



SURVEY-BASED PROGRAMMING

Using Research to Create Dynamic Workplaces

Pre-Design
 Multi-Clients: Cargo Service, Finance
 2022-2023
 Multi-Locations
 100-150staff
 25,000-30,000 square feet

Faced with the expectations of a newly hybrid workforce, organizations that relied on traditional offices for years are now evolving to meet their workers' day-to-day needs. Everything – from space types offered to technologies employed, and even the *amount* of space available – has come directly into question as employers seek to optimize the well-being, and thereby the productivity, of their workforce by building a more accommodating workplace. The biggest challenge, though, is in programming a workplace so that it can serve the workforces of both *today* and *tomorrow*. For many organizations, this can seem like a harrowing – perhaps impossible – undertaking.

Toward this end, PLASTARC's comprehensive programming services help clients ensure that their new spaces will support the workforce for many years to come, regardless of any unforeseen changes that may arise. By collecting quantitative and experiential feedback from *all* workers – not *just* department heads – to build a complete workplace profile, PLASTARC avoids the pitfalls of rough estimates and meticulously assesses factors like space type usage, individual workstyles, and technology solutions. This process, which is deeply informed by PLASTARC's experience across several sectors, adds new dimensionality to the process of workplace data analysis, and gives way to tailored programming recommendations that reflect each client's industry-specific, long-term needs.

When working with two separate clients, Commonfund and Atlas Air, PLASTARC and its design partner, CPG Architects, avoided a prescriptive approach by providing multiple programming options. The variations between these options reflected the clients' top-of-mind considerations: for Commonfund, the viability of desk-sharing was a major question, whereas Atlas Air saw potential variability when considering occupancy levels. Supplying our clients with three distinct programming solutions offers a range of potential approaches, and ensures that each client retains a sense of agency when shaping their future workplace.

After the initial process, PLASTARC assesses the effectiveness of clients' workplace solutions using workforce feedback. This helps identify whether the changes in spaces, policies, and technologies meet their intended goals and enables swift adjustments, thanks to their focus on dynamic design. In each programming engagement, PLASTARC aims to create workplaces that evolve with the workforce over time, rather than remaining static snapshots.

METHODS

- Designed and distributed department-specific surveys to build workstyle profiles for each department
- Conducted workshops, interviews, and visioning sessions with workers of all seniority levels to establish a clear sense of how the workplace is currently used
- Used research methods from behavioral psychology and other social sciences to synthesize and analyze collected data

KEY VALUES & OUTCOMES

- Converted data sets to tailored programming recommendations using human-centered design techniques
- Provided client with a range of programming recommendations from which they could choose according to internal priorities and expectations
- Collaborated with CPG Architects to efficiently implement accepted programming recommendations
- Proposed further updates to ensure that the newly implemented workplace solutions were optimally used

“PLASTARC’s rapid survey-based programming transformed our design process, accelerating decisions with data, while clients appreciated the inclusivity, involving their staff to craft tailored workspaces that resonate with their needs”

~Karen Lika, Principal, CPG Architects