

#29co-session

Build your own innovation space.

Creative & innovation spaces, methods, tools and people attitudes



ORGANIZED BY:



INSTITUTE
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CO-SOCIETY
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OUR NEW SPACE

In our last Co-Session of the year we were in a new space of our own. We now have our own premises in the heart of Barcelona's Poblenou neighborhood. This old industrial zone has been undergoing reconversion for several years now to become the city's innovation district, a favorite location for new tech and knowledge companies. We have named the space "The Institute of Next", and we want it to become a place where companies and organizations of all kinds can learn to change their "operating system" to be able to adapt to the different disruptions that will affect all sectors and types of company in the near future.

What better occasion than the opening of our new premises to dedicate this Co-Session to the subject of spaces for innovation? So this is what we did with the fellows of Co-Society, as usual, and this time we were also accompanied by a group of young students from the Summer School on Management of Creativity, organized by the HEC business school in Montreal and the University of Barcelona, and on tour around the city to explore its creative and innovation ecosystem in more detail.





CREATIVE AND INNOVATION SPACES. STATE OF THE ART

Workspaces have undergone a major transformation over recent years. In the 70s and 80s, a typical corporate office had dozens of employees isolated from each other, each in their own cubicle. Thirty years later the opposite is the order of the day, with totally open spaces that strip away any feeling of privacy and even hierarchy. But now, even this model of a workspace that is so in vogue is a subject of hot debate as it is considered counterproductive in the case of some jobs and types of workers.

Alfons Cornella, founder of Co-Society, showed us some trends and examples of new workspaces around the world. We learned that the ideal and definitive place for creativity and innovation has yet to be found, and that perhaps the best way forward is to offer spaces that are easily adaptable to the needs of each moment and context. We also learned that the corporate space is no longer the only possible option anyhow, and that nowadays new workspaces are expanding into increasingly varied ways of relating to other people: co-working spaces; spaces for “making” and doing things with our hands (FabLabs); combining work and personal life; working from time to time on a particular challenge with creatives “in residence”, etc.

PRACTICAL CASES:

THREE ACCOUNTS



BANC SABADELL

Creativity and innovation have not traditionally been words associated with banks. But now new types of customers, new ways of entering the market and new technologies provide a context of accelerated transformation that demands new ways of working in these financial institutions. Maria Santolaria, Venture Designer at Innocells, Banco Sabadell's hub for new digital businesses, has witnessed the way in which initiating this change is held back. For example, and to start, she has seen the obstacles involved in creating a different space to that used for everyday tasks and duties, with a "Project Room" in which for the first time in the bank the walls were transformed into whiteboards to work on new ideas.

Having overcome teething troubles at first, this new space is now booked out several days in advance by different departments of the bank. Having changed the space has meant that many employees come up with a new way of thinking about things. The idea is for people who pass through the space to take this new mindset back to their usual work station. The whiteboard walls have now spread throughout the organization and, for the first time, everyone involved in the bank's new projects can participate in the process from the very beginning. Implementing Innocells has led to a fivefold increase in this initial space for innovation.



MICHELIN

For his part, Erik Grab, VP of Strategic Anticipation, Innovation & Sustainable Development of the Michelin Group, stated that they didn't want to have their own spaces to innovate. He prefers instead to "hack" other spaces like a bus or a FabLab. His reasons: Erik works with different large corporations and considers that the fact that some of them in-

vite others to work in their headquarters promotes greater knowledge between them and, therefore, better collaboration. For Erik, the important thing is the process, not so much the place. Each space can be used to deal with a different type of problem, so not having your own makes you adapt to each new challenge that needs to be worked on.



SALOMON

Anne Déroulède, Manager of Outdoor Concepts (Footwear) at Salomon, also learned from experience that the place where you innovate is of little use if you do not have the right processes. When the outdoor equipment company grew by opening different centers, it was felt that concentrating everything in a single new building would facilitate interaction between people and departments. This

was not the case. For Anne, this creative interaction happens more efficiently in informal processes that take place outside the office, such as a business trip or at the company's Christmas dinner. The space to innovate is, more than a physical space, a "mental space" outside the time and places where plans and strategies dominate.



Montse Pareja, professor at the University of Barcelona and part of the School on Management of Creativity team, was responsible for summing up the ideas learned during the morning on spaces for innovation. Among other ideas, she reminded us that workspaces and creativity are changing because ways of working and creating are also undergoing the same process. There are many and varied approaches, and it is worth noting that there are specialized research groups on the subject, such as the Research Group for Collaborative Spaces.

UP

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These new spaces are the result of current changes in working environments such as an increasingly blurred line between work and personal life, or the need for more frequent adaptation to an increasing variety of requirements and types of projects. New forms of digital communication have not done away with the need for and the convenience of physical and face-to-face encounters when creating collaboratively. That said, we have to remember that the space for innovation is not only physical and that other elements such as processes, times and people should also be considered.

WORKSHOP: DEFINING THE BEST INNOVATION SPACE

Divided into several working groups in which the Co-Society Fellows were able to do joint creation with the students of the Summer School on Management of Creativity, the time came to put into practice what they had learned and to contribute their own ideas on the day's theme. The goal: to design an ideal space for creativity and innovation. The rules: just one, to consider four key elements: The space itself, of course, but also the time or times to be creative; the type of people or group of people involved in the innovation and, finally, the materials and tools to be used.

As is to be expected considering the large number of creative profiles taking part in this workshop, the ideas proposed included several interesting concepts, such as the use of music and sounds to get people into the right mood, or the configuration of the creative space following the metaphor of time of the day and its different biorhythms. There was also a considerable amount of agreement, such as the need to make time for innovation a time outside the run-of-the-mill and the "mind-set" used for day-to-day tasks.

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RESULTS OF THE WORKSHOP: Six prototypes of new spaces for innovation

ZEN STETIC

Space: Inspire yourself by feeling Nature and fostering the connection between Body and Mind. Find a way to create your own space to innovate and be creative depending on the goal and how you feel at each moment. **Materials:** Visualize ideas combining the use of all types of physical and digital elements. **Time:** Take advantage of your energy at the weekends by devoting time to innovating and being creative on Monday mornings. **People:** Connected diversity. Promote a variety of ages, genders, nationalities, profiles and professional experiences.

SENSORY SPACE

Space: A sensory space that encourages interaction with people and thinking “outside the box”. **Time:** Once a week, outside traditional working hours. For example, at night and in a relaxed or leisure environment.

METAPHOR OF TIME

Space and time organized according to the metaphor of time throughout the day. There would therefore be an “Awakening” area and/or time dedicated to the first triggering of ideas. A “Lunch Time” area where the aim would be to try to “feed” these ideas and share them. The “Afternoon” area would be the place and time to put ideas into practice, an area in which to stop thinking and start doing (prototypes, etc.). Finally, a “Night” area would be where you could meditate ideas, “consult with your pillow/sleep on it” or explain ideas to and interact with people other than those you work with in the office for the rest of the day.

THE COCKTAIL

A space to offer a mixture of flavors: an area for inspiration, another linked to knowledge with a library/media library, another as an open space to connect with the air and be able to look directly at the sky, feel the outside temperature, etc.

ROOM ON DEMAND

A space that can be adapted to the needs of all types of creative or innovation process in which different elements are always included, such as relaxation through leisure, the use of sounds to create the most suitable moods for each occasion or encouraging interactions with people outside the organization itself.

S.P.A SPACE TO PUT IN ACTION

A space that mainly focuses on “learning by doing” in which we must be able to prototype the most diverse ideas to capture important insights in the process. Connectivity must also be a very important factor for this space to be above all a space to share ideas and receive feedback on them. S.P.A. must be a space where any moment provides an opportunity to learn and create.



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