



ENVISION PHARMA
GROUP

Smarter, faster outcomes for life sciences

New Hungary office: Honoring heritage while looking forward

Earlier this year, we celebrated the opening of our 15th office worldwide in Szeged, Hungary – a community with a long history of resilience and rebirth on the world stage. We wanted to share the journey to Szeged through the eyes of Zsófia Székács-Pecze, who led the site selection and renovation process on behalf of Envision Pharma Group (EPG).

Zsófia Székács-Pecze, Back Office Administrator, Envision Pharma Group

For the last 3 years, I've put my heart and soul into finding and creating a new office space for our Hungarian associates and it's my pleasure to say that we have now celebrated the official opening of our new Hungary office located in Szeged – a city of history, resilience, and innovation.

EPG decided to open a hub in Hungary to assess the potential for growth in the area. Only a few months after renting a small office space however, the pandemic forced us to close it and for all employees to work remotely. Despite this unexpected turn, we continued to hire new team members and grow our business in Hungary. As the pandemic waned, it became clear that we needed a larger office space to accommodate our ambitions and expanding team.

First impressions, a restoration journey

When I first stepped into the building on Maros Utca 43, I was surprised at its poor state. It was in such disarray, with walls crumbling and dirt everywhere. But once I looked past the mess, I could see the historic charm of the building and the potential for it to be a new home for us.



The landlord there shared the same sentiment, expressing a desire for a tenant that envisioned crafting something extraordinary – someone willing to undertake substantial renovation, design innovation, and technological integration – all while paying homage to the building's rich history.

A quick history lesson

Built at the end of the 19th century, the construction we now call our Hungarian home was once someone's actual home. Very likely, someone from the Pick family of the iconic Pick Salami company. A whole compound of factories, business buildings, and homes in this area were owned by the famous Jewish family, and official records confirm that this building was included in that.

Unfortunately, like many successful Jewish business owners at the time of Hitler's rise, the Pick family became a target for the Nazi regime. The people who lived and worked in those buildings were forced to hide in the basement with the livestock while the area was bombed.

After the home left the Pick family's hands, it was left with the government for some time. Other companies would come and go, renting and owning over the years, and then it was back to the government again. It had changed hands a lot, and hadn't been used for over 10-15 years before we found it.

When asked why, the owner simply said he was waiting for the right company to come along and make something special out of it. Additionally, he emphasized their commitment to renovating the building's exterior to align seamlessly with stringent historical preservation standards.

Embracing innovation

The interior of the office underwent a 2-year process to become what it is today. We worked hard to balance the modern needs of a forward-looking tech company within governmental requirements – and our desire to maintain all the historic hallmarks that we could.

The front door's exterior is a replica of the original and many of the bricks throughout are original. Some had to be moved around to make way for the contractors' plans, but they are artfully rearranged as a testament to what was. In the attic, the original 150-year-old wooden beams are still in place.

Some notable pieces of the new office we are proud of include the conference room that depicts a constellation. Our meeting rooms are actually named by constellations that are visible from our office's location. This aligns with our vision of being a global company, working toward one vision under one sky. We also asked team members to send us thoughts about what the office should represent and we arranged those into an art piece on display.



Coming to life

Now able to accommodate 72 employees in our Hungary office, we are excited to welcome the local and international employees that visit. To help Hungary-based associates get to know the area also, we held two opening parties with games that required them to walk all around the new space.

It's been a lot of hard work (combined with a healthy amount of fun and games) to get us to the point of being comfortable in today's new exciting office. As a native Hungarian, I am honored and touched by Envision's commitment to reinvesting in Szeged in a way that maintains our pre-war history, combined with such thoughtful design and a positive mindset.