

WORK PANORAMA 2023

A format to prompt new ways of thinking.

Working environments are changing more rapidly than ever. "Stable Diffusion", "Metaverse", "Workation", "Quiet Quitting" – future work environments are influenced by different technological and socio-economic factors. After the past pandemic years and in the face of the ongoing economic shifts, the future of work seems more and more uncertain. Work Panorama 2023 draws connections and outlines the potentials that are ahead of us.

As recent years have shown, both architectural-technological and socio-economic trends are crucial factors in understanding the future of work. The topic clusters of the new Work Panorama 2023 are therefore divided into a vertical scale, where architectural-technological innovations are presented, and a horizontal scope, where insights into the major socio-economic challenges for the future of work are provided.

At each of the two levels, we have defined four thematic clusters, whose trends, however, are entangled with each other at some points. On the vertical scale, we look at challenges and innovations in the areas: "Extended Realities", "Collaborative Environments", "City-as-a-Service" and "Machine Minds". These topic clusters are complemented by the following socio-economic perspectives on the horizontal scope: "Talent Squad", "Sustainable Leadership", "New Cooperativism" and "Human Needs".

The goal of Work Panorama 2023 is to contribute to a general "Future Literacy". Precisely because it seems increasingly difficult for us to imagine a likely future, we want to develop cultural techniques that enable us to make predictions about future challenges and innovations. These cultural techniques are the key to collaboratively shaping a better future of work. Work Panorama 2023 sees itself as a decisive step in the direction of these new cultural techniques of a "Future Literacy".

To this end, Work Panorama 2023 will guide us through uncertain times and help all stakeholders to become pioneers in their respective fields. To this end, all actors and groups interested in the future of work are invited to join us and discuss the scenarios on the future of work that Work Panorama 2023 opens up.

Work Panorama 2023 is a project by Raphael Gielgen, Trends Scout Future of Work Life & Learn. For more information contact raphael.gielgen@vitra.com. Disclaimer: This document is for research and informational purposes only and must not be used for commercial purposes. This document is not to be shared or duplicated. We do not own any rights to the presented texts, quotes and images, as they belong to the authors, photographers and sources as stated. The information contained in this document is not intended to be a substitute for professional advice, and should not be relied upon as such. The owners and creators of this document make no representations or warranties of any kind, express or implied, about the completeness, accuracy, reliability, suitability or availability with respect to the document or the information, products, services, or related graphics contained in the document for any purpose.

What if Questions

by Spacecouncil

No. 1

What if digitalisation and urbanisation continue at their current paces? To preserve a maximum of green space, would we invent new green high-density typologies in which to work and live?

No. 2

What if you could digitally measure the degree to which a working environment supplements a city's ecosystem?

No. 3

What if, through omnipresent digital tools, the merging of the workplace and common urban spaces continues, like we see in coworking spaces today? Can a company's workspaces extend, encourage, and facilitate the public life of a city?

No. 4

What if city politicians worked effectively with the workplace provider? How would this benefit both sides?

No. 5

What if you could shape your own city where you live and work to your own specifications? What is the threshold of investment in outdoor public spaces that benefit both workplaces and the public realm?

No. 6

What if architectural typologies were a cliché with no universal rules for what an office building must look like? How would you create an identity for your workplace?

No. 7

What if the manifold technological and social disruptions we experience today lead to better communication among architecture, computers, and people? How would this change workspace architecture?

No. 8

What if we could live for 120 years? Would this lifespan affect the workplace?

No. 9

What if you could have a free, unlimited service in your workspace? Which would you choose?

No. 10

What if you were an A.I. driven robot in a workplace? What would you say to the humans who work in it?

No. 11

What if you could only work in one illusory space for the rest of your life? In what kind of artificial environment would you choose to work and why? Would such an environment make physical architecture obsolete?

No. 12

What if advanced technology allows unconventional short-term rental models for residential and work architecture? What kind of radical new opportunities can you imagine?

No. 13

What if the global top 100 companies had to contribute directly some portion of their revenues to the improvement of the environment and society (besides taxes)? What kind of contributions in the public interest could you imagine? Would fewer people be employed but a city may have more parks?

No. 14

What if you had more time to develop a project? Where in the process would you invest this time?

No. 15

What if the spatial configuration of the workspace was designed to be highly flexible and dynamic? How might employees identify with this fluctuating architecture?

No. 16

What if you, as a developer, had unlimited financial resources? What kind of project would you initiate today?

No. 17

What if you could change one thing about the stakeholder process during the realisation of a new building? What would it be?

No. 18

What if work/life integration were seen as a synthesis between the two as opposed to carving out more space in one or the other? How would this view change your routine?

No. 19

What if participative design, coupled with an awareness of changing attitudes, results in new emerging business models that form the circular economy? What would be key strategies for incentivising and encouraging private entities to be "good neighbours"?

No. 20

What if the flexibility of the construct of work reaches a maximum? How would this affect the workplace organisation? Is there a limit to flexibility? Why?

No. 21

What if you could replace one thing in your daily routine with a digital tool that will work with you and your team? What would it be?

No. 22

What if you could not make your own decisions regarding the development of your next office tower, but you had to choose someone else to make them for you? Who would you choose and why?

No. 23

What if you had the chance to write a bestselling novel about the development process of advanced workspace architecture? Would it be a romance, mystery, science fiction, or factual historical account and why?

No. 24

What if you could develop one aspect of the future of the workspace so well you could be famous? What would you do?

No. 25

What if the global business of architecture and urban planning encounters local cultures? Are you able to find a way to integrate them into the respective culture or mentality, and how do you do that?

No. 26

What if people can work from anywhere, but they don't want to do it anymore?

No. 27

What if you had to live one workday over and over again? What would your chosen day look like?

No. 28

What if you entered your office and were 20 years older? Would you still enjoy working there?

No. 29

What if creativity were the most important principle in life in every profession? How can architecture support this creative process?

No. 30

What if you are the curator of an advanced workspace, and you can pick any three people from history to come, work, and enrich your workspace. Whom do you choose and why?

No. 31

What if you were trapped in a workspace for one week to finish a life-changing assignment and could only bring three things? What would they be?

No. 32

What if you could make one law in the workplace? What would it be?

No. 33

What if you could create your own company management standards with no limits on how they function? What kind of structure would your company have and why?

No. 34

What if the current workspace rental economy is not based on the concept of static buildings but on atmospheric places in permanent flux? Would that free us from the ongoing discussion between custom versus universal and transformable workplaces?

No. 35

What if communication among A.I. robots, human beings, nature, and architecture is continuously accelerating? Can employees benefit from this permanent beta condition?

No. 36

What if our environment shifted towards one based on hyperscale computing, encompassing an entire alternative world in which we spend most of our time? What aspects of knowledge cannot be transferred to illusory places?

No. 37

What if a new idea could be quickly and realistically simulated? Would we be more innovative, looking beyond the "known" and encouraging experimentation?

No. 38

What if the flexible, versatile, and urban community requires a participatory approach to neighbourhood design that is human, social, circular, and uplifting? Would it transform the work/life neighbourhood towards more social sustainability?

No. 39

What if there is never a final version of your working environment and all settings, physical and virtual, are in a permanent beta state? Would such a state benefit the communication between knowledge workers and digital tools?

No. 40

What if your employees demand an inclusive workplace? Would it look different from conventional offices?

No. 41

What if the next-generation office does not meet any of the existing standards? What percentage of existing offices would we need to rebuild?

No. 42

What if more than half of the existing office space were obsolete like yesterday's typewriter? What strategy would be most successful with regards to sustainability?

No. 43

What if zero-commute time between home and the workplace becomes undesirable? Is work/life integration still healthy in the near future? Would we need a new architectural typology?

No. 44

What if the countryside rather than the city were providing a better quality of life, and more comprehensive health care led to a new urban exodus? Can digital connectivity generally make the countryside attractive for the workplace?

No. 45

What if digital technology performs checks and balances to preserve resources? What kind of new daily routines would you establish concerning the workflow?

No. 46

What if building standards and regulations were not rigid systems, but contained options and tools for individual adaptation that encouraged tenants and employees to actively engage with their surroundings?

No. 47

What if you could invent one thing regarding your communication with stakeholders and clients? What would it be?

No. 48

What if the creation and promotion of a sense of community among employees and computers were our key aim? Where would you emphasise quality improvement?

No. 49

What if people, computers, and robots could work together in a way that could not be done before? Could this human-computer team develop interpersonal skills that require new workplace typologies?

No. 50

What if you want the workspace you are proposing to give the impression of a positive and productive location where people seem genuinely happy? Would authentic solutions that incorporate holistic architecture be a key strategy to follow?