National Bank of Kuwait Headquarters in Kuwait City Completes

By Foster + Partners. **Photographs** Nigel Young/Foster + Partners

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Foster + Partners has recently completed the new headquarters for the National Bank of Kuwait. Located on a prominent site in Kuwait City, the 300-meter skyscraper has a distinctive presence among the buildings of Sharq, the city’s growing financial district.

The new building brings all of the bank’s corporate employees together under one roof, promoting synergy and enhancing wellbeing. The design combines sustainable features and structural innovation, providing an energy efficient passive form, shielding the offices from the extremes of Kuwait’s climate.

Stefan Behling, Head of Studio, Foster + Partners, aid: “The new headquarters for the National Bank of Kuwait represents the coming together of an innovative environmental strategy and a diverse program as a distinctive landmark that stands out on the Kuwaiti skyline. The building incorporates a sustainable, functional, and iconic design that signifies NBK’s unique presence and identity in the city.”

To the north, the curved façade reveals the panoramic views of the Arabian Gulf. A series of concrete fins along the sun path extend the full height of the tower, providing structural support while contributing to the environmental strategy through shading. By tapering the floorplates inwards towards the base, the design maximises floor space at the upper levels and provides self-shading as the overhanging floorplates shelter the offices below. Utilising both passive and active measures to reduce water consumption, energy use is minimised and the indoor air quality improved.

The tower’s distinctive shape creates wider floorplates towards the top, offering expansive views out to a greater number of people. The tower’s sixty-three floors are punctuated by sky lobbies, which provide a social focus and meeting facilities for staff.

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At the base of the tower, an 18-meter-high lobby greets employees and visitors. Level 18 features a double-height restaurant, followed by a state-of the-art gym at level 19, a unique ballroom and auditorium on level 38 with panoramic views out to the bay and the rest of the city, and a triple height boardroom on level 48. These communal areas are complemented by the chairman’s club in the dramatic, soaring volume at the tower’s apex, lit by a distinctive skylight that traces an arc through the space, offering panoramic views of the city and coastline.

Nikolai Malsch, Senior Partner, Foster + Partners, said: “The form we’ve developed for the tower is driven by the needs of the bank and the internal spatial

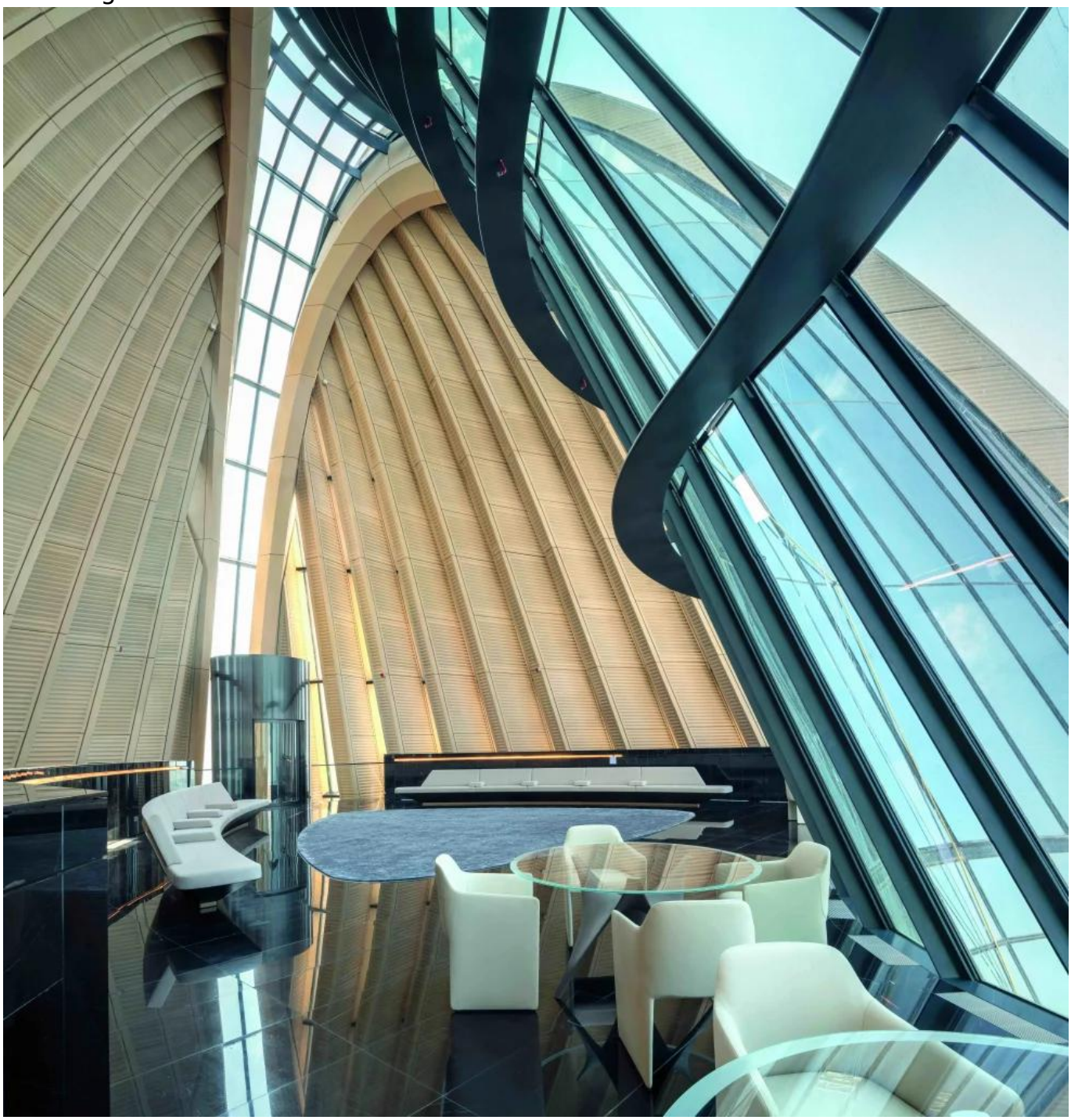
arrangement is tailored to its organizational requirements, whilst providing flexibility for future change and growth. We have created a customized working environment where everybody has their own unique space.”

The innovative twin-lift strategy minimises the size of the cores to increase the net usable floorplate area. The practice has also designed the interior fit-out with its bespoke furniture and lighting for key spaces within the tower.

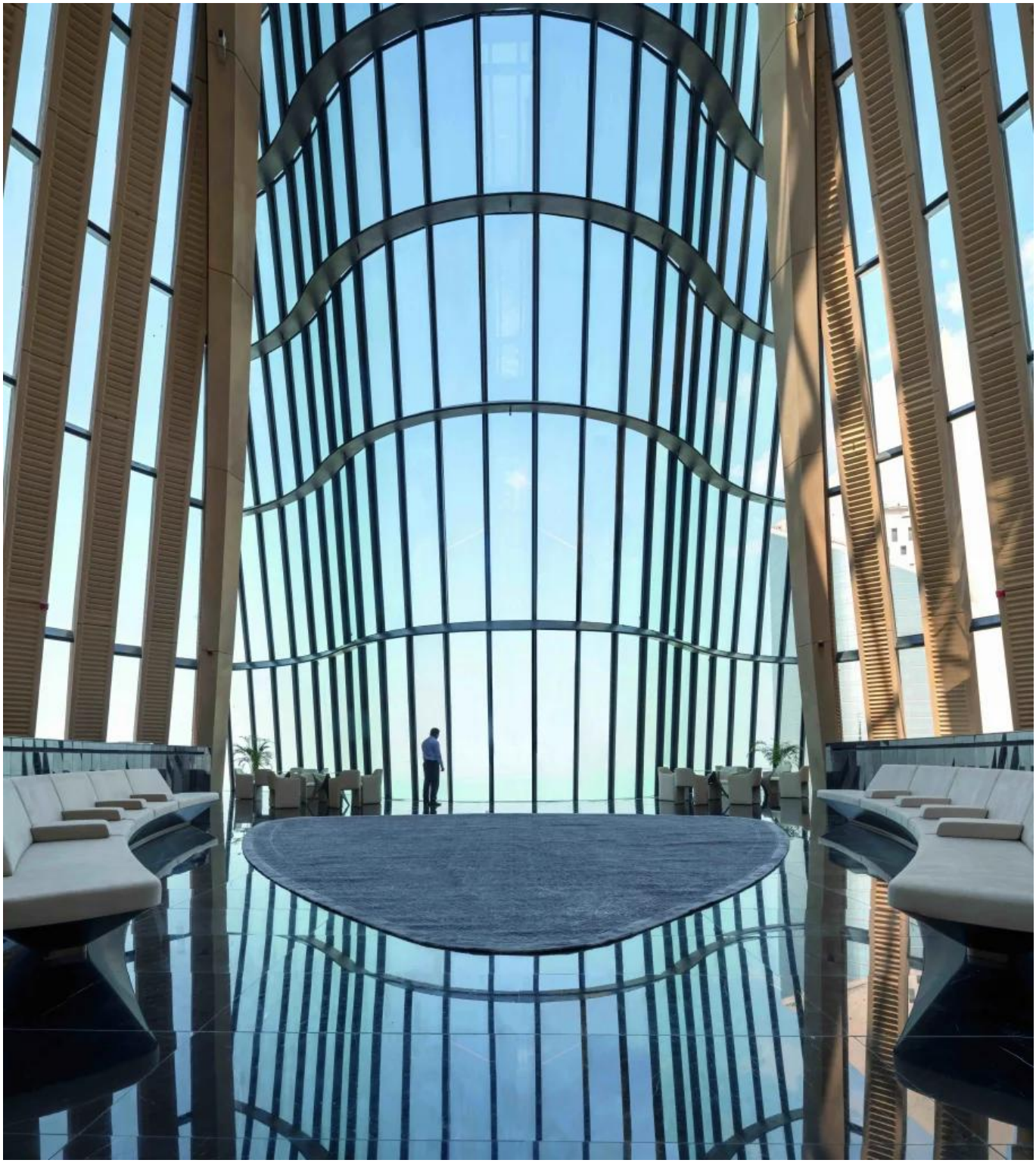
The boardroom features distinctive lighting installations comprising several elegant blown-glass pendent lights – designed by the practice’s industrial design team – which form a cloud-like cluster above a grand 13-meter board table.



Exterior view of the National Bank of Kuwait. The design com- bines sustainable features and structural innovation, providing an energy efficient passive form, shielding the offices from the extremes of Kuwait’s climate.

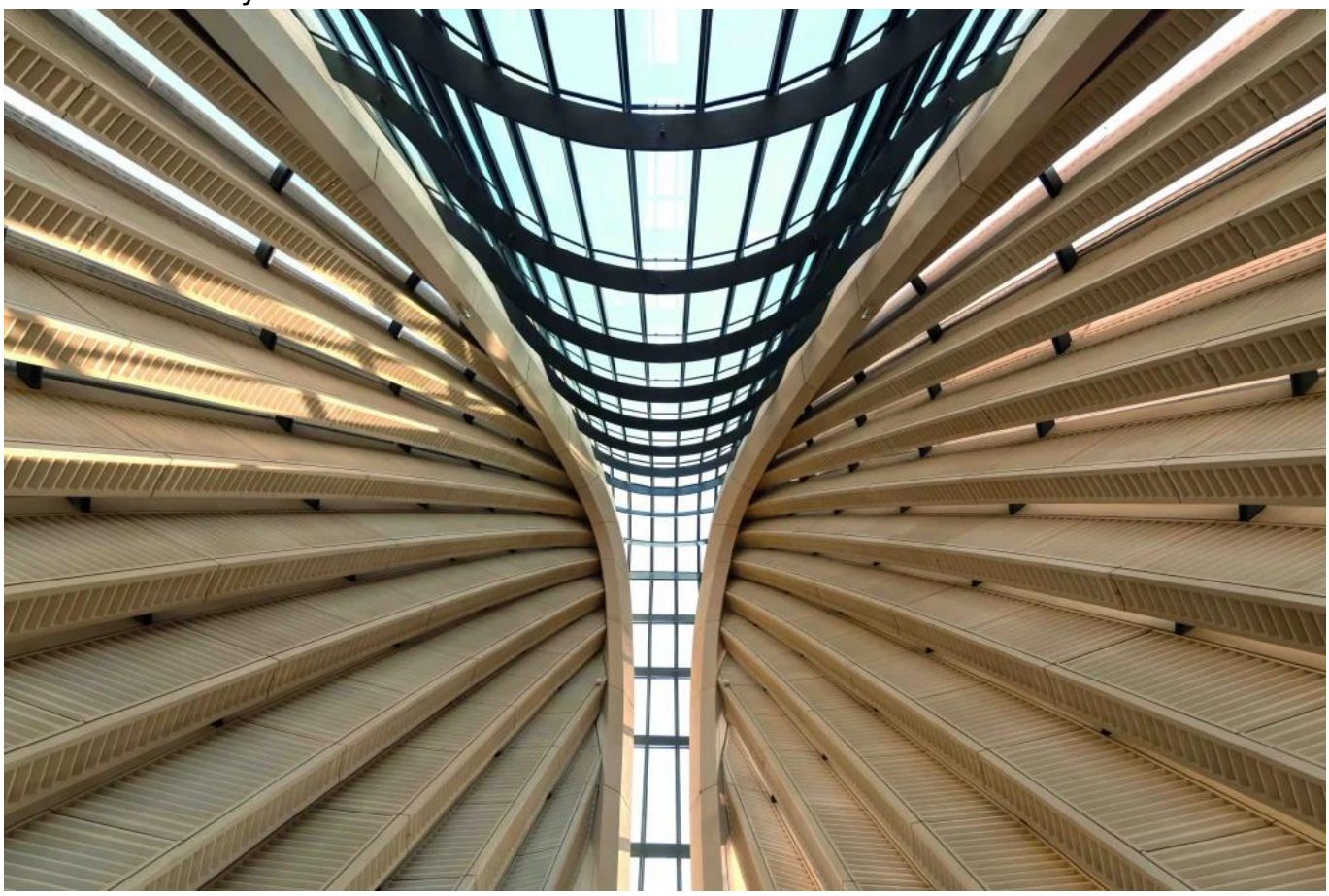


Chairman’s club at the top of the building.

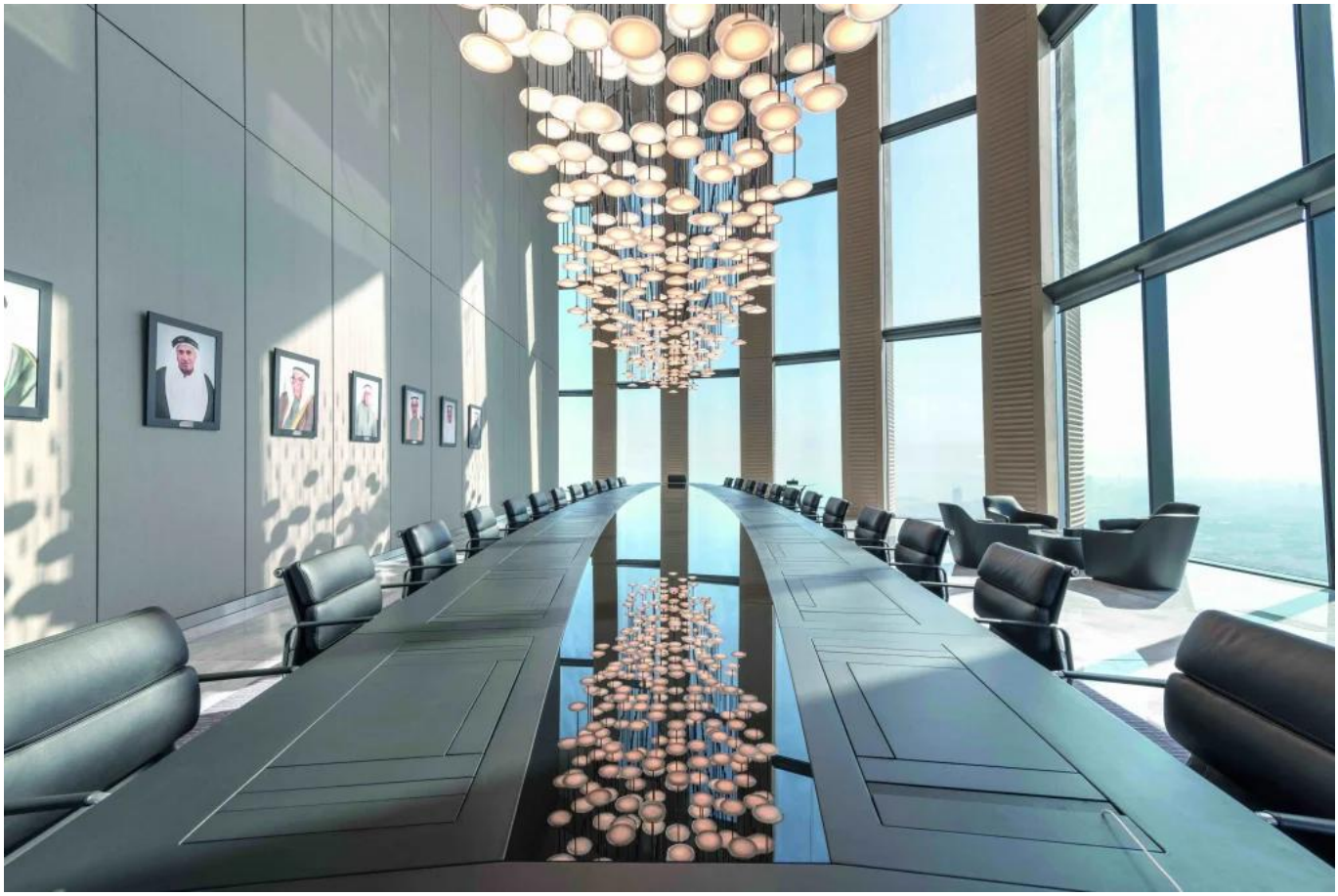


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