

# Citylabs - the former Royal Eye Hospital Manchester



**The grade II listed former Royal Eye Hospital in Manchester has been transformed into a new £21 million biomedical centre of excellence, called Citylabs.**

The 100,000 sq ft BREEM 'Excellent' rated project includes the refurbishment of the Victorian building and the addition of an almost fully glazed newbuild to the rear. The design by architects Sheppard Robson is both cutting edge and visually compelling, yet sympathetic to the original building's Victorian façade.

The biomedical use of the building means that there is little requirement for natural light particularly in the laboratory areas. A shading solution was therefore devised by GLASSOLUTIONS which is an aluminium feature "veil" – this acts as brise soleil solar shading that reduces glare and overheating in the building.

Its distinctive red colour is designed to complement the red brick of the existing building which is located close to the Royal Manchester Children's Hospital.

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Client: **Bruntwood**  
Main contractor: **Lend Lease**  
Architect: **Sheppard Robson**  
Project type: **New build**  
Completed: **September 2014**

The veil also provides access to the outside of the new building, which features an external maintenance walkway on each of the four storeys. This architectural and practical feature of the development minimises maintenance costs and improves health and safety with regard to ease of access to the exterior of the building.

The veil is bespoke and is supported independently of the structure. It is cleverly attached to the curtain walling with 368 special brackets, the attachment of which was analysed using 2D and 3D thermal imaging at the design stage to assess overall impact on the building's performance. GLASSOLUTIONS devised a solution to reduce the heat loss through each bracket by

incorporating bespoke thermal breaks which lowered the heat loss to 0.17 W/m<sup>2</sup>K per bracket.

The glazing specification also included floor to ceiling Schüco curtain walling for improved thermal performance and to achieve a U-Value of 0.87 Wm<sup>2</sup>K. This was complemented by the use of the Spiderglass bolted glass system on two elevations which form the entrance to an internal atrium.



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