The Salk Institute believes in the quality of Antron® carpet fiber.

→ For the Salk Institute's Senior Planner Adam Ames, his philosophy is simple. “When you have experience with a product that performs beyond your expectations, don’t mess with it.” Carpet fiber has earned that reputation at the Salk Institute, and the facility team has now moved to one global specification that all carpet at the facility must be manufactured with Antron® carpet fiber.
In 1959, Jonas Salk, M.D., the developer of the polio vaccine, collaborated with architect Louis Kahn to design the Salk Institute, an independent nonprofit research center. His vision was to create a place for biologists to work together in a collaborative environment researching potential new therapies and treatments for a range of diseases. Salk also had a vision for the architectural and interior design of the facility, challenging Kahn “to create a facility worthy of a visit by Picasso.”

“The Salk Institute’s reputation is quality, from the distinguished researchers and biologists it employs to all of the architecture and design details of the building,” said Adam Ames, Senior Planner, Facility Services at the Salk Institute. “In regard to carpet, we’ve witnessed firsthand how selecting high quality interior finishes results in long term performance and a high return on investment. The carpet manufactured by Bentley® with Antron® carpet fiber installed more than 27 years ago is one of the most quality specifications we’ve made for a commercial interior product.”

In many areas of the facility, the carpet still looked great, but we decided to replace the carpet for consistency throughout the facility. In the last year, there were some areas that started to fray, but for the most part I don’t think anyone would have ever guessed the carpet was that old.”

The Salk Institute holds its new employee orientation and receptions for potential donors in one of the carpeted spaces. “For 27 years, we hosted weekly events in that space and the carpet has held up surprisingly well to coffee, juice and food stains, that we still felt comfortable using that space to court potential donors.”

Quality purchasing decisions are paramount because the Salk Institute is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. “We do not allocate a lot of money for interior renovations because we want most of our funding to go straight to science innovations,” said Ames. “We are extremely mindful of our budget and assign funds in the best possible way.”

When it came time to replace the 27-year-old carpet, selecting the replacement carpet style was one of the easiest interior design decisions Ames’ has made. “The replacement decision was a slam-dunk for all parties,” explains Ames. “When choosing interior selections in the past, I’ve found that everyone has an opinion about color and pattern. But in this case, the key stakeholders involved in the selection decision were all pleased with the previous carpet’s performance that everyone agreed we wanted the exact same Bentley carpet for the renovation. We also learned about all of the technical and performance improvements made to Antron® fiber over the years, and we anticipate being even more pleased with the quality, durability and performance expectations of the carpet.”

Because the existing carpet worked so well but was no longer a running line style, Bentley Mills agreed to manufacture the previous style as a custom order. The simple elegance of this carpet style featuring Antron® makes a nice back-drop and finish in heavy traffic areas such as the lobby, offices, conference rooms and the auditorium so the color and pattern is exactly like the old carpet. Even though the carpet style has pattern, the sophisticated style weaves well with the wood and concrete finishes in the facility and overall architectural design.

According to Ames, another benefit of carpet made with Antron® carpet fiber is that maintenance is minimal. The maintenance plan consists of daily vacuuming, with steam cleaning and spot cleaning as needed.

When asked to describe how the new carpet looks, Ames emphatically said, “Awesome!” He expects to keep the carpet for at least 20 years.