Tradition

Since 1853 the Academy’s mission has been to explore, explain, and protect the natural world.
Embodiment

The Loma Prieta earthquake provided an imperative for structurally sound facilities that better support programmatic needs. The new building will be an architectural achievement symbolizing scientific progress, environmental stewardship, and educational significance.

Integration

Designed by Pritzker Prize winner Renzo Piano, the Academy’s new building will be an expressive response to the site - one of the world’s most beautiful urban parks. The very shape and texture of the building will be a celebration of nature, with an undulating “living roof” that echoes the seven hills of San Francisco and reflects the Academy’s commitment to ecological sensitivity and sustainability. Floor-to-ceiling glass walls at the east and west sides will suffuse public spaces in natural light and integrate the interior space into the surrounding environment of Golden Gate Park.
True to form, the Academy has taken a scientific approach to design, incorporating rigorous pilot testing to reduce the risk of integrating innovative sustainable techniques into design and construction. The temporary facilities are dedicated to testing sustainable life support and aquatic systems that will be employed in the new building.
PROCESS [ Energy Modeling ]

PROCESS [ Roof Mock-up ]

PROCESS [ Life Support Systems Prototyping ]
Sustainable techniques apply to both the building design (reliance on daylight and natural ventilation, a green roof ringed by photovoltaics, water efficiency, use of recycled steel and concrete, and minimal finishes) and the building operations (sustainable coral harvesting, flexible interchangeable tanks, organic café and green cleaning programs).
Sustainable values will be imparted to over 1.6M visitors per year, through exhibits, educational programs, lectures, field trips, and back of house tours highlighting the sustainable aspects of the building. The Academy's influence will extend far beyond the building, to the international community engaged in research designed to understand our impacts and inform policy to protect the natural environment.