become possible. SARO brings these different needs together. Living, working, exhibiting, eating, arriving, and celebrating are located close to one another, while remaining spatially clearly legible. This creates a place that functions calmly and productively in everyday life and can open outward in summer.

In normal operation, SARO is primarily a place for work and living. The apartments provide distance and privacy. The studios and workspaces create room to work. Seminar rooms, break areas, and shared outdoor spaces allow encounters without forcing them. The buildings are not arranged strictly along an axis, but organically within the landscape. This creates not a rigid order, but a natural rhythm of proximity and distance. Each building volume has its own function, while all parts belong to a shared whole.

In summer, the **atmosphere** of the complex changes. SARO then becomes more public. Workspaces can become exhibition spaces, courtyards become meeting points, and paths become a sequence of stations. Visitors arrive, move through the campus, see works being created, come into contact with the artists, visit exhibitions, eat in the restaurant, or stay for events. The design is therefore not intended for one fixed use only, but for different intensities: calm in everyday life, lively during events, open during exhibitions and summer operation.

The **architecture** follows this idea. The round and partially opened buildings are organized around inner courtyards. These courtyards are more than just open spaces. They bring light deep into the rooms, provide orientation, and create protected places within the complex. In the studios, this produces a concentrated atmosphere with views into the greenery. In the exhibition areas, the courtyards bring daylight and nature into the rooms. In the residential areas, they become quiet, almost private gardens.

The circular form has both a spatial and an atmospheric meaning. It creates protection, gathers the users around a center, and avoids harsh fronts and backs. At the same time, it remains open enough to allow passages, visual connections, and transitions. SARO is therefore not a closed complex, but a permeable place. The paths lead between the building volumes and open toward the lake, the beach, the forest, and the shared courtyards.

The **open spaces** are just as important to SARO as the buildings. Between the round building volumes, plazas, gardens, courtyards, and open path areas are created. They are not conceived as leftover spaces, but as the actual connecting element of the project. Conversations, breaks, small exhibitions, spontaneous meetings, and outdoor events take place here. The outdoor space becomes an expanded workspace and exhibition space.

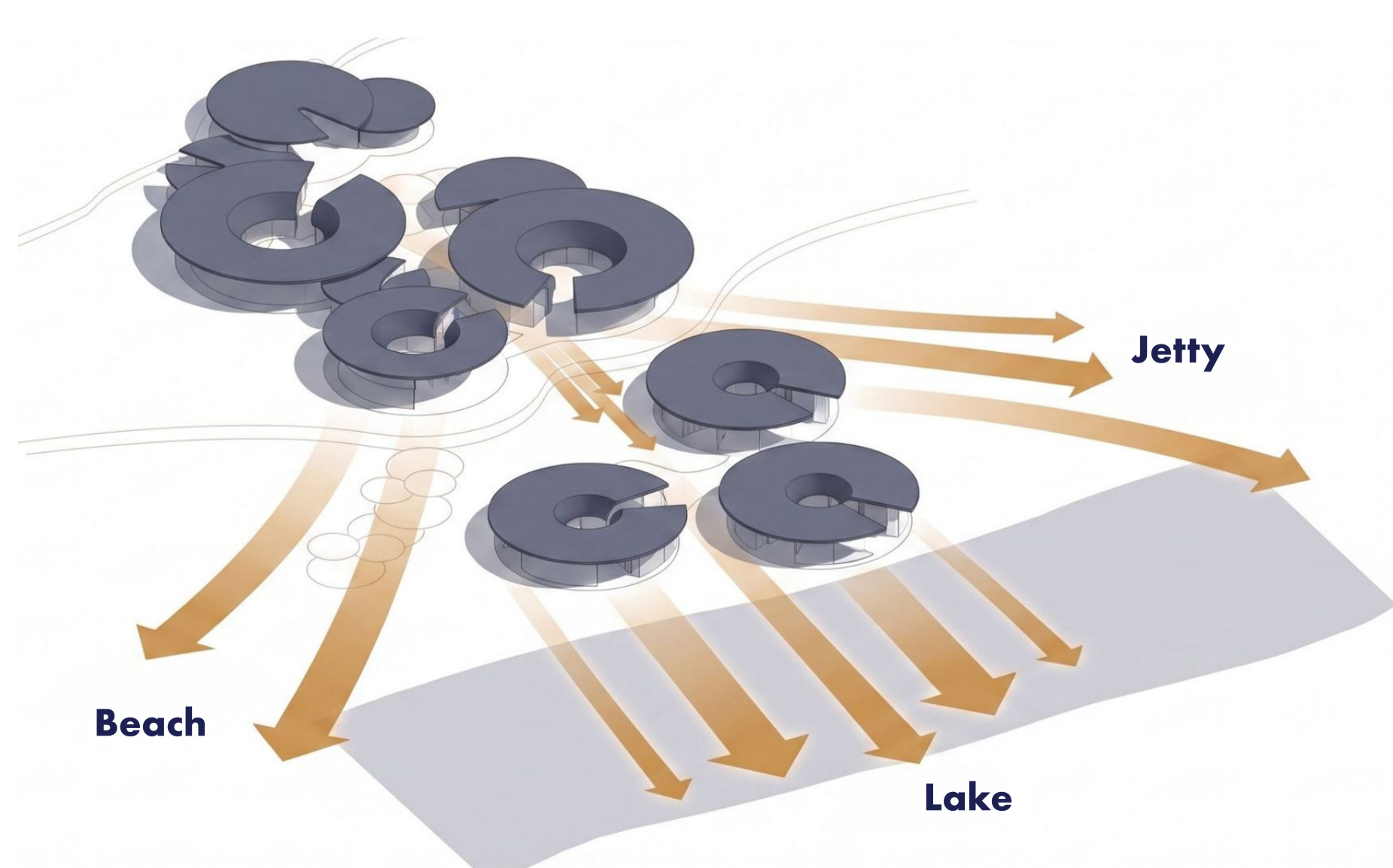
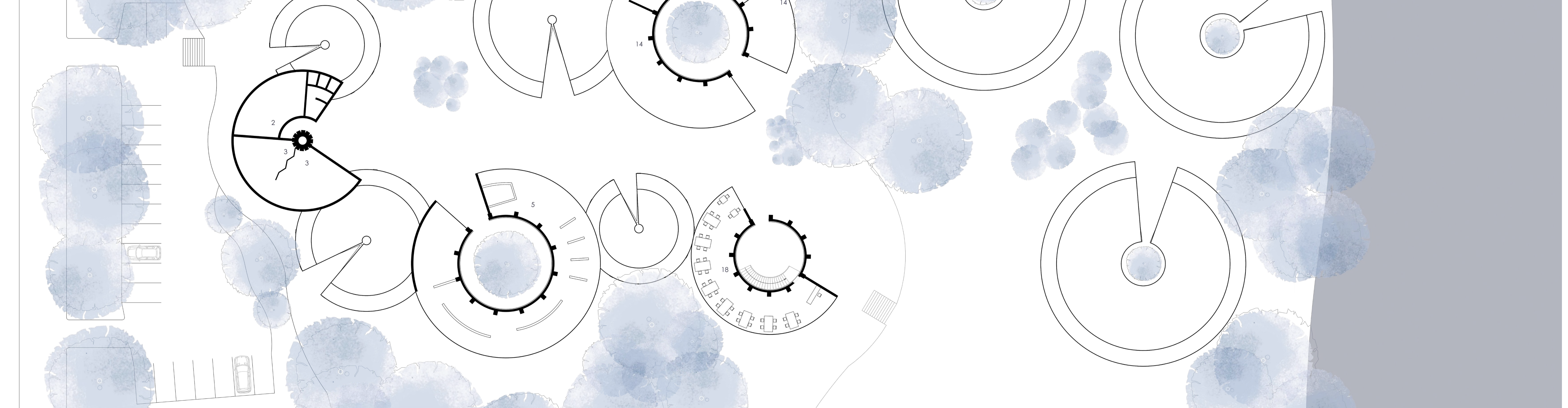
SARO is therefore neither a classic artists' house nor a purely exhibition-based building. It lies somewhere between the two. It is a place of living, workshop, gallery, meeting point, and public space all at once. The strength of the project lies in this mixture. The architecture does not create a strict separation between production and presentation, but instead shows the path between them. Art is not created here in secrecy and only exhibited at the end; rather, the process itself becomes part of the place.



Upper floor, scale 1:200

Room Program

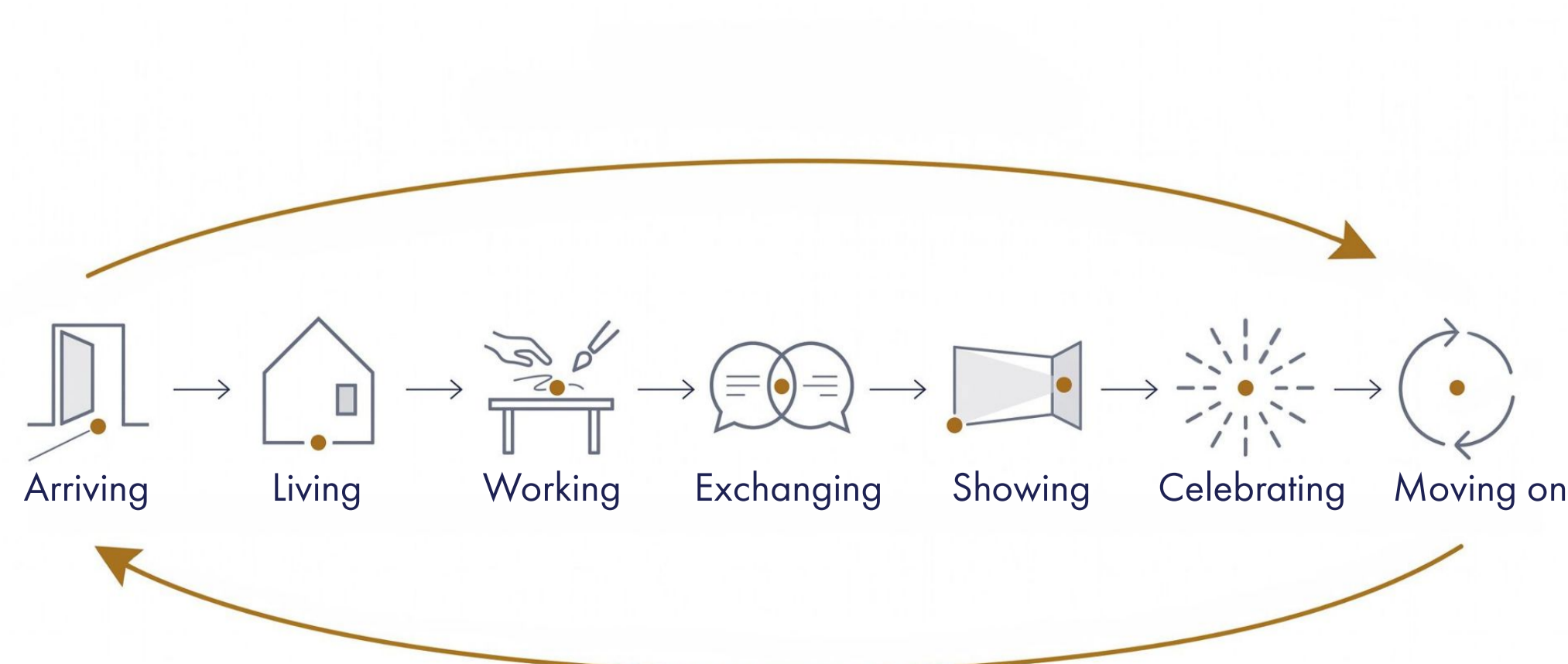
1 Reception	7 Break room	13 Artists' storage
2 Workspaces	8 Cold storage	14 Workstations
3 Seminar room	9 Storage	15 Parking lot
4 Office	10 Kitchen	16 Small apartment
5 Exhibition	11 Bar	17 Large apartment
6 Outdoor exhibition	12 Shop	18 Restaurant seating



Visual Axes

The form of SARO develops from radial movements and organic landscape forms. Paths, openings, and building volumes are deliberately oriented toward Lake Scharmützelsee, the jetty, and the surrounding nature. This creates clear sightlines that make the place tangible and connect arrival, working, living, and exhibiting with the lake..

Creative Cycle



Extroverted vs. Introverted

SARO changes its character with the seasons. In winter, the complex appears introverted: inner courtyards protect against wind, create retreat, and support concentrated work. In summer, the campus opens up. Paths, courtyards, and exhibitions become places of encounter, where working, showing, and exchange merge into one another.

Germination



Growth...





Gallery in garden light



Studio in rain light



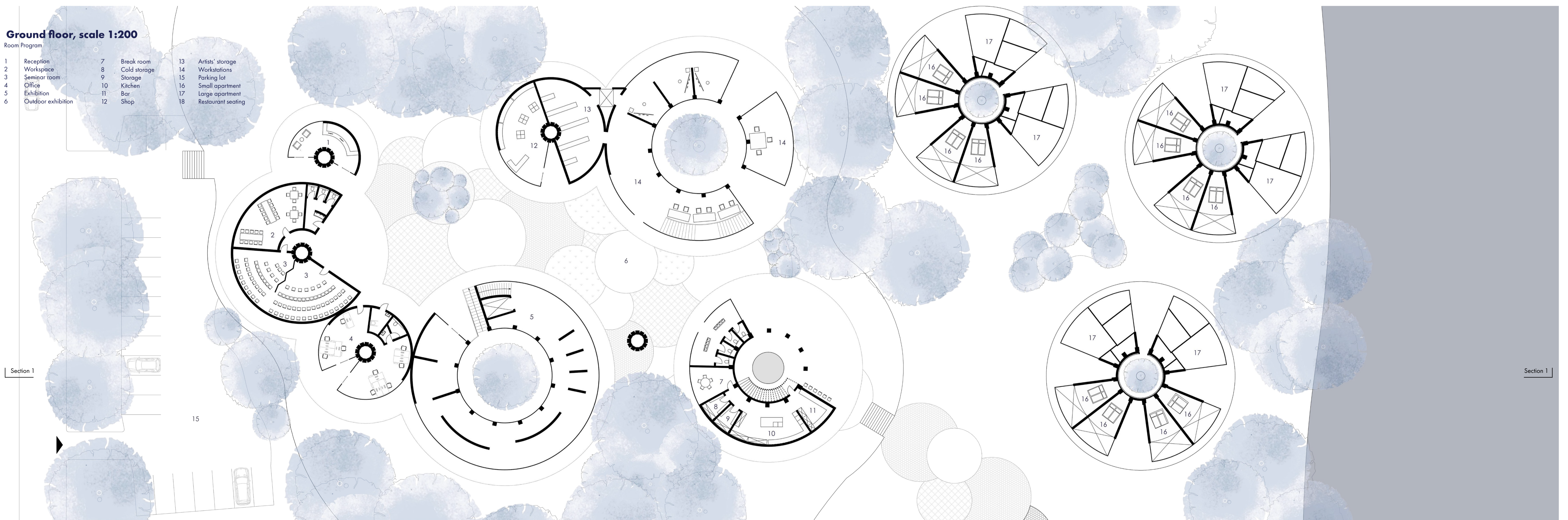
Apartments in morning light



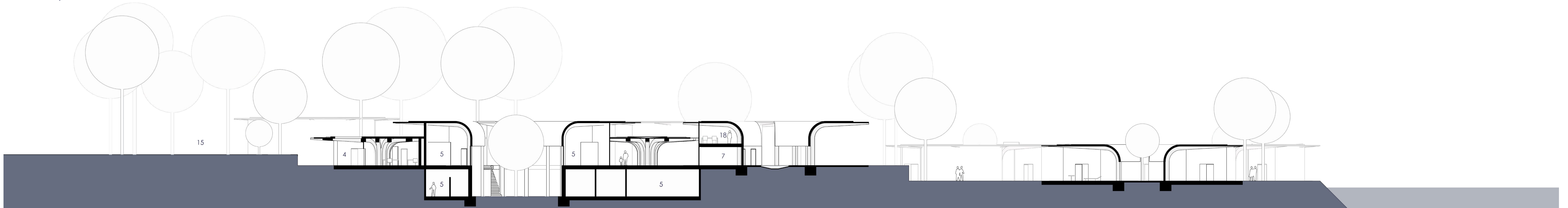
Encounters in evening light

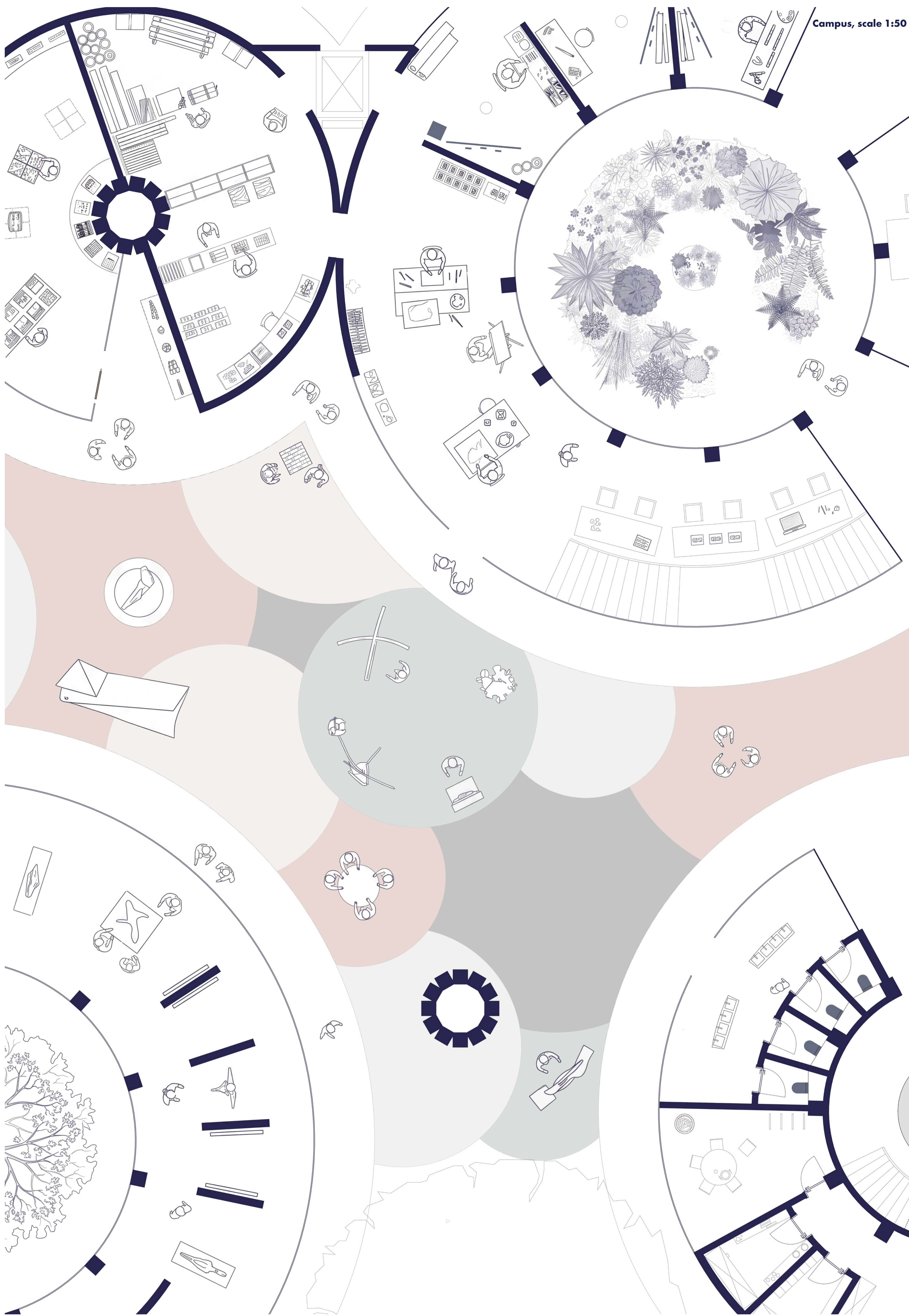
Ground floor, scale 1:200

- Room Program
- | | | |
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| 1 Reception | 7 Break room | 13 Artists' storage |
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Section 1, scale 1:200





Campus, scale 1:50

Slate Roof

The slate roof protects the rooms from weather, connects the individual building volumes, and shapes SARO as a durable, repairable, mineral envelope with a calm and lasting effect.

Steel Columns

Steel columns support the projecting roofs and allow flexible floor plans. The clear construction remains legible, dismantlable, and supports long-term adaptable use of the spaces.

Glass Façade

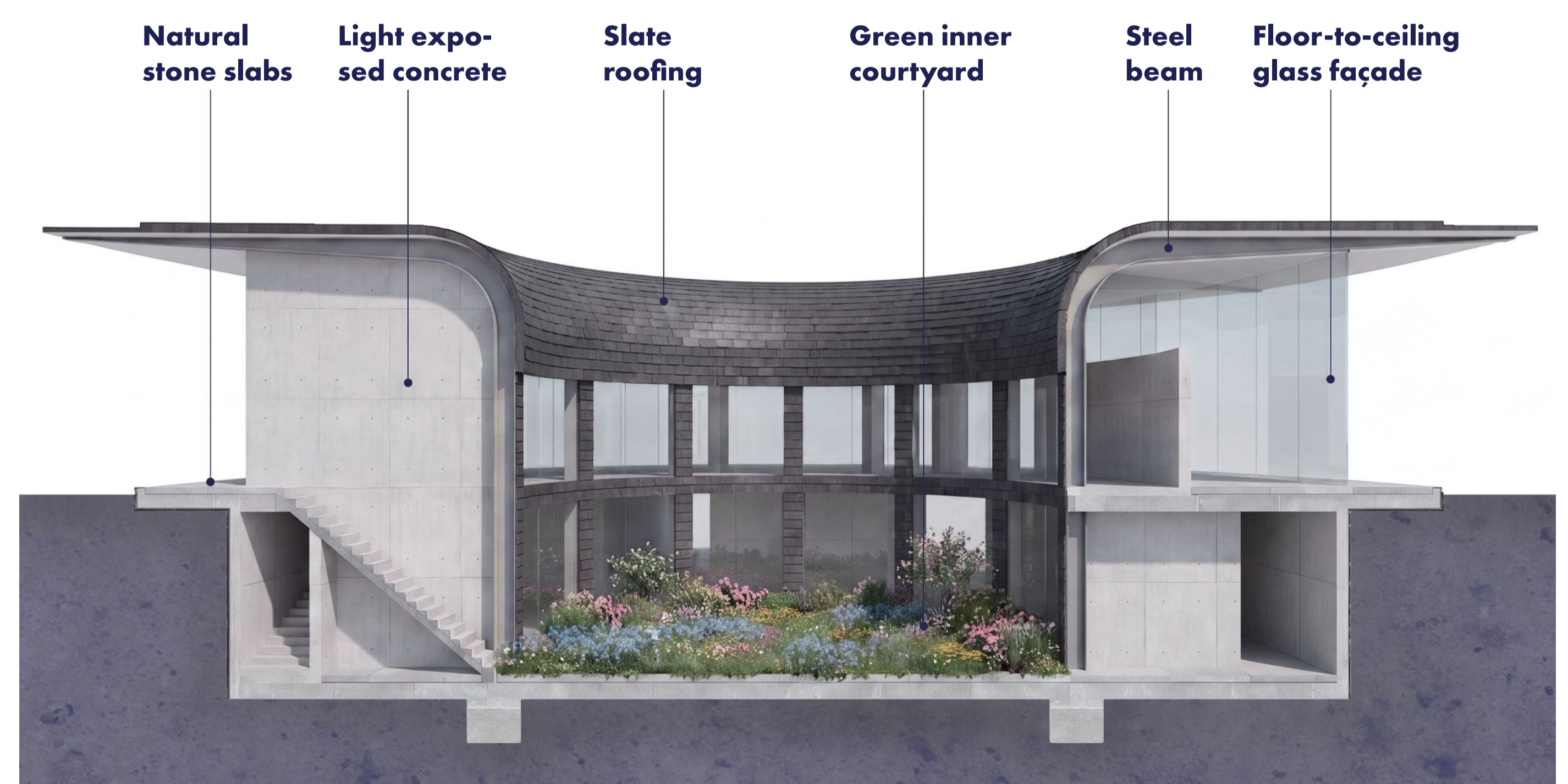
Floor-to-ceiling glass surfaces open the rooms toward the courtyards, lake, and landscape. They bring daylight into the interior and create a transparent connection between working, exhibiting, and the public realm.

Monolithic Aerated Concrete

Monolithic aerated concrete gives the studios bright, calm wall surfaces and a sense of massive depth. The material appears raw, simple, and appropriate for concentrated work by the lake.

Concrete Floor Slab

The concrete floor slab stores heat, withstands heavy use, and forms a calm, continuous base for studios, exhibitions, and communal areas.



For the **materiality**, it was important to us that SARO should not appear like a temporary pavilion, but like a permanent place in the landscape. We understand sustainability not only technically, but also spatially. The buildings use daylight, natural ventilation, and constructive sun protection. The courtyards improve the microclimate and create places for encounter and retreat. At the same time, the floor plans are flexible, so the spaces can adapt to different uses over the long term.

Another important point is **reuse**. The materials should be conceived to be as separable and dismantlable as possible. This means that components such as slate, steel, or natural stone can be processed after their use and used again. The slate roofing should ideally be made using existing material from the surrounding area.

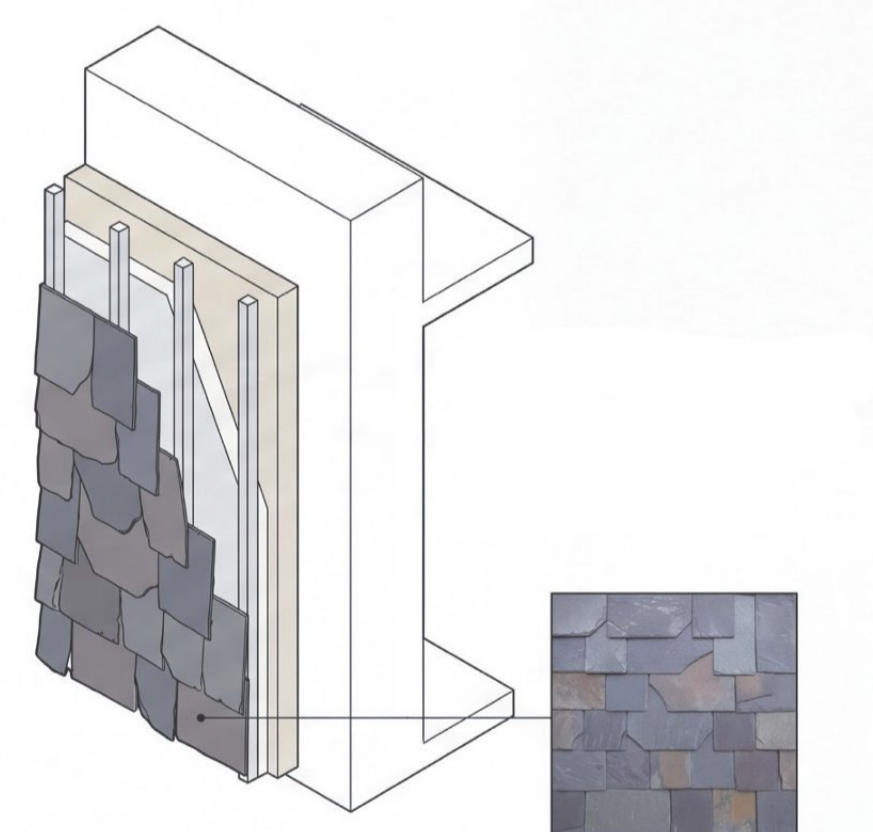
Demolition



Processing



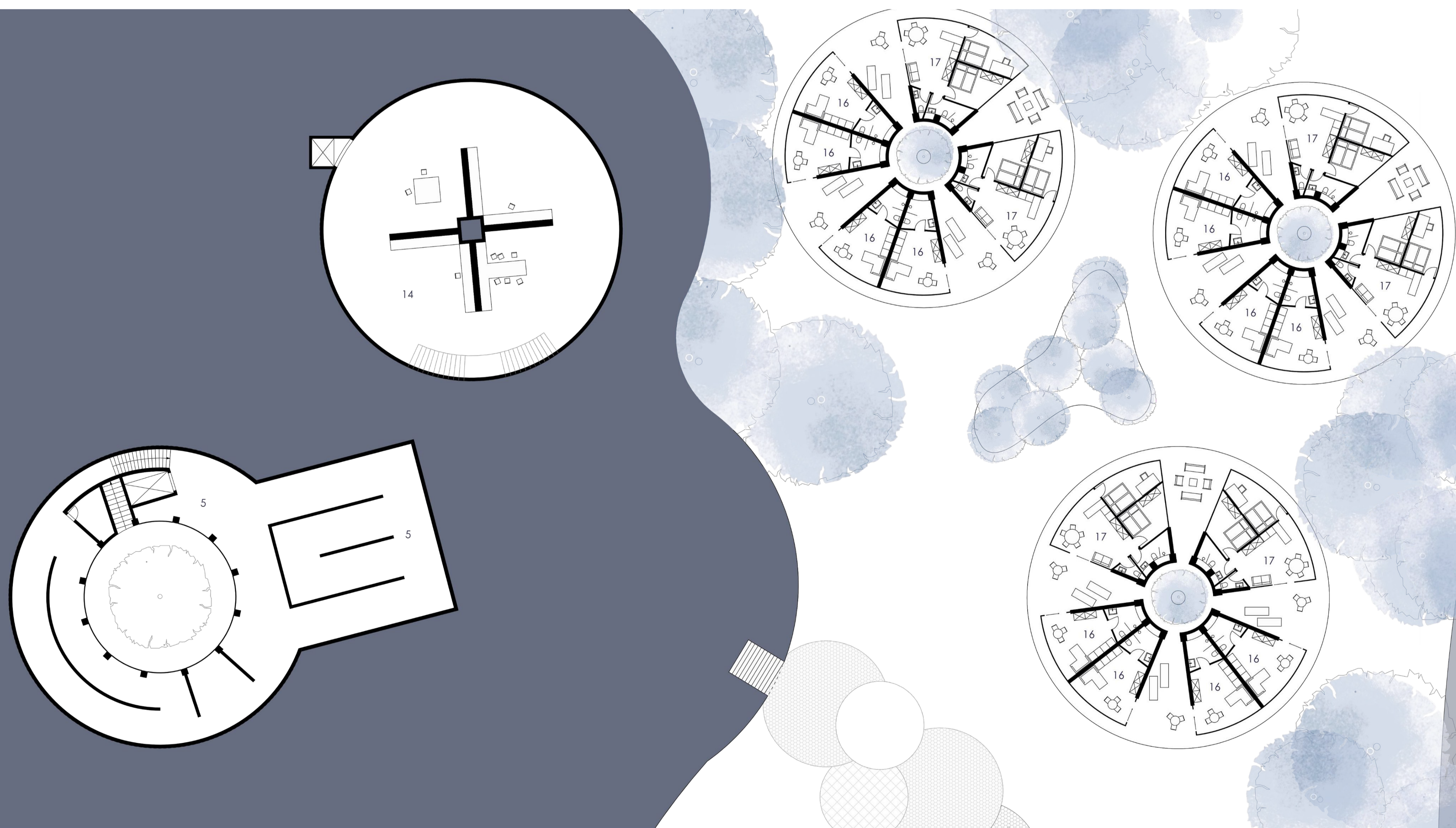
Reuse



Basement, scale 1:200

- | | | |
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Section 2



Section 2, scale 1:200

