Every campus needs a home base, and The Bloomberg Center is Cornell Tech’s hub for learning. It is the intellectual nerve center for the campus, bringing students and faculty together to collaborate across disciplines, but also serving as a venue for chance collisions between academia and the world at large.

SETTING THE BAR
The four-story, 160,000-square-foot academic building—named in honor of Emma and Georgina Bloomberg—is designed to support the idea that innovation is a collective enterprise. In the Bloomberg Center, open offices and ample huddles encourage collaboration, allowing teams to spread out and actually make things—to make a mess and put ideas into action with the full range of tools and collaborators, visitors and viewpoints.

Designed by Thom Mayne, design director of the Pritzker Prize-winning Morphosis architecture firm—known for their work that pushes the traditional boundaries of architectural form—the center takes its shape from its triangular site facing the public plaza, the nexus of the campus. Exceeding sustainability standards throughout, the building is clad in a warm bronze-colored metal and topped by a swooping lily-pad-shaped roof covered with photovoltaics.

ART AS INSPIRATION
In keeping with the mission of nurturing leaders with a broad base of experience and inspiration, the center has a rich art program. In fact, the building dedicates 1% of its overall budget to art. Artwork is prominent in the café, creating an opportunity for contemplation for those eager to take a break from the intensity of the work going on upstairs and across campus. Much of the artwork was consciously chosen to feature themes and materials that weren’t tech-inspired, like a forest scene created in rich inlaid woods, calling out the eternal, psychic push and pull between nature and human endeavor.

Another art installation is a WPA-era mural—one of three to be reinstalled on campus—that lined the walls of the hospital that stood on the site until 2014. Created in 1942, it isn’t painted in the typical propagandistic mural style of the time, but is instead reminiscent of the colorful, jazz-like abstraction of the early 20th-century with all of its futuristic optimism.

HIGH PERFORMANCE
The Bloomberg Center pioneers new standards in building performance and sustainability, setting the bar for the rest of the campus. It aspires to be among the largest Net-Zero energy buildings in the United States, with all of its power generated on campus. Energy is produced onsite to offset the annual building energy consumption. The center has a passive energy-efficient design including a rooftop photovoltaic array system and geothermal heating and cooling systems. The center is also targeting LEED Platinum Certification.