

## COWORKING SPACES

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**Abstract.** *The concept of 'Work' and 'Workplace' started to change in recent decades in parallel with developments in information and communication technologies. New ways of working have been defined as flexible, mobile and multi-locational. Coworking spaces have emerged worldwide as a new type of workspace concept. These places offer a flexible and appropriate work environment with various usage options.*

*Coworking spaces have emerged as a distinctive phenomenon in the sharing economy. They are collaborative environments that feed innovation and creativity under the slogan "working alone together".*

*These shared workspaces offer a suite of office-like amenities such as hot-desks, private meeting rooms, kitchens, coffee and more. Often, they also offer a community. Occupants typically are freelancers, entrepreneurs, start-ups and small teams who want to take advantage of a flexible space.*

**Keywords:** *coworking spaces, office, workspace, building, innovation space, architectural structure, flexibility, large cities, independent workers, creativity.*

## КОВОРГИНГ-ПРОСТРАНСТВА

**Аннотация.** *Понятия «работа» и «рабочее место» начали меняться в последние десятилетия параллельно с развитием информационных и коммуникационных технологий. Новые способы работы были определены как гибкие, мобильные и мультилокальные. Коворкинги появились во всем мире как новый тип концепции рабочего пространства. Эти места предлагают гибкую и подходящую рабочую среду с различными вариантами использования.*

*Коворкинг-пространства стали своеобразным явлением в экономике совместного потребления. Это среда для совместной работы, которая способствует инновациям и творчеству под лозунгом «работаем вместе в одиночку».*

*Эти общие рабочие пространства предлагают набор офисных удобств, таких как горячие столы, частные конференц-залы, кухни, кофе и многое другое. Часто они также предлагают сообщество. Обычно это фрилансеры, предприниматели, стартапы и небольшие команды, которые хотят воспользоваться гибким пространством.*

**Ключевые слова:** *коворкинг-пространства, офис, рабочее пространство, здание, инновационное пространство, архитектурное сооружение, гибкость, крупные города, самостоятельные работники, креативность.*

## INTRODUCTION

If we had to give a definition of coworking, we would say that it is a type of work organization that combines two concepts: a shared and flexible workspace (also called Flex Offices), but also a network of workers encouraging exchange and openness. Coworking spaces are essentially shared workspaces. They offer affordable office space for those looking to escape the isolation of a home office or coffee shop.

The idea of an office to share between several companies or independent workers comes from the United States. In France, coworking has been a real success especially in dynamic metropolises. The first coworking spaces were created in the heart of large cities. Today, this way of organizing work is also developing in rural and suburban areas.

In addition to culture, cost is another big draw. One of the advantages of these spaces is the ability to rent out only what you need vs an entire private office space, which can be costly. Through various membership based models, costs vary and allow for flexibility. These include options for daily fees or monthly fees. Membership costs also differ based on whether you use a shared desk or want a dedicated one.

Coworking is a self-directed, collaborative, flexible and voluntary work style that is based on mutual trust and the sharing of common core values between its participants. Coworking involves a shared workplace, often an office, and independent activity. Unlike in a typical office, those coworking are usually not employed by the same organization. Typically, it is attractive to work-at-home professionals, independent contractors, independent scientists or people who travel frequently who end up working in relative isolation. Coworking is a social gathering of a group of people who are still working independently, but who share values and who are interested in the synergy that can happen from working with people who value working in the same place alongside each other. Coworking offers a solution to the problem of isolation that many freelancers experience while working at home, while at the same time letting them escape the distractions of home. It generally costs money in the form of membership dues, though some spaces are free of charge.

Coworking is not only about the physical place, but about establishing a community. Indeed, its rapid growth has been seen as a possible way for city planners to address the decline of high street retail in urban centres. Its benefits can already be experienced outside of the physical spaces, and it is recommended to start with building a coworking community first before considering opening a

Coworking place. However, some coworking places don't build a community; they just get a part of an existing one by combining their opening with an event which attracts their target group.

Real-estate centric coworking spaces are about selling desks first, with building community as a secondary goal. Players target freelance professionals, remote workers, and small to medium enterprises who need a space and seek a community with a collaborative spirit. Customers also often benefit from professional services such as printing or incorporation or consulting.

Coworking is distinct from business accelerators, incubators and executive suites. These spaces do not fit into the coworking model because they often miss the social, collaborative, and informal aspects of the process. In coworking, management practices are closer to that of a cooperative, including a focus on community rather than profit.

The Village Underground Lisbon coworking center in Lisbon, Portugal was established in May 2014.

Village Underground Lisbon is an international platform for creativity, art, and culture. It has an original architectural structure built with two buses and 14 shipping containers converted into multidisciplinary creative spaces where an artistic community resides. It has a restaurant and

a sound recording studio. It hosts music, theatre, cinema and dance events with a focus on street culture (Figure 1, 2).



Figure 1. Village Underground Lisbon coworking center in Lisbon, Portugal.



Figure 2. Interior of Village Underground Lisbon coworking center in Lisbon, Portugal.

As an innovation space, Workshop17 is a hub where there's entrepreneurship for positive outcomes in both social and economic change. In a shared workspace, Workshop17 is where start-ups, companies, profit or non profits can work and share the same vision in one dynamic environment.

Since the start of Workshop17 in 2012, they have been fully committed to prioritising and incorporating the needs of all individuals, teams, and enterprises into each of their locations by providing members with a cool, creative, collaborative, and forward-thinking space to be productive, grow their networks, expand their ideas, and feel part of something bigger.

Workshop17's creative, collaborative coworking office spaces are discreetly elegant, chic, contemporary, and state-of-the-art. Each space is designed with the intention to inspire



productivity, creativity, and collaboration. Located in seven secure buildings across the cities of Johannesburg and Cape Town, every Workshop17 coworking space is furnished with the creative outputs of local designers and furniture manufacturers and equipped with the latest in advanced technology to ensure optimal productivity is achieved and maintained (Figure 3).



Figure 3. WORKSHOP 17 coworking center in Cape Town, South Africa.

To ensure they meet all individual, teams and business needs, Workshop17 boasts a variety of dynamic workspaces. For those looking to collaborate and work interactively, Workshop17 has created spaces like ideas lounges, pause areas, informal meeting booths, lounges, and open cafés. Members who prefer some privacy or are crunching to meet a deadline are encouraged to use their hot-desking areas and VC booths.

Each of their working spaces also comes fully equipped with phone booths, meeting rooms, boardrooms, seminar rooms and auditoriums, all of which enables members to work, meet and collaborate in an optimal environment. This allows for an easy and seamless transition from your home to the office.

Workshop17 has developed their very own software platform to manage all aspects of flexible workspaces. This includes bookings, memberships, access control, internet access, wallets (for space and other uses, creating a cash free environment) and networking (Figure 4).

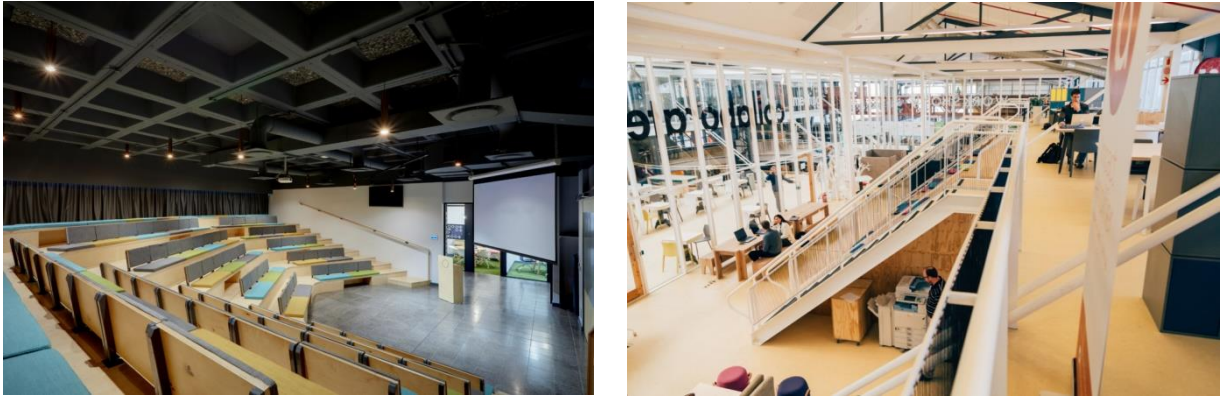


Figure 4. Interiors of WORKSHOP 17 coworking center in Cape Town, South Africa.

Workshop17's workspace solutions are:

- **Flexible:** Each workplace environment is designed to grow, shrink, and adapt with changing needs. It offers the ideal workspace without the burden of being tied to long term commitments.
- **Friction free:** Workshop17 provides you with everything you need to be productive and removes all hassles and sticking points. This way you can solely concentrate on what you want to achieve.
- **Comfortable:** Each space is ergonomic and beautiful, with a variation of seating and workspace solutions to suit all needs.
- **Engaging:** Workshop17 coworking space allow for networking opportunities.
- **Technologically advanced:** They provide members with corporate grade Audio Visual and ICT facilities and state-of-the-art technology.

## CONCLUSION

People collaborate with each other in new and innovative ways and connections constantly change from physical to virtual. Different types of actions in a work environment are mostly determined by new means of communication. In this age, knowledge workers, free lancers, start-ups and so on have the chance to do their solitary work anywhere without time restriction, which leads to more spatial independence and flexibility. But what is not changed, is their need of face-to-face interactions. New relationship forms and the search for new cooperation possibilities bring people together to work in co-working spaces though it is possible to work at home. Coworking spaces have emerged worldwide as a new type of workspace concept that meets different and changing user requirements.

They provide users with a constantly changing business partnership in alternative attractive spatial solutions which also encourages creativity. The new job of the new generation requires a more flexible analysis in terms of time and space, while socializing in a creative and sharing environment. The space can be shaped by the interaction between the users as well as providing the opportunity to prepare the grounds for interaction and offer different experiences. One of the major reasons for people to join in this pay to access co-working arrangement is to collaborate and socialize in addition to working. These types of workspaces differ from the traditional workplace with the dynamics they own. In these places, different spaces are created for various functions that offer the user the chance of a flexible and appropriate work environment with different membership plans.

Due to flexible ways of working (temporal and spatial) these places are used more intensively. The ability of the city to respond to this rapid development is achieved in the selected case by creating spaces through refunctioning within an existing building stock in a central part of the city which can be evaluated positively in the context of sustainable development.

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