

Observation tower Thurauen, Flaach

2025



A design competition was held at ETH Zurich for the construction of the new observation tower at Thurauen. Timbatec was commissioned with the design and construction as part of the implementation project.

The project

Completed in 2025, the observation tower is located on the left bank in the direction of flow of the Thur, as seen from the Ellikerstrasse bridge, directly on the riverbank. At 15 meters high, it is an imposing structure, but it blends seamlessly into the floodplain landscape. There are platforms at heights of eight and twelve meters where visitors can observe nature and enjoy the panoramic view. The project originated from a master's thesis at ETH Zurich.

The construction method

The supporting structure consists of crossed rods. The inclination of the straight rods creates the impression that the rods are curved. This structure is called a hyperboloid. The two platforms are suspended from this hyperboloid. The spiral staircase stands separately.

The challenge

The delicate bars of the staircase cage did not allow for any load to be taken up by the platforms, so a structure had to be found for the platform without central support. The connections between the outer bars/supports were also challenging because the angles change on each step.

[Project description Canton of Zurich](#)



Connection of the lattice bars



Opening of the tower

Construction Data

- Ridge height from foundation 15.3 meters
- Platform heights 7.8 and 11.9 meters
- Glued laminated timber larch 14 m³
- Glued laminated timber spruce/fir 10 m³

Construction costs

- BKP 1-9: CHF 530'000

Services of Timbatec

- SIA Phase 51 Implementation project
- SIA Phase 52 Execution
- Statics and construction

Building owner

Baudirektion Kanton Zürich
8090 Zürich

General contractor/Total contractor

Blumer-Lehmann AG
9200 Gossau/SG