

Formfunc Studio's Office And Distribution Centre Achieves South Africa's First Interior 6-Star Green Star Award

Cape Town, South Africa: The Green Building Council has awarded Formfunc Studio, a leading ergonomic furniture supplier, a 6-Star Green Star rating following the recent fit-out of their office, showroom and DC in Lanseria.

The project led by specialist sustainability and environmental consultants from the Terramanzi Group attained the highest possible Interiors Green Star v1 certification - the first such rating to be awarded in South Africa for an office and distribution centre. Director and co-founder of Formfunc, Kim Kowalski said that the aim of the project was to create a workspace that was not only functional but optimised health, wellness, productivity and efficiency -all within an advanced and ergonomically designed workspace. "As we are the exclusive distributor of Humanscale® ergonomic chairs, workstations and other office accessories to the southern African market, it was imperative that our office environment went beyond just an ergonomic solution but also reflected our brand and our philosophy of recreating workspaces that are simpler and healthier for our employees to work in."

In order to attain this exclusive international rating, the project consultants along with IT solutions provider, Aethyr IT and design specialists, Mask.Design and other contractors had to assess every element of the fit-out and scope of work to ensure that it would score a rating of between 75 and 100 credits in accordance with the Green Star Rating Tool. Categories evaluated and rated under the Green Star SA Rating Tool incorporate a range of factors and elements that required forethought and considered from the materials used, to Indoor Environment Quality (IEQ) and emissions. A strong focus is also placed on the efficient and responsible environmental stewardship in terms of energy, water and waste management.

Adopting a 'less is more' approach:

- the interior space features unplastered walls and exposed ceilings, minimising the use of redundant resources; floor-to-ceiling glazing that takes advantage of the natural sunlight allowing for a large quantity of natural daylight throughout. The heating, ventilation and air-conditioning (HVAC system) were designed to improve outside air rates into the building - above SANS 10400 requirements, whilst sensors monitor and control carbon dioxide levels within the office.
- Water and electrical meters have also been installed to offer live-time consumption updates on multiple mobile devices and reduce overall water and electricity usage. Consideration was also given to the paint and sealant products used to make sure that they had extremely minimal, to no VOCs.

- The office also has a recycling station and a composting unit for organic waste. To further encourage the reduction in carbon emissions, employees have direct access to a cyclist & motorbike parking on the premises.

“It has been a challenging and ambitious project,” notes Kowalski. “But it has also been a labour of love and is a fitting tribute - and a living legacy to Peter Kowalski, my husband and Co-founder of the company we started ten years ago.” “Peter was extremely passionate about doing things right, it was who he was – and it was a mantra he applied to his everyday life, no matter the task. He would have been proud of what we have been able to achieve.”