

# Key Trend at the 2023 Laboratory Design Conference: Converting Existing Spaces into First-Class Lab Facilities

*Find out the key trends from the conference: converting, repurposing, and renovating existing spaces into first-class laboratory facilities.*

AUSTIN, TEXAS, UNITED STATES, June 18, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- News From The 2023 [Laboratory Design Conference](#) In San Diego

This year the Laboratory Design Conference selected San Diego to host the annual gathering of industry professionals working in the fields of lab design, construction management, and scientific innovation.



In the words of one of the presenters at the conference, Jennifer Swedell, the San Diego of today is a world-class center for laboratory research, having gotten its start with the founding of UC

San Diego in 1960, the gift of 27 acres by the City to the Salk Institute for Biological Studies (which built its famous research facility designed by renowned architect Louis Kahn), followed by the founding of the Scripps Research Institute (now known as the Scripps Research Institute). Today San Diego boasts \$1.55 billion in research funding (in 2021), and it's the home of key research-focused companies, including Illumina, Qualcomm, and the J. Craig Venter Institute (JCVI).

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*Formaspace*

And San Diego's lab ecosystem just keeps growing, as evidenced by the new Lusk Innovation Portfolio life science project, a \$1 billion office park conversion project that will convert nine existing office buildings on a 20-acre campus into 2.5 million square feet of new, state-of-the-art

research facilities. Conference attendees received an update from two of the key players working on this landmark project, Scott Potter, Director of Design and Construction at Boston-based Longfellow Real Estate Partners, and Joseph Marshall, Principal at Flad Architects.

### Formaspace Presents Its Newest Lines Of Lab Furniture At The Laboratory Design Conference

The Formaspace Team was out in force at the Laboratory Design Conference.

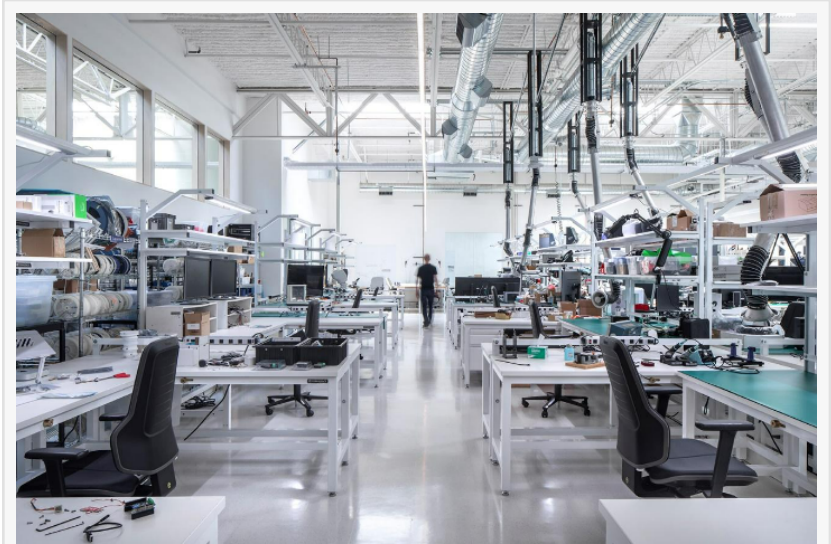
Attending the event were Claire Redsun, VP of Sales at Formaspace Contract, Southern California-based Formaspace Contract representatives Kimberly McCready and Kari Schultz, and Formaspace National Sales Manager Debora Zach.

The Formaspace team was excited to reconnect with long-standing customers and other vendors, as well as meet many of the new faces in attendance, including NIH executives, architects and interior designers, general contractors (GCs), and other lab design planning and management professionals.

The event also provided an excellent opportunity for those new to Formaspace to learn about our high-quality, versatile, American-made lab furniture solutions, including our fully custom lab furniture offerings that are built-to-order at our Austin, Texas, factory headquarters.

### Key Trend At The Conference: Converting, Repurposing, And Renovating Existing Spaces Into First-Class Laboratory Facilities

The Laboratory Design Conference organizers outdid themselves this year, creating an extremely vibrant, in-depth agenda – featuring over sixty leading industry professionals – who collectively delivered 33 outstanding presentations – plus a tour of four San Diego landmark research facilities, Tata Hall and Franklin Antonio Hall at UCSD, the SOVA Science District, and Biovista.



Turn to Formaspace for your laboratory furniture needs. Shown above is a custom lab installation at the Belkin headquarters in Los Angeles.



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We've already mentioned the ambitious projects from the Lusk Innovation Portfolio life science office-to-lab conversion project, but we'd like to also introduce you to many of the other ambitious project case studies, including valuable insights and "lessons learned" that were presented to the Lab Design Conference attendees.

## Repurposing Underused Spaces Into Laboratory Facilities

What to do with underperforming shopping centers and malls has long bedeviled beleaguered property owners and city planners alike.

Savvy developers are seeing an opportunity to convert underutilized retail space into a valuable laboratory real estate portfolio.

At the Laboratory Design Conference, Cynthia Walston, who recently formed the women-owned, Houston-based firm Scientia Architects, joined Garth Shaw of GSBS Architects and Donavon Minnis of Engage Contracting to present a case study of converting a large Dick's Sporting Goods retail space located in downtown Salt Lake City's The Gateway mall into a first-class laboratory space called the BioHive. The first tenant to move in was the biotech company Recursion Pharmaceuticals, which was joined more recently by the biotech firm Perfect Day signing a 60k square foot lease at the BioHive.

Among the major challenges in this lab conversion was the management of HVAC exhaust air exiting the building and not interfering with the residential tower located above the mall.

In another presentation to Laboratory Design Conference attendees, two colleagues from the well-regarded Los Angeles-based firm CO Architects, Jennifer Swedell, Associate Principal, Senior Lab Planner, and Edgar Beltran, Associate.

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