

# BOLZANO TOWER 2019-2020, Bolzano – Italy

**Client** IPES - Istituto per l'Edilizia Sociale della provincia Autonoma di Bolzano

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In an uncharacterised area, the proposal privileges a landscape approach, establishing a deep relationship between the tower and its attachment to the ground to create an articulated space capable of offering itself to the community as a significant moment of meeting and identification. This outdoor space defines a set of open rooms, delimited by high hedges, that multiply and enrich the offer of spaces for communion, allowing opportunities for relationships throughout the different seasons of the year. To create maximum continuity between the outer space and the tower, it contains a structural base with minimal contact points with the ground, offering a contemporary reading of the traditional portico as an urban element. The two functions foreseen by the competition - residential versus public use areas - were conceived as specificities in a coherent and unitary architectural score. The proposal starts with the idea of a large “table” as an element of mediation and connection between the base of the tower of public nature (resting directly on the ground and extending over two floors) and the wooden volume of the dwellings rising slightly towards the sky. The base was conceived as a single glass element to reinforce its public character. With an autonomous steel structure, the glass volume sets back concerning the base’s protective shell in reinforced concrete (this setback varies according to the sun exposure).

The vertical wooden volume, corresponding to the residential component of the building, acts as a counterpoint to the horizontal emptiness of the base. The accessibility system determines the overall design based on the organisation of the basement. The attention paid to access to the houses reflects in all other floors. The distribution space was expanded and illuminated by two deep “cuts” of light, which open to the outside, transforming the threshold between private space and communal space into a place for interaction between the inhabitants, always guaranteeing the privacy of the entrance. The internal distribution of each dwelling follows simple rules. All rooms have a living area next to the entrance and a separate intimate area, a bathroom with a window, and views towards different sides. Thermal and acoustic comforts are guaranteed by using wood in support floors and walls. And the use of a ventilated façade provides even more environmental quality: the exterior cladding forms a structure of lamellar cedar uprights and beams, filled with panels, also in cedar. Each panel constitutes an autonomous element to allow ventilation without worsening the structure’s fire resistance (avoiding the chimney effect). The constructive autonomy of the individual panels also facilitates the possible replacement or restoration of individual elements. At an architectural level, the structure proposed on the façade produces a chiaroscuro vibration on the surface that, on the one hand, attenuates the volume and, on the other, controls the variability of the natural material, making it the characterising element of the project.

