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INNOVATION CENTER IDEABOOK

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Innovation is the driving force of today's economy, more essential for business success than ever before and harder to achieve. A well-designed workplace has the power to propel an organisation's innovation potential, amplifying the performance of individuals, teams and entire enterprises.
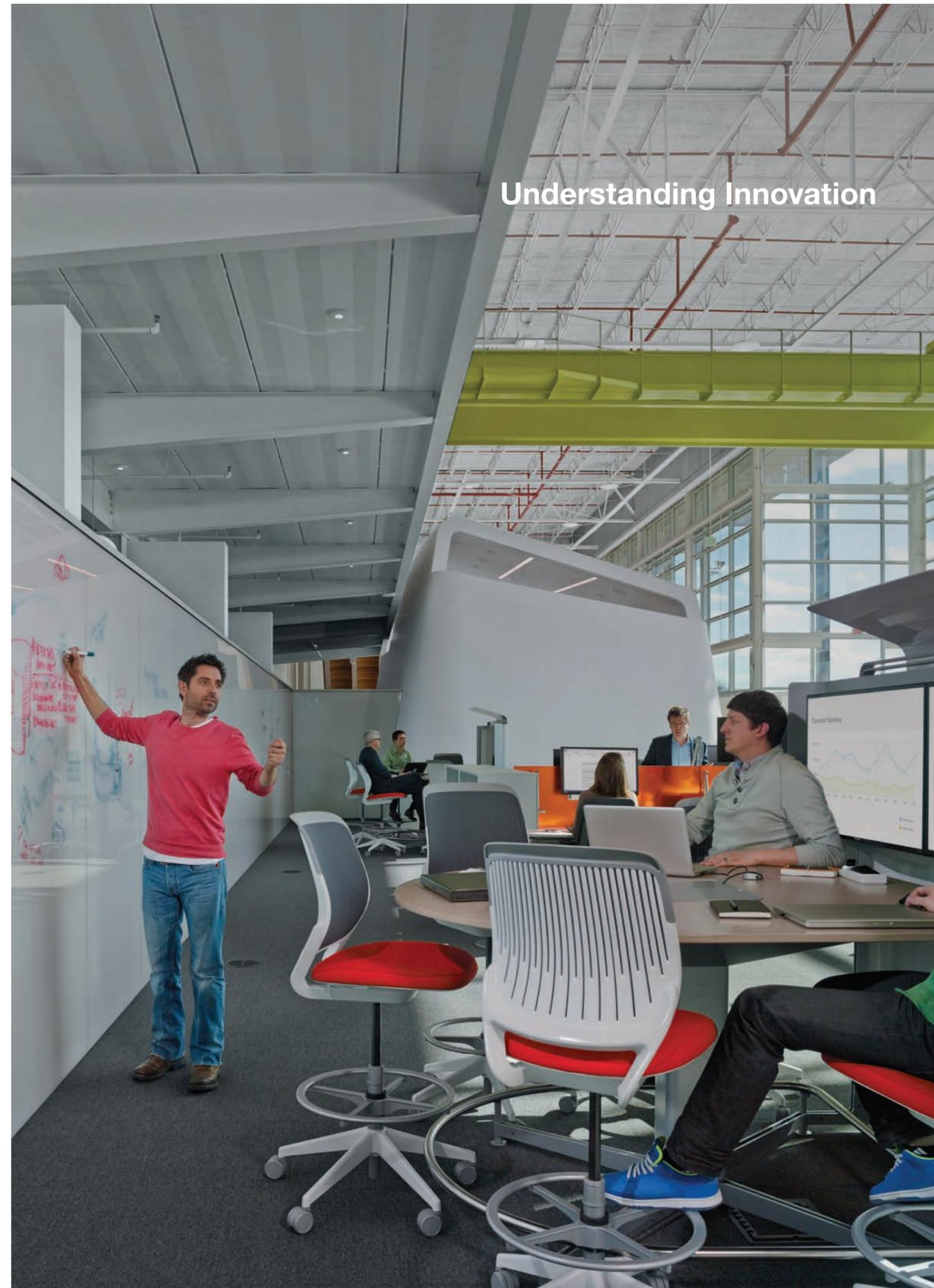
WHY INNOVATION?

Innovation drives advancement. That's always been true – throughout history, in every enterprise and in every part of the world.

Today, however, the drive for innovation is more intense than ever before. Global competition, rising customer expectations and escalating complexity now make innovation a business imperative, impossible to ignore. Companies know they need to improve and reinvent continuously to stay competitive.

And yet, innovation doesn't come easily. It requires building an innovation culture and creating the right kind of environment where people and their ideas can thrive.

TRENDS

Two notable workplace trends affect the process of innovation:

Empowerment

To do their best work, people want control over how they work. Having choices is empowering. It helps build an environment of trust, encouraging people to share ideas, take risks and make decisions – fundamental behaviours for creating innovation.

Restoring boundaries

Constantly connected to one another and surrounded by abundant, easily accessible information, workers today deal with workplaces full of distractions and noise. This threatens their productivity, creativity, decision-making, emotional wellbeing and willingness to engage with others – all key for effective innovation. Controlling the flow of information and level of stimulation has become critical.

KEY TENSIONS

PLANNING AND CREATING AN INNOVATION CENTRE THAT
SUPPORTS PEOPLE WORKING TOGETHER AND ADVANCES
THE SPEED OF INNOVATION REQUIRES BALANCING
A NUMBER OF NEEDS.

Secure

Support experimentation and protect fragile ideas.

Open

Invite engagement within the community of innovators.

Self-serviced

Provide basic provisions and amenities for teams to access
on their own without disrupting their workflow.

Facilitated

Facilitate and provide services to organise space and orchestrate
interactions when teams require additional assistance.

Static

Create a sense of permanence with consistent
tools, space and experience.

Evolving

Embrace change as processes evolve over time; "always
under construction."

Owned

Assign settings exclusively to an individual or a team.

Shared

Create spaces for everyone's use at different times.

KEY ELEMENTS

FOR ANY ENTERPRISE THAT WANTS TO AMPLIFY ITS
CAPACITY FOR INNOVATION, THREE ELEMENTS ARE KEY.

SAFE HAVEN FOR NEW IDEAS
In a protected "incubator" environment, teams are
free to test and develop fragile ideas, accelerating
iteration and innovation.

CULTURE OF INNOVATION AND COLLABORATION
Space can encourage curiosity, experimentation and
collaboration. It can inspire new thinking and communicate
key aspects of brand and culture.

LOCAL/GLOBAL CONNECTEDNESS
Co-located and distributed teams have distinct needs.
Thoughtful integration of teams across distances requires
planning, insight and commitment to minimize disparities.

SAFE HAVEN FOR NEW IDEAS

In a protected "incubator" environment, teams are free to test and develop fragile ideas, accelerating iteration and innovation.

Create a nurturing environment

• Provide areas for thinking alone and together, plus areas to build and test ideas.

• Understand that messiness is often essential to the process.

• Facilitate generative collaboration (i.e., combining content and knowledge to solve problems).

• Support the flow of ideas, good and bad.

• Provide a safe haven for generating, sharing and prototyping.

• Support the rhythm of collaboration – breaking apart for individual work and then coming back together again.

CULTURE OF INNOVATION AND COLLABORATION

Space can encourage curiosity, experimentation and collaboration. It can inspire new thinking and communicate key aspects of brand and culture.

Inspire curiosity

• Reinforce openness, transparency and gaining inspiration from others' work in progress.

• Stage items that inspire.

• Provide access to subject experts to disrupt conventional thinking and expose learning opportunities.

• Make sharing social.

• Create space for storytelling.

Encourage experimentation

• Create a set of permissions that empower people; move away from a "rules-based" approach.

• Plan for serendipity; allow unplanned encounters to occur easily in the space.

• Celebrate risk-taking, whatever the results.

• Allow teams to own a space for the length of their project.

Stimulate collaboration

• Allow for the messiness of brainstorming.

• Build diverse, interdisciplinary teams to solve problems in new ways.

• Cultivate a vibe of enthusiasm and optimism.

• Create spaces for different modes of collaboration: informative, evaluative and generative.
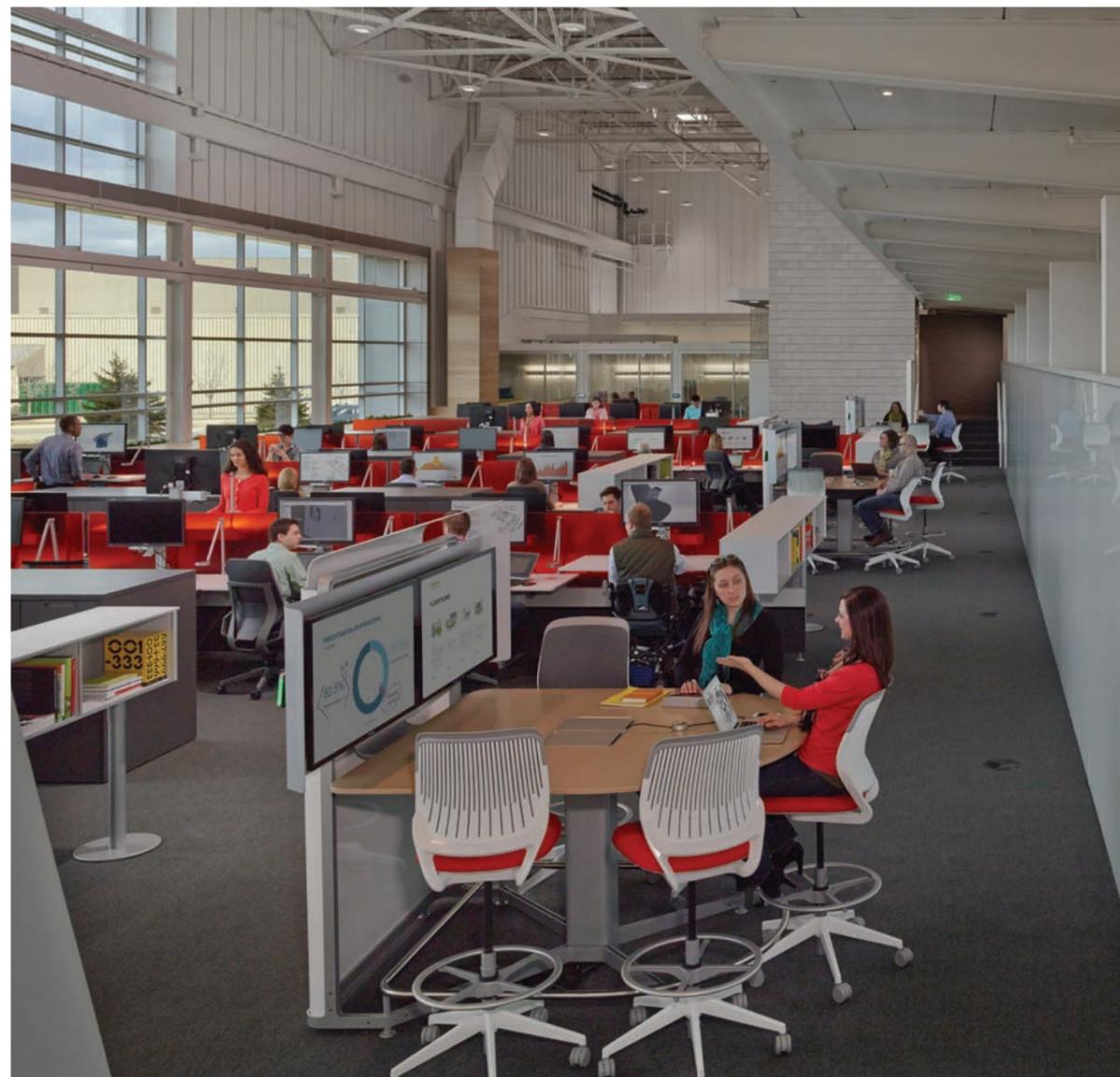
7 HABITS OF INNOVATION

IN PREPARATION FOR THEIR MOVE INTO STEELCASE'S NEW INNOVATION CENTRE, A CROSS-DISCIPLINE TEAM DEVELOPED A MANIFESTO OF SORTS FOR NEW RESIDENTS. THE AIM: ACCELERATING INSIGHTS TO INNOVATION.

Raise central questions

Ask big questions, and then start digging in. It can be intimidating to work in uncharted territory without familiar paths to follow, or with no right or wrong answers. But accept this ambiguity as a part of your process and go with it. Question your assumptions and ask crazy, lofty questions... then explore these mysteries by breaking them down into focused pursuits.

Be observers, listeners and learners

We are all explorers of ideas, and we need to uncover the edges of what we already know so that we're able to step into new territories. So roll up your sleeves, get dirty and take risks to venture into the unknown! Covering a lot of ground quickly will help you uncover the most exciting opportunities to take further.

Make ideas visible

Get ideas out of your head – make them visible! Write it, doodle it, hack it, build it, act it out, make a video, whatever. Ideas are useful only to the extent that they can be shared, evaluated and built on by others. If you have trouble finding a way to express or visualize your ideas, team up with someone who can help you get your ideas out in the open.

Share and co-create

Reach out to foster connections and meaningful relationships both inside and outside of the company. Inspiration, opportunities and partnerships can come from anywhere; they feed your intellectual appetites and assemble a more dynamic community. So, spark some interesting and even provocative discussions by inviting more diverse voices into your conversations. Mix it up – great ideas can come from unexpected places.

Make others successful

A great measure of your success is how well you have made others successful. Build an environment of trust and respect around you. Recognize your colleagues, encourage their contributions and build on their ideas. Celebrate courage, and create more opportunities for the people around you to shine.

Be an optimist

Enthusiasm is contagious. We all share an innate optimism in the very work that we're doing; our collective efforts create solutions that can improve people's lives and build a healthier world. Openly embrace this enthusiasm, and listen to constructive criticism – it makes ideas stronger, and doing so also gets others excited about what you're creating together.

Fail faster to succeed sooner

Learn, rinse, repeat. Don't wait to try and get everything right the first time. Even if something doesn't work as expected, we still learn from it. Rapid prototypes gradually grow your understanding of the big problems that we're trying to solve, piece by piece. And the more things you try out, the more you learn – faster!

SHARED EXPERIENCE + PROCESS

ACCESS TO TOOLS, TECHNOLOGY + SPACE

LOCAL/GLOBAL CONNECTEDNESS

To foster innovation between co-located and distributed teams, an organisation must provide a consistent and equitable experience through access to tools, technology and space.

However, co-located and distributed teams have distinct needs. Thoughtful integration of teams across distances requires planning, insight and commitment to minimize disparities. Acknowledge the need to solve for co-located and distributed teams in different ways.

Distributed teams

• Make interactions fluid by facilitating informal video communication throughout the day and providing videoconferencing rooms for meetings.

• Provide technology that makes content-sharing easy for everyone.

• Provide multiple monitors so participants can see one another and shared content concurrently.

• Create spatial context by providing similar environments in all locations.

• Support movement during videoconferencing with technology that captures the entire setting.

• Create a dashboard that communicates phases and status of work.

Co-located teams

• Increase opportunities to network, interact and build trust for stronger working relationships.

• Inspire new thinking with a venue for informal interactions, workshops and speakers.

• Provide spatial flexibility with mobile furniture and assets that can be easily reconfigured to meet worker needs.

Designing for Innovation

Key Zones
Design Considerations
Scalability + Customisation
Innovation Centre Floor plans

FIVE SPATIAL ZONES*

When creating a Resilient Workplace, consider the intentional combination of five spatial typologies (zones), designed to accommodate and anticipate changing organizational and employee needs.

The size, ratio and adjacency of each zone should be tailored to match both your business objectives and cultural expectations. The result is an agile workplace that supports change, rather than resists it.

SOCIAL ZONE

This inviting space promotes both intentional and chance encounters with co-workers. It supports social behaviours around connecting with others to help foster a community of innovation.

MEETING ZONE

This space is designed for deep collaboration, supporting the cycle between individual and collaborative modes throughout the duration of a project. Settings are planned purposefully to accommodate project needs over time, while promoting connection across the table or across the globe.

RESIDENT ZONE

Designed to grow expertise and community within their discipline, the Resident zone supports workers who are tethered to technology and have assigned spaces.

NOMADIC ZONE

The Nomadic zone invites individuals who are transitioning throughout the day between projects and tasks. Located close to the concierge, and with easy access to work tools that help workers manage their day, the space gives individuals everything they need to be productive.

RESOURCE ZONE

The host for the Innovation Centre supports the tools, culture and processes that are necessary for innovation. This space houses the work tools and shared materials that support the residents of the Innovation Centre.

* SPECIALTY ZONE

A specialty zone would be an area specific to the innovation at hand. An example might be a prototyping area, machine shop, laboratory or resource library.

Ecosystem of Zones

NOMADIC ZONE · RESIDENT ZONE · RESOURCE ZONE · MEETING ZONE · SOCIAL ZONE
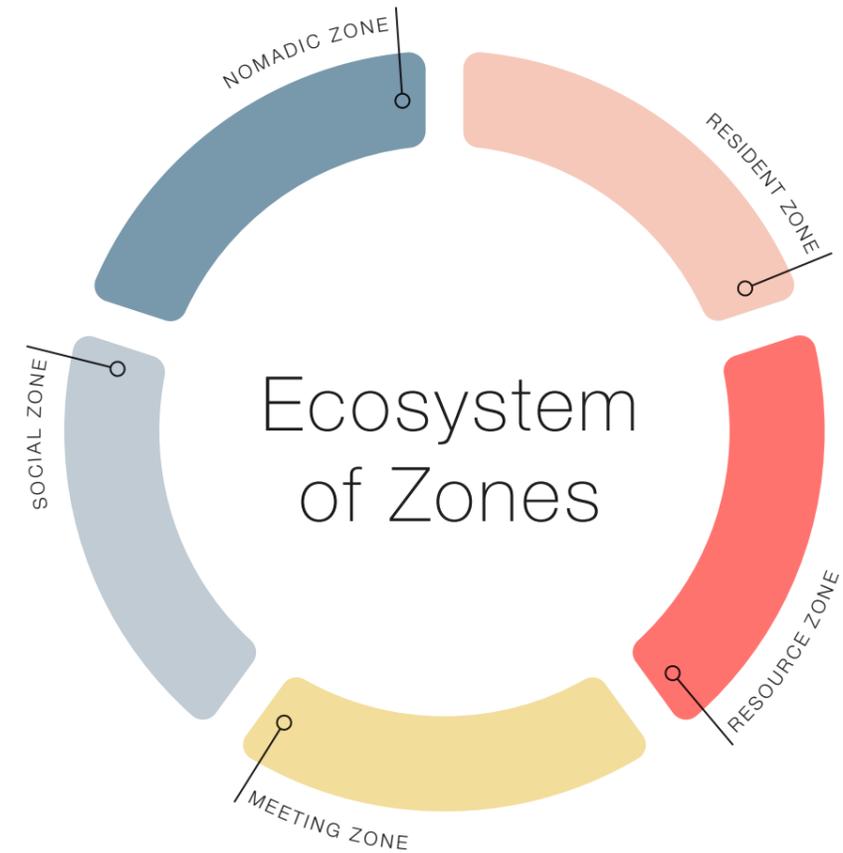
SOCIAL ZONE

This inviting space promotes both intentional and chance encounters with co-workers. It supports social behaviours around connecting with others to help foster a community of innovation.

Design considerations

- Leverage technology to organise and deliver company information, creating an enterprise-wide link for employees.
- Create small collaborative and social settings to support planned and unplanned interactions throughout the workday.
- Create engaging experiences that attract workers to the space.
- Leverage the space to strengthen relationships and build trust.
- Provide informal settings where workers can unwind and rejuvenate.
- Incorporate flexibility to hold events and host experts, ensuring that the technology and furniture are scaled to the size of the group.
- Provide access to food and beverages throughout the workday.

Worker behaviours supported

Socialising with others

Relaxing to recharge

Refuelling with nourishment

Staying connected to organisational information

MEETING ZONE

This space is designed for deep collaboration, supporting the cycle between individual and collaborative modes throughout the duration of a project. Settings are planned purposefully to accommodate project needs over time, while promoting connection across the table or across the globe.

Design considerations

- Tailor spaces for various worker needs (e.g., different tools and technologies, levels of formality, duration of use and postures).
- Provide transition spaces that allow workers to prepare for or debrief between meetings or to step aside during a meeting to take a phone call or complete an individual task.
- Incorporate videoconferencing and technology to enable distributed collaboration for remote users.
- Consider adjacencies of resident and nomadic spaces so people can quickly switch between individual and group work modes.

Worker behaviours supported

Presenting to others

Generating new ideas

Connecting with other geographies

Co-creating with others

Preparing for meetings

RESIDENT ZONE

Designed to grow expertise and community within their discipline, the Resident zone supports workers who are tethered to technology and have assigned spaces.

Design considerations

- Provide customisable assigned work settings for individuals in a co-located team.
- Carefully consider the blend of spaces for focused thinking (both individually and as a team) and spaces for making prototypes.
- Provide alternative work settings, such as private enclaves, so workers can choose where to work based on the task at hand.
- Enable seamless transitions between work modes – focus, collaboration, learning, social, rejuvenation – within the surrounding ecosystem of spaces.
- Incorporate intuitive tools and technologies for ease of use.
- Consider "aside" and "porch" spaces where people can connect, share or get away.
- Balance collaboration with spaces for rejuvenation where workers can refresh, access nature or spend meaningful time alone.

Worker behaviours supported

Working on tasks

Concentrating

Absorbing information

Sharing ideas

Connecting with others

Building relationships

Working together

Seeking respite

NOMADIC ZONE

The Nomadic zone invites individuals who are transitioning throughout the day between projects and tasks. Located close to the concierge, and with easy access to work tools that help workers manage their day, the space gives individuals everything they need to be productive.

Design considerations

- Provide a mix of reservable and on-demand individual spaces for planned and impromptu needs.
- Support users' work modes, personal preferences and wellbeing needs by providing a variety of settings.
- Provide for the privacy experiences of focus and rejuvenation.
- Consider lockers for mobile workers to house belongings, long and short term.
- Plan for easy access to the Meeting zone and Social zone.
- Consider adjacencies and protocols to create or manage the intended vibe and stimulation of the space.
- Incorporate collaborative spaces where teams can gather to share ideas and information quickly.

Worker behaviours supported

Focusing on a task

Taking a moment to rejuvenate

Having a private conversation

Working alone among others

DESIGNING FOR INNOVATION

RESOURCE ZONE

The host for the Innovation Centre supports the tools, culture and processes that are necessary for innovation. This space houses the work tools and shared materials that support the residents of the Innovation Centre.

Design considerations

• Provide workspace for a host/concierge.

• Consider the entry/welcome experience for guests and residents, so they can connect to tools, spaces and people, as needed.

• Enhance effectiveness by providing appropriate tools and technology on an as-needed basis.

• Provide storage for work tools that support customized meeting experiences (mobile telepresence, whiteboards, presentation tools, etc.).

• Provide appropriate self-serve and facilitated hosting services so team members can maintain optimal efficiency in their workflows.

Worker behaviours supported

Seeking assistance

Accessing work amenities

Pursuing technology help and advice

Designing a personalised meeting experience

* SPECIALTY ZONE

A specialty zone would be an area specific to the innovation at hand. An example might be a prototyping area, machine shop, laboratory or resource library.

Design considerations

• Understand the unique needs of the organisation and the requirements of its development process.

• Ensure easy access and adjacency to team work areas to support optimal workflows.

• Provide a place for prototyping and testing ideas – virtually or physically.

SCALABILITY + CUSTOMISATION

The different zones within an Innovation Centre create an ecosystem of interdependent spaces that act as a platform for the innovation process. Each must be customized and scaled to the organisation in alignment with its specific business needs and goals. Working together, the zones create an inspiring environment where innovators can come together in interdisciplinary teams to create and advance innovation.

INTERNAL MODELS OF INNOVATION

OFF-SITE MODEL
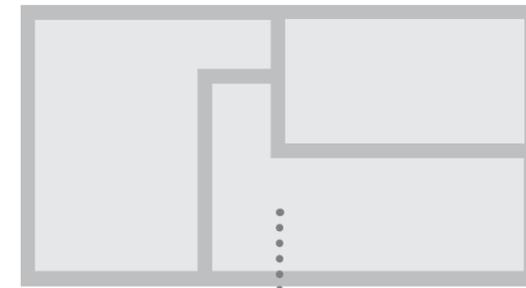
ON-SITE MODEL
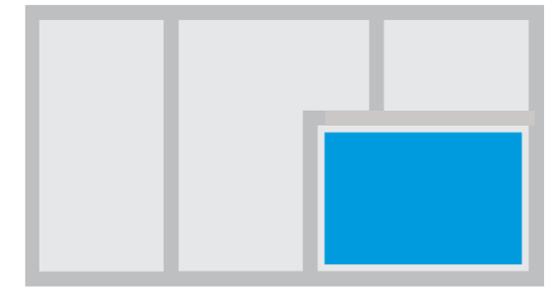
Organisations seek innovation in a number of different ways, from internal grassroots efforts to external partnerships. Within this ideabook, we'll be exploring two internal models: an off-site floorplan and an on-site floorplan.

INNOVATION CENTRE FLOORPLANS

The process of innovation is unique to each organisation, so the space to support it should be unique, too. There are many ways to design for innovation in organisations with different needs related to location, size and project type. Exploring these two examples of internal Innovation Centres – an off-site model and an on-site model – may help identify and visualize opportunities.

SOCIAL ZONE · RESOURCE ZONE · MEETING ZONE · NOMADIC ZONE · RESOURCE ZONE · RESIDENT ZONE

SOCIAL ZONE

NOMADIC ZONE

MEETING ZONE
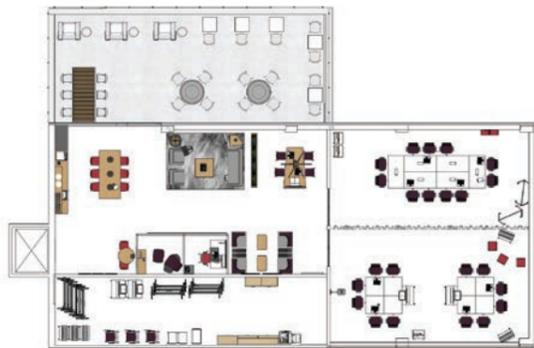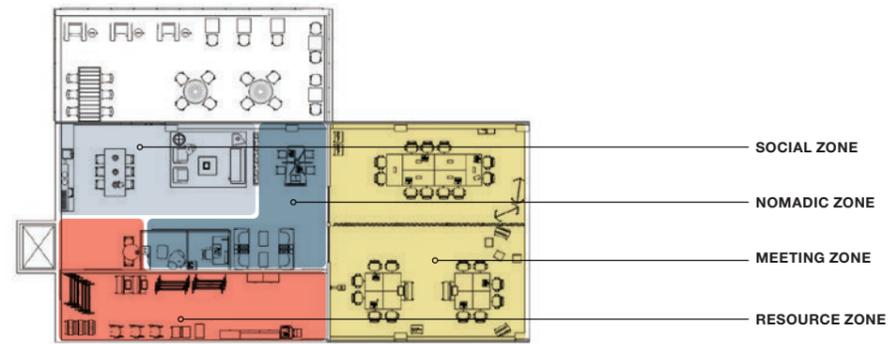
RESOURCE ZONE

OFF-SITE
SAMPLE SCENARIO: 251 M²

Comprised of the following zones:

- Social zone 22%
- Meeting zone 43%
- Nomadic zone 16%
- Resource zone 19%
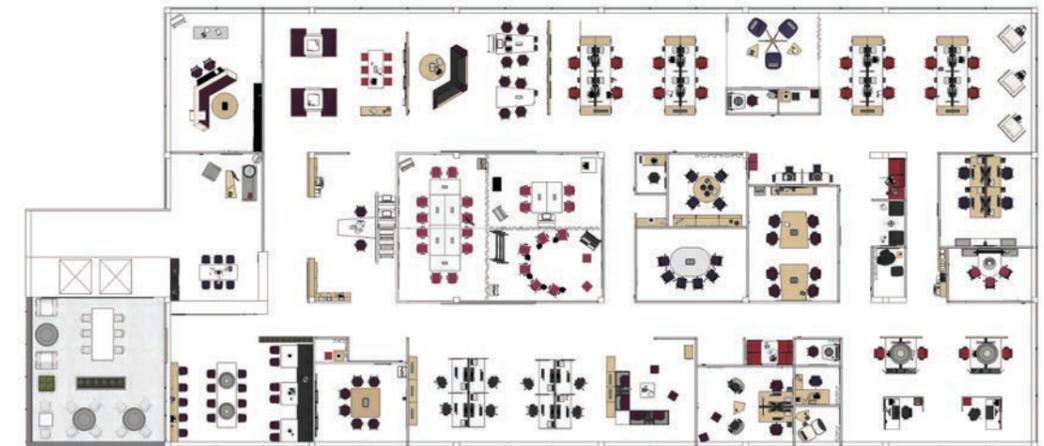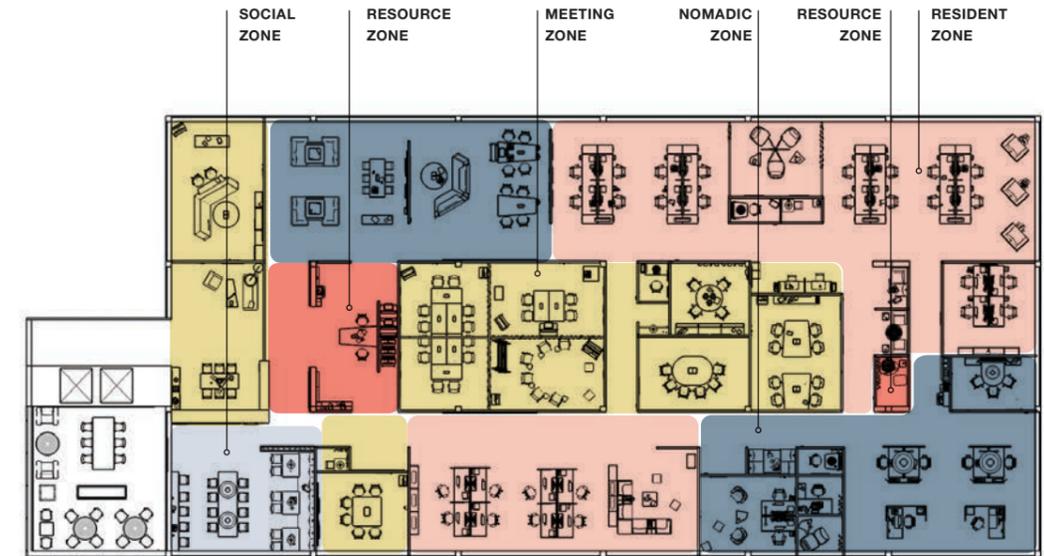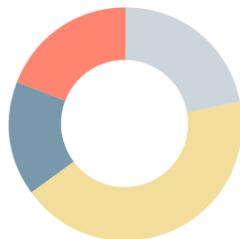
ON-SITE
SAMPLE SCENARIO: 1022 M²

Comprised of the following zones:

- Social zone 5%
- Meeting zone 30%
- Resident Zone 34%
- Nomadic zone 25%
- Resource zone 6%
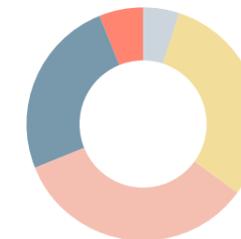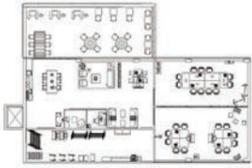
INNOVATION CENTRE
OFF-SITE MODEL

For some organisations, getting away is the best way to support part of the innovation process. In this destination model, a team can generate, present, evaluate and make decisions. The off-site space can be utilized during different points of the innovation process. A highly hosted retreat type setting that can be used for whatever duration of time fits the team's needs.
The space is set to temporarily accommodate large and small groups and can be easily arranged and re-arranged.

Design solution includes:

• Hosted meeting spaces prepared upon arrival.

• Social spaces for individual or team breakouts and rejuvenation.

• A variety of meeting spaces to accommodate the varied needs of project teams during the innovation and development process.

• Small phone booths, enclaves and individual settings for spontaneous privacy needs.

ENTRY + RESOURCE ZONE

bienvenida.
welcome.
benvenuti.
willkommen.
bienvenue.
welkom.
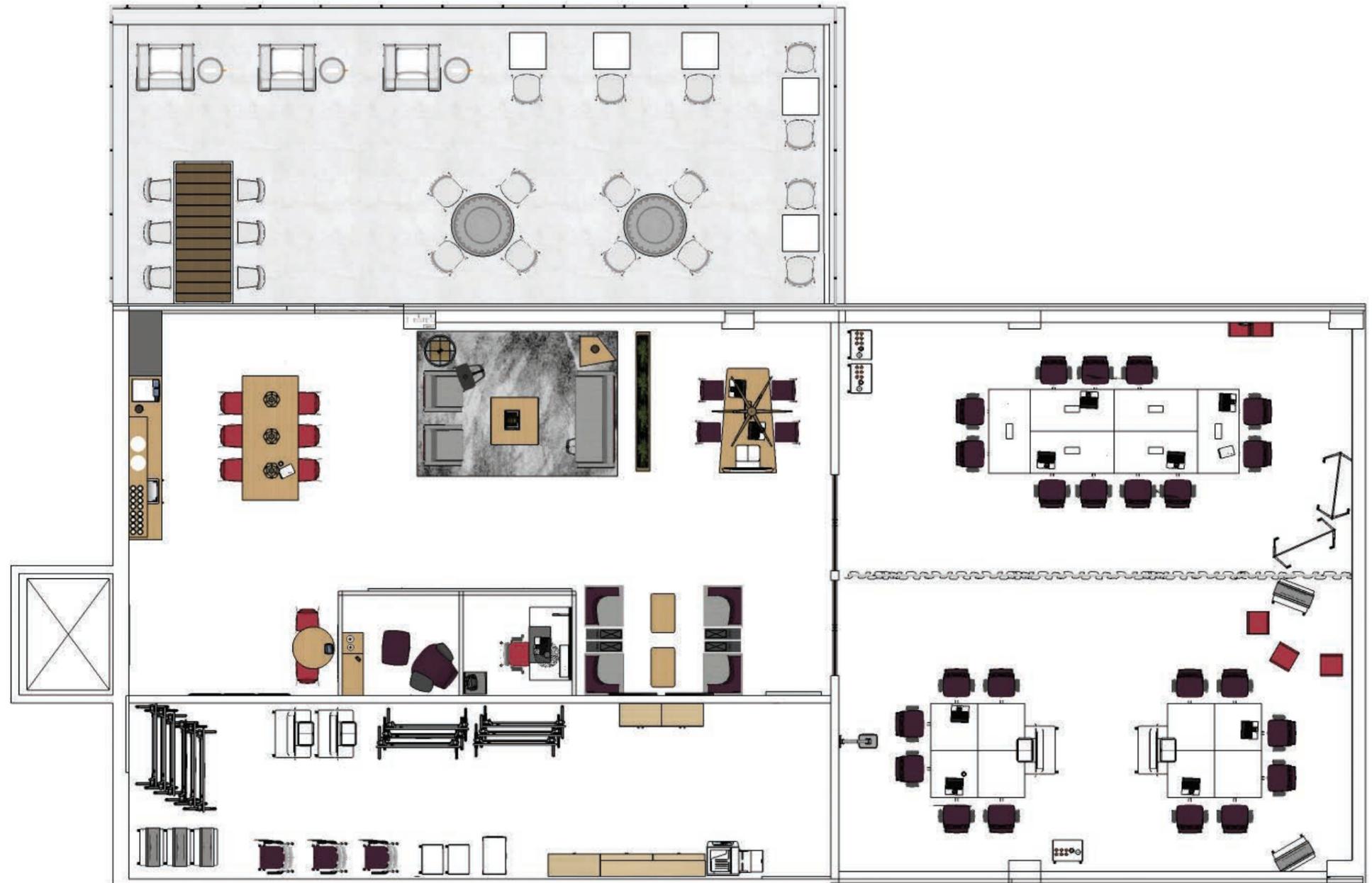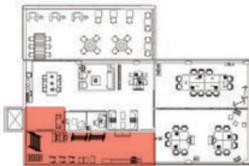
The entry welcomes workers to the space, flowing directly into the Social zone where workers can be greeted and directed.
The Resource zone is highly hosted and "behind the scenes". It is used by staff to prepare the space for incoming groups.
The use of all mobile furniture allows the meeting spaces to be easily configured based on the needs of each team.
A large back storage area allows for unused furniture to be stored when not in use. A very intentional kit of parts balances group
capabilities with storage efficiencies.
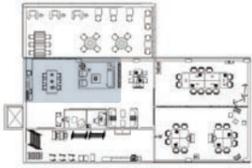
SOCIAL ZONE

This self-serve café provides a place for individuals to connect with others, work individually or take a break from meetings in a social environment. When needed, the café is set up to provide fully hosted lunches and events.

An open lounge setting allows workers to informally collaborate or socialise without removing themselves from the energy and activity of the café.
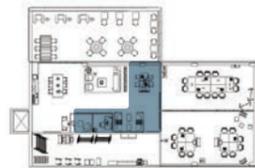
NOMADIC ZONE

These collaborative settings support short-term group sessions. Allowing workers to prep for larger group shares or use as an overflow breakout space to the larger adjacent meeting room.

Free address enclaves give workers a chance to complete focus tasks, join a conference call or get away from the group for a moment of respite.
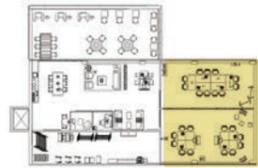
MEETING ZONE
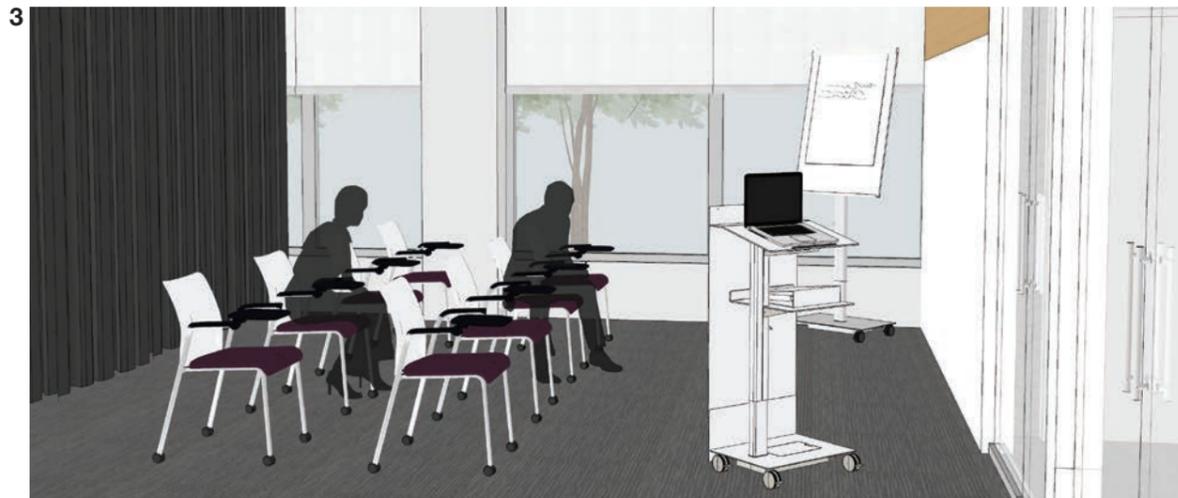
The flexibility of the large meeting space allows it to be set up to accommodate smaller groups in a variety of ways. Each meeting space is arranged based on the needs of the team and ready upon arrival. These spaces are designed to help aid in generating and capturing content.
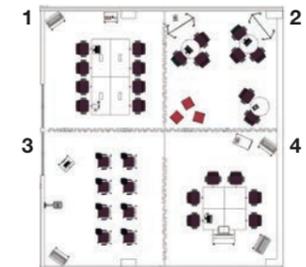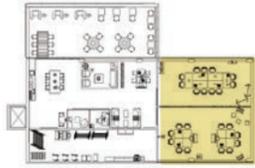
MEETING ZONE

The Meeting zone can also be arranged to accommodate two separate groups. If necessary, the mobile furniture can be easily re-arranged by the group throughout the course of the day.
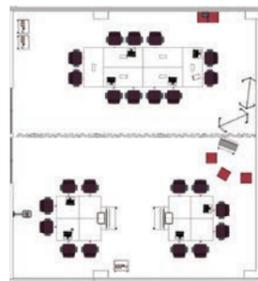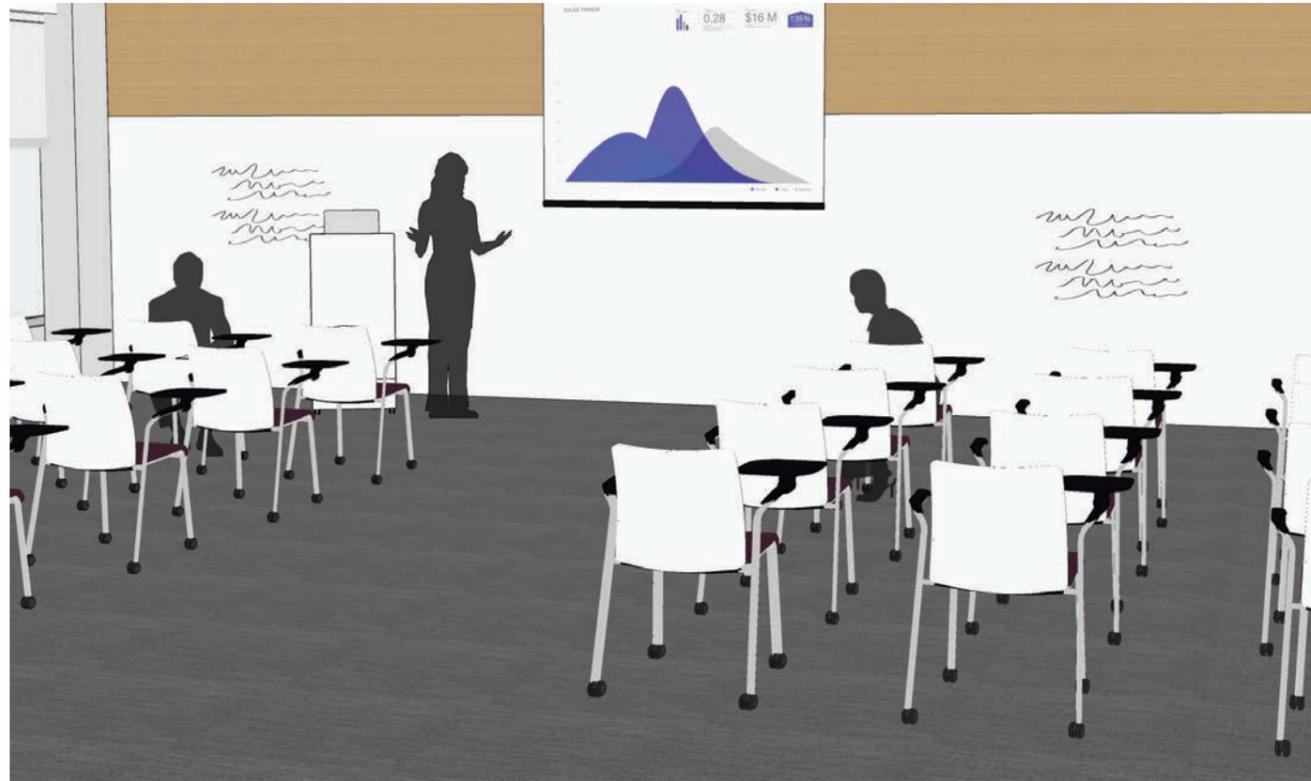

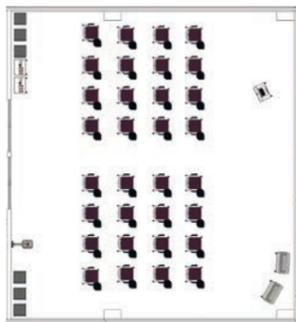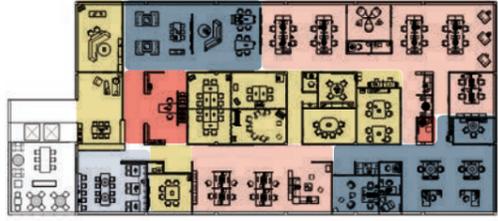These larger group spaces are ideal for content sharing and decision making during the innovation process.
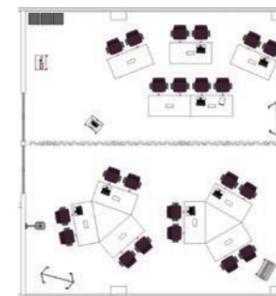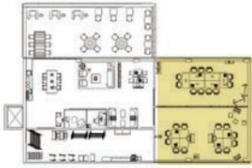
MEETING ZONE

Completely opening up the space can accommodate one large group meeting or sharing session. Technology in the space allows for presentation and group share.
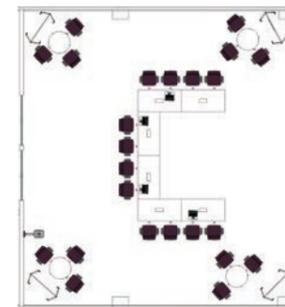
INNOVATION CENTRE

This model creates a safe haven for new ideas within the larger space of an organisation's campus. It's designed to empower a distinct cross-functional group that is responsible for innovation within the organisation. Highly secure, the space can be accessed only by designated employees who actively contribute to innovation and development processes. With opportunities for individual work as well as group collaboration across distances, the space intentionally fosters a culture of innovation through creating, sharing and testing ideas. A range of settings provides for individual choices, and dedicated team spaces support key innovation behaviours.

Design solution includes:

• Individual spaces adjacent to and embedded in project studios for shifting from individual to group work

• Small phone booths, enclaves and individual settings for spontaneous privacy needs

• Front porch spaces for project studios to accommodate collaborative transitions

• Anticipation of constant expansion and contraction of project studios as project teams and phases change over time
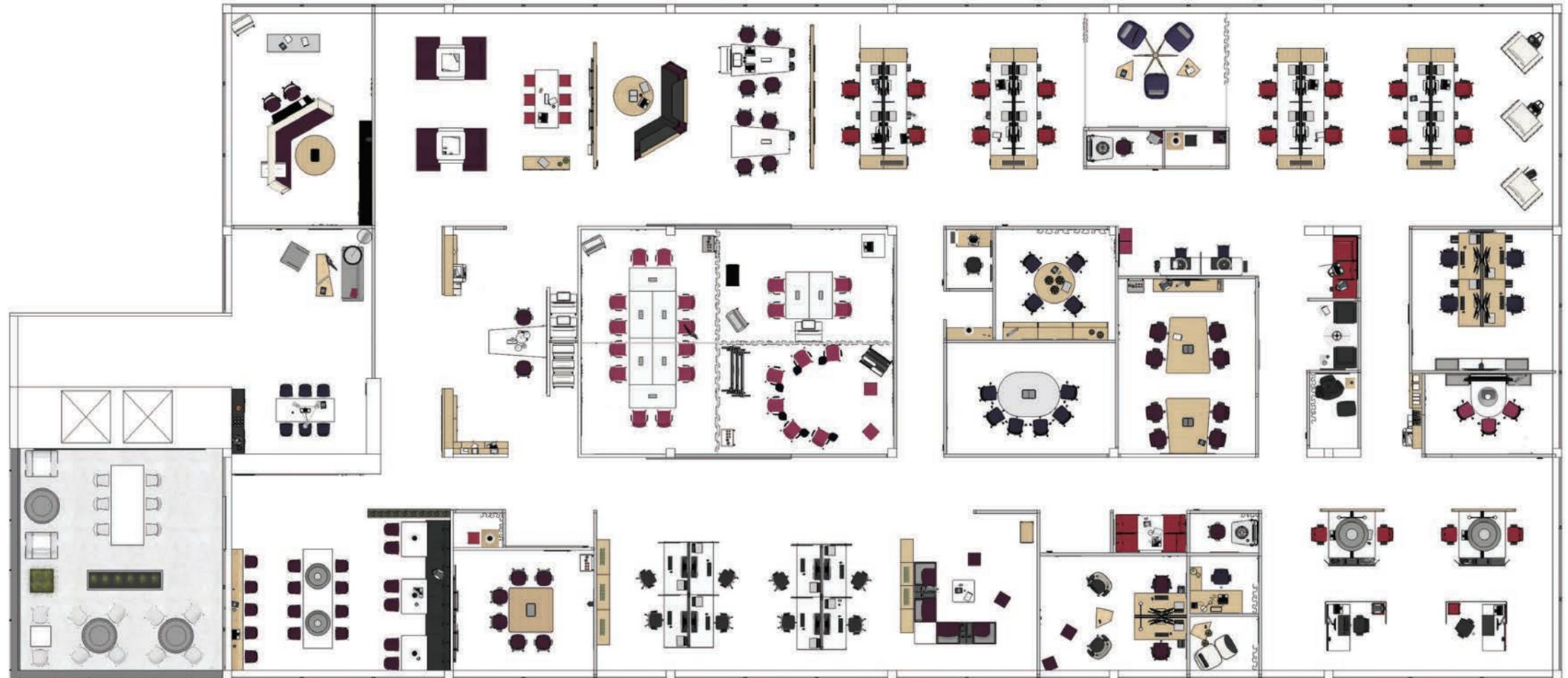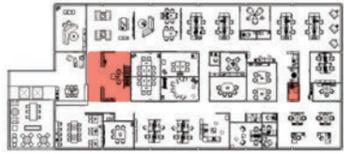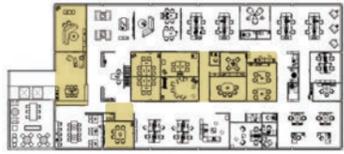
ENTRY + RESOURCE ZONE

The entry sets the stage for a welcoming experience with a concierge to help introduce and orient workers to the space.

Just outside of the entry, two informal meeting areas allow for guests to meet with workers or wait to be brought back into the space.

Easy self-serve access to resources upon arrival helps workers prepare for the day.

MEETING ZONE

A project room provides a team a dedicated, owned space for a period of time. Lockable storage, access to power and data, integrated technology and display space aid the project in process.

The front porch supports transitions before, during and after meetings. Also included in the porch area is a place to display and share team communications.
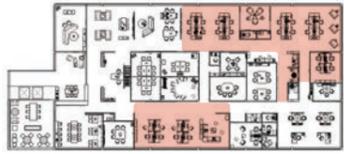

Small scale meeting rooms provide opportunity for small groups of workers to break away and generate ideas or build content. Ample whiteboard space allows workers to capture and share ideas easily.
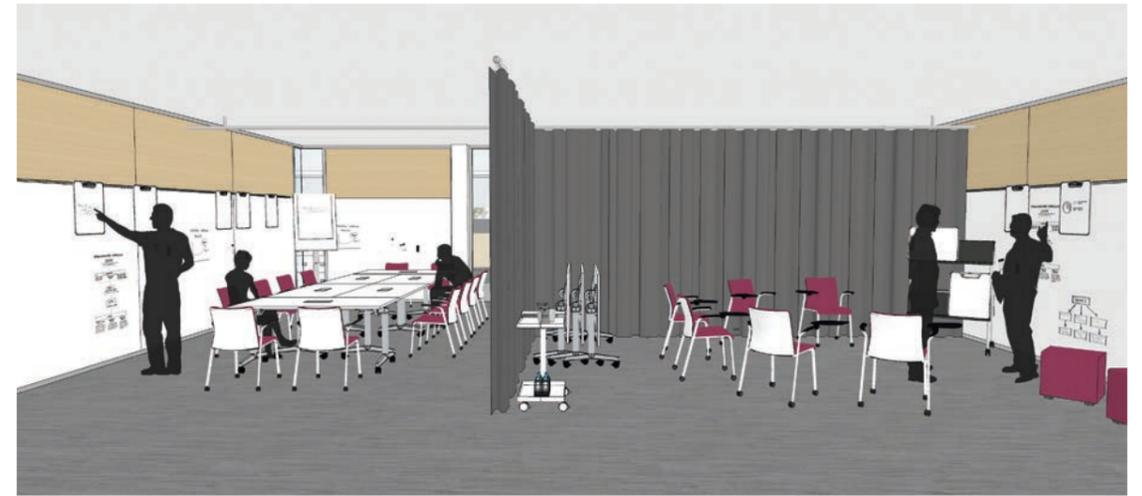
Groups can quickly immerse themselves here, hold a brainstorming session and easily rearrange the space to meet their needs.

RESIDENT ZONE

Height-adjustable tables give residents the ability to shift postures throughout the day. Power access, lighting, work tools and bag storage help to maximize work area.

A shared, dynamic space provides a team with acoustical privacy from the rest of the office, with space for idea-sharing and feedback, as well as social interaction – building a sense of community among team members.
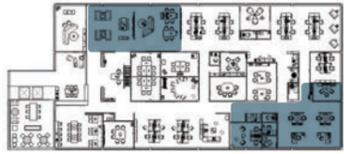

Workstations with high storage provide residents with boundary, ensuring privacy and helping to define and separate the space. Each resident is provided with storage, technology support and work tools.

The back porch of the team room provides individual spaces to make private phone calls, engage in focused work away from teams or simply unwind.

NOMADIC ZONE

This nomadic setting provides storage and defined boundaries for workers seeking focus.

Individual settings with high boundaries are provided for nomads who seek minimal interruption. Height-adjustable tables allow for movement and customisation, ideal for longer durations.

Private enclaves offer workers a high degree of control and boundaries for rejuvenation or shallow-focus work.

In this reservable workspace, a dyadic team can work side by side at a work surface or in an alternative-posture lounge area that offers a comfortable place to share content or connect.
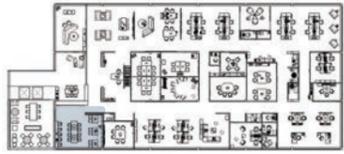
SOCIAL ZONE

A café helps build a sense of organisational culture and belonging. Workers can connect, socialise and build valuable social capital.

A shielded café close to the entry provides a space for personal or casual conversations. By utilizing the outdoors, the space can grow to accommodate a large social gathering.