



## COWORKING IS ABOUT MORE THAN JUST A DESK!

Over the last five years there has been a massive disruption in the way people work. The global pandemic, the cost of living crisis, the growth of the gig economy and changes in technology, have all played their part in seeing a 44% growth in the number of people working remotely and almost 5 million people now working from coworking spaces globally.<sup>1</sup>

### Is frequent solo work causing a pandemic of isolation and loneliness?

Surveys show that people choose to work in communal spaces because to prevent loneliness and enable members to work alongside others from diverse industries - and 69% of coworking space members say they learn new skills in a coworking space.

But perhaps, most importantly, coworking spaces are places where communities can grow; both in terms of members supporting each other and also with programmes which introduce work and services to the wider local community, which in turns aids social capital and potentially economic growth.



## THE COWORK PLUS FRAMEWORK CAN HELP.

1. <https://www.flexas.com/blog/coworking-statistics>

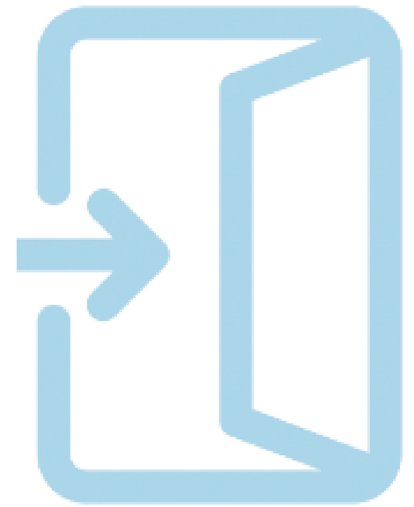
# MAKE A POSITIVE SOCIAL IMPACT WITH COWORK PLUS.

**COWORK PLUS** is an initiative being promoted by a number of coworking membership organisations keen to showcase different models of **additional** activities individual workspaces are pioneering for social impact.



Many of these initiatives involve finding ways to better support existing members and ensure their workspaces are more inclusive and diverse. However, others are developing exciting partnerships with local stakeholders and are innovating to help people find employment, grow their work skills and introduce new services to communities. For example:

- **Working with Housing Associations** to gift membership for residents furthest from the labour market.
- **Creating bespoke workspace days and integration activities** for refugee communities.
- **Supporting** school students with their transition into work by providing homework/tutor space and work experience.
- **Subsidising** membership to young people under 24 who are starting their own businesses.
- **Partnering** with Local Authorities and NGOs in running social entrepreneurship 'Changemaker' training.
- **Helping** parents returning to work through providing creche facilities and wellbeing sessions.
- **Championing** environmental initiatives including creating a network of Sustainable Development "Goal 11" spaces.
- **Hosting** soft-skills and career development training opportunities.



*And the list goes on....*



*Any job creation or local economy renewal programme that fails to recognise the opportunities to partner with, or establish a community workspace is missing a crucial ingredient. Workspace Plus is a framework Local Authorities can be part of.*

*Stephen Carrick-Davies  
The Facework Group*

*What I love about this initiative is that it is a win/win. Operators get more diverse users and at the same time co-design initiatives which are relevant to the changing world of work. Yes, we're behind COWORK Plus and are really keen to share our experience and programmes.*

*Kofi Oppong Founder, Urban MBA*



# HOW DOES IT WORK ?

**COWORK PLUS** is not an organisation or a club, but rather a simple framework and network which is collectively owned by those who run Coworking spaces and want to do more.

All sorts of operators; commercial, not-for profit, council run and informal community spaces can be part of this conversation and contribute to showcasing and piloting new ways to expand the activities and impact in our workspaces with local communities. We don't need a secretariat or a separate organisation to run Cowork Plus, it simply works if:

- It fits into the business model of the cowork space, aids footfall and contributes to income.
- It engages outside stakeholders to partner with cowork operators and fund and promote these additional activities.
- It involves and strengthens the 'membership' of a cowork space and enables them to contribute if they wish.

Cowork plus activities will be showcased, replicated and grown through existing networks, meetings and forums including, The European and London Cowork Assemblies as well as international conferences.

Cowork Plus can also be a powerful 'vehicle' through which we can mobilise social entrepreneurs and engage with wider civil sector partners and local governments to recognise the potential of setting up cowork spaces which support lone workers and also have wider social impact.



*"Providing affordable workspaces is crucial to ensuring London remains at the forefront of the tech and creative industries. But these spaces can also play a pivotal role in cultivating vibrant communities where collaboration, networking, and social innovations can grow. COWORK PLUS can accelerate this."*

*Clare Bailey, Director, Commercial Research, Savills UK*

*The untapped power of community workspaces has never been harnessed, and has always had the potential to change the world around it. Cowork Plus provides a promising framework for community spaces and their members to leverage that power together, and make the world we all want to see.*

*Jeannine van der Linden founder of European Cowork Assembly*

*There are 1,400 Coworking spaces in London alone. Just imagine if 20% of these had a social impact programme and worked in closer partnership with Councils, civil society, and educators. The London Coworking Assembly is backing this Cowork Plus initiative.*

*Bernie Mitchell  
London Coworking Assembly*



**TUESDAY 16th APRIL 9.30-4pm**  
5th Floor  
Peckham Levels Car Park  
95a Rye Lane,  
London SE15 4ST



## Remixing Community for a Citizen Groove

Join us to hear from coworking operators who are innovating in Cowork Plus activities and find out how we can all do more!

### 9.30- 10.00 INTRODUCTION & WELCOME

Complimentary breakfast and chance for networking

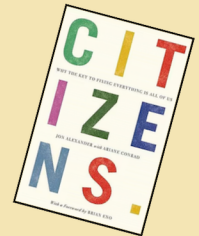
TICKETS £12.00  
includes breakfast & lunch  
<https://lu.ma/coworkplus>



### ACT 1 - ON THE STAGE

#### 10.15 JON ALEXANDER - IN CONVERSATION WITH JOYCE OGUNADE

Jon is the author of the book *'Citizens; why the key to fixing everything is all of us.'*  
Listen to a podcast interview at <https://londoncoworkingassembly.com/podcast>  
Joyce is the Head of Affordable Workspace Programme at Islington Council



### ACT II - IN THE PIT

#### 11.00 - 12.30 ROUND TABLE CONVERSATIONS

We're mixing up the format of the gathering to encourage interaction, deep conversations and reciprocal learning between speakers and participants. Table discussions include:

- 1 COWORKING AND THE GROWTH OF THE LOCAL ECONOMY**  
Representatives from Housing Associations, Universities and businesses who have all supported Cowork Plus initiatives share what is in it for them and what their clients need.
- 2 WHAT POLICY CHANGES COULD BE DEVELOPED TO AID COWORKING?**  
Clare Bailey, from Savills, interviews senior representatives from London Local Authorities on the development of their affordable workspace strategies.
- 3 SHOW US EXAMPLES AND IMPACT**  
Coworking operators share examples of their Coworking Plus initiatives which include providing workspaces for refugees, supporting social entrepreneurship training and volunteer hosting.

#### 12.30 FEEDBACK: WHAT WE ARE LEARNING?

### 1PM NETWORKING LUNCH

#### ACT III - AT THE FRINGE

#### 2PM - 4.00 UNCONFERENCE

If you can stay for the afternoon we invite you to present your work, your ideas and continue the conversation.

Curated by Bernie Mitchell

#### Cowork Plus Partners



Venue sponsor

