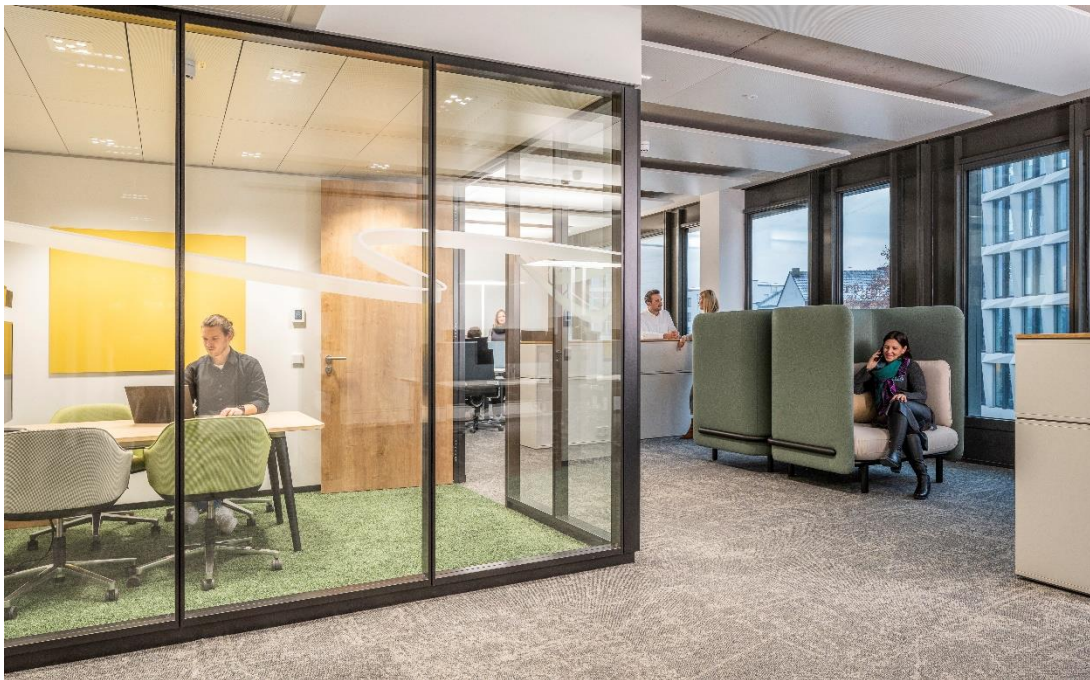


New year, new working environments: Drees & Sommer opens showcase project for New Work in Frankfurt



Drees & Sommer's new multi-space office in Frankfurt offers different working environments for different activities – designed by the company's own New Work experts. © Peter Neusser

Frankfurt, Germany, January 2, 2023. Start to the year at Drees & Sommer SE in Frankfurt/Main: around 500 employees set up home in the new OstStern quarter in Frankfurt's Ostend district. The Stuttgart-based consulting company specializing in construction and real estate is relocating its Frankfurt office to a showcase project for modern working environments, designed by professionals from within the firm's own ranks. A multi-space area of around 7,000 square meters offers the right environment for every activity, including open-air workplaces.

In 2020, Drees & Sommer secured some 5,500 square meters of office space in the commercial unit of the OstStern quarter in the up-and-coming Ostend district. It also leased an additional floor from project developer Lang & Cie. before moving in. At the start of the

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year, the consulting firm will relocate to a total of 7,000 square meters of space on five floors, with custom interior design by the firm's own New Work experts.

'Everyone has different needs, even in everyday work. We take this into account in our multi-space concept. Those looking for personal interaction can work in the open-plan area, while those who need peace and quiet will find the right retreat room,' explained Manuel Dorn, partner responsible for Drees & Sommer's Frankfurt location. Lounges, phone boxes, think tanks and meeting rooms complement the open workstations. 'In addition, we have specifically created areas for meeting, and for communication,' Dorn said.

Tailor-made for firm's own use

There is no *one-size-fits-all* solution for modern working environments. Needs in terms of retreat options, phone boxes, creative spaces and meeting rooms depend heavily on the activities of the employees. 'There are no fixed workstations, but each section has a home, so to speak, with storage space, pin boards and lockers. The employees in each section have themselves chosen how this is designed, and what the furniture for the retreat rooms looks like. This ensures that each of the teams really feels at home and can also work well,' explained Christopher Hestermann, team leader at Drees & Sommer and planner responsible for the Frankfurt working environments.

Multi-functional areas are also spread across the floors, including rooms for project and creative work, a community and meeting room with table soccer, a library, and a materials library with catalogs, material samples, and an adjoining meeting room for client workshops relating to interior design. Flexible furniture means that the layout can be customized at any time. All the rooms are named after the staff's favorite places – locations and sights in the Frankfurt area. Hafenpark, for example, a popular sports and recreation area in Ostend, gives its name to the sports and activities room with a table tennis table, basketball hoop and yoga mats.



The marketplace on the top floor with its large kitchen serves as a central meeting place for breaks, for conversations every now and then, or as an event location. © Peter Neusser

Sustainable and smart

Around 80% of the furniture comes from the former office on Schmidtstrasse, with the addition of furniture made from sustainable materials. Some of the furnishings are Cradle to Cradle certified and therefore recyclable, including the curtains and carpeting. Digital solutions and an app provide employees with access to the underground parking garage and office floors, and can also be used to book workstations, lockers, meeting and conference rooms. If necessary, the app can navigate to the booked workplace or room. The building controls ventilation, lighting and shading independently via sensors, to maximize energy efficiency in operation.

Inclusion meets health protection

Anyone who wants to visit the restroom in the new office will not find any familiar symbols for male and female. 'All of our restrooms are single cubicles with their own washbowls. So

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they take into account *diversity and inclusion* and are also pandemic-proof,' explained planning manager Hestermann, who came up with the room design.

Another component of health protection in the building is the ventilation system. In the *layered ventilation* principle, fresh incoming air spreads out near the floor like a *pool of fresh air*. The heat emitted by people pushes the stale air upward, drawing in fresh air from the floor level. This means that staff always have fresh air available, while exhaled particles such as CO₂, aerosols or viruses are conducted towards the ceiling and extracted from the room.

Compared to conventional mixed ventilation systems, in which the room air is completely mixed and pollutants are distributed evenly throughout the room, layered ventilation can provide better room air quality for staff with the same amount of incoming air, while also minimizing the risk of virus transmission via aerosols.

Experience the sun, moon and stars above the OstStern

As special highlights, the office has two outdoor seating areas that all employees can use. While the balcony on the fourth floor is being developed into an outdoor meeting space for analog meetings, the large rooftop terrace on the sixth floor offers a variety of outdoor options. Equipped with electricity and WiFi, it acts not only as space for breaks and leisure, but also as an outdoor workspace. The space will also have a barbecue and a herb garden for staff.

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As the leading planning and consulting company with headquarters in the Germany city of Stuttgart, Drees & Sommer SE has worked with private and public clients from construction bodies to investors on all types of real estate and infrastructure projects – both analog and digital – for more than 50 years. With its pioneering and future-shaping consulting, the company offers solutions for successful buildings, high-return portfolios, powerful infrastructure and livable cities. 4,500 employees in interdisciplinary teams based at 51 locations worldwide support clients across a wide spectrum of sectors. All the services provided by the partner-run company take into consideration both economic and ecological concerns. Drees & Sommer calls this holistic approach ‘the blue way’.

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