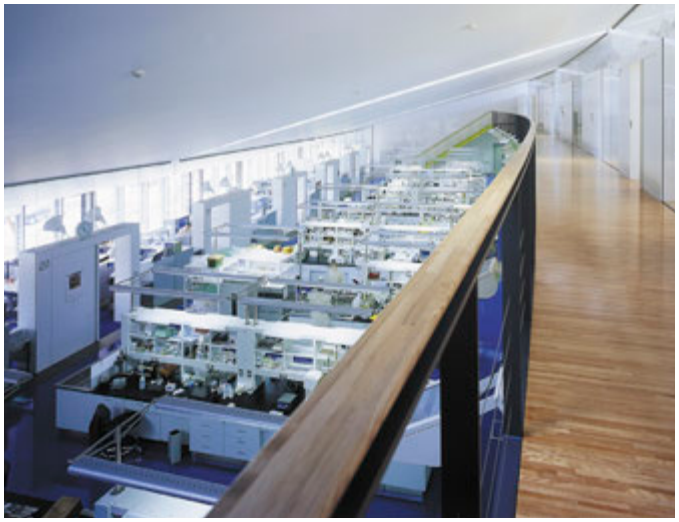
Amano Research Laboratories

Gifu, Japan



Location
Gifu, Japan

Date
1997—1999

Client
Amano Enzyme

Cost
£9 million

Area
6,353m²

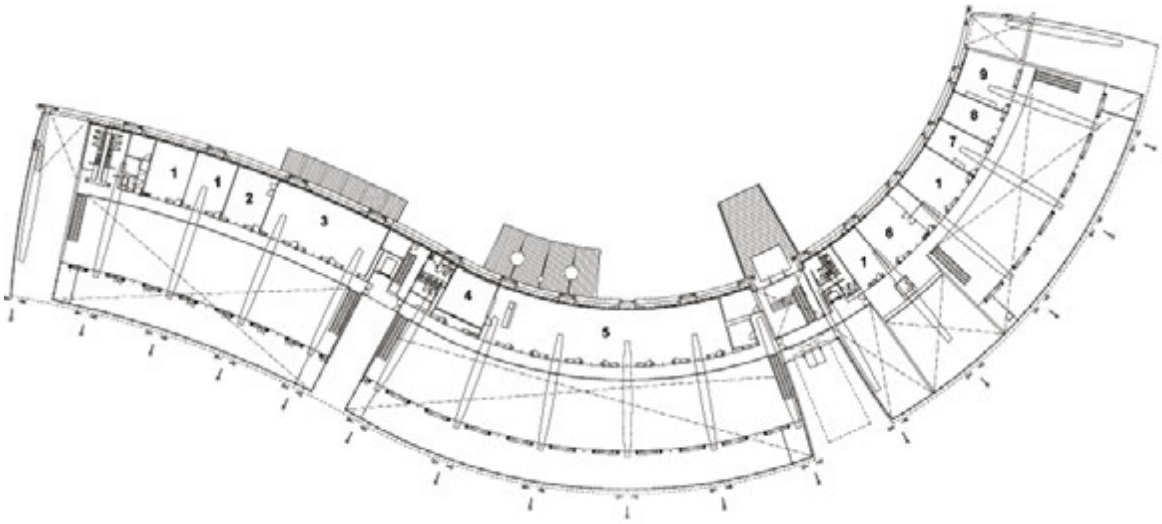
Co-Architect
Kisho Kurokawa & Associates

Structural Engineer
Umezawa Structural Engineers

Services Engineer
Inuzuka Engineering Consultants

Landscape Architect
Equipe Espace

Main Contractor
Takenaka



Amano's pedigree belongs to INMOS and Pat Centre Princeton, but instead of adopting a rigorous orthogonal plan, the building follows the sinuous contours of the site.

In 1997, RSHP and co-architects Kisho Kurokawa & Associates were approached by Amano Pharmaceutical to design a low budget building at Kakamigahara City, Gifu, to accommodate the company's enzyme research group. The building is located on the same site as the VR Techno Plaza, completed in 1998 by RSHP, and includes a small research and development campus for up to ten buildings which are let to research based companies. The building for Amano Pharmaceutical, which has an area of 6,353m², incorporates not only specialised laboratories but also offices and a restaurant.

The building form is curved in response to its hilly site, giving a curved plan. Positioned within the context of the landscape, the building's glass façades maximise the impressive views of the surrounding area.

The roof's steel structure is expressed externally. Rooflights following each structural bay allow natural daylight to penetrate laboratory space. As a consequence of placing the roof structure outside, the design succeeds in minimising dust in laboratory areas.

Inside, the laboratories are open plan, providing visual contact between lab areas and meeting rooms. Specialised booths provide accommodation for work requiring specific environmental conditions or work with toxic materials.

By partially sinking the building into the hillside, the resultant thermal mass considerably reduces energy consumption whilst glazed façades are protected from solar gain by external shading, resulting in a low-energy services strategy.