

Co-working Connections for Creatives

Generating new co working spaces

"Coming together is the beginning. Keeping together is progress. Working together is success."
(Henry Ford)

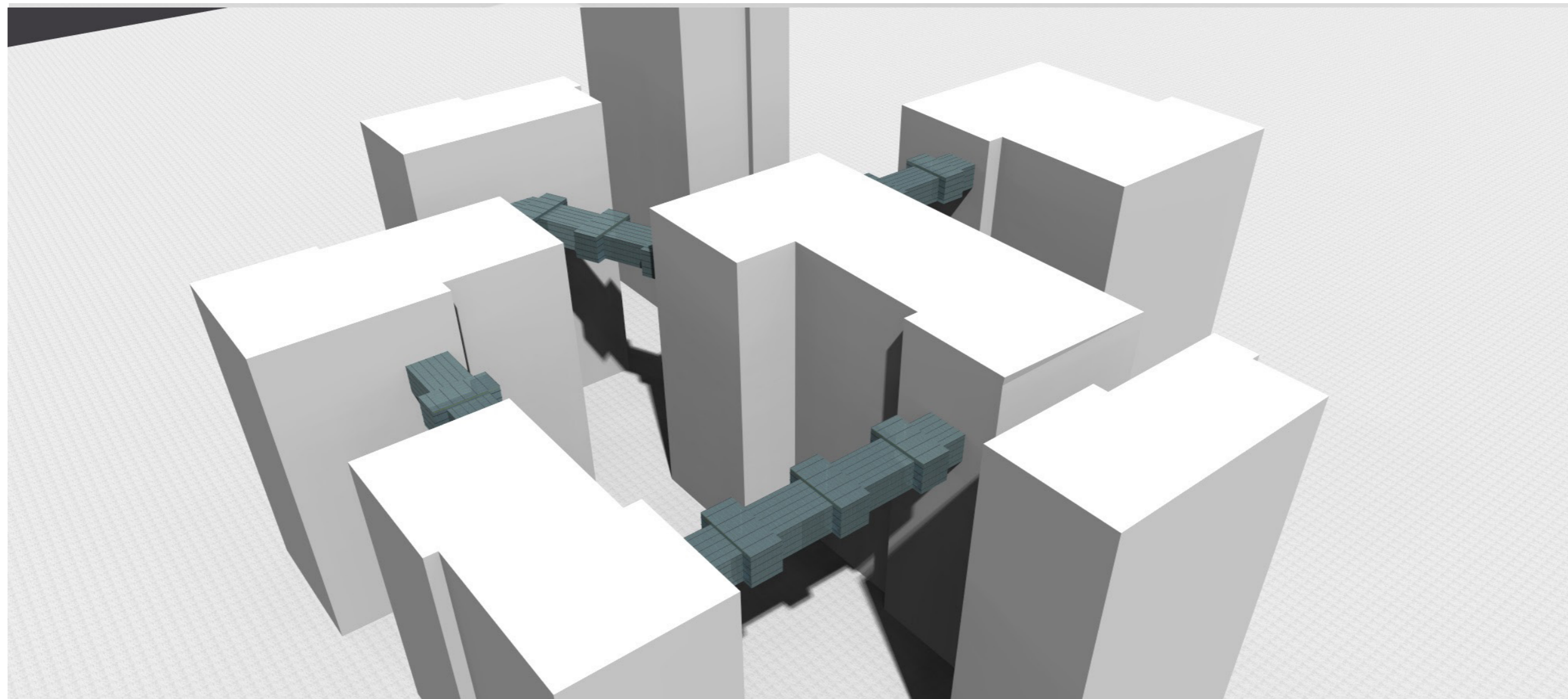


Fig. 1
Co-working connections bridges connecting buildings.

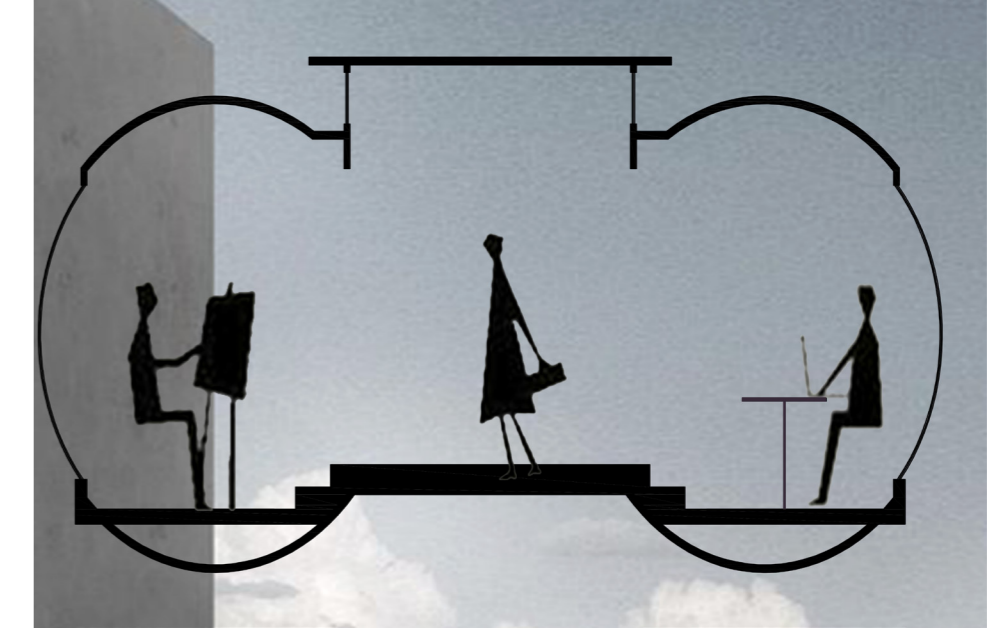


Fig. 2
Bridge section



Fig. 3
Ideas for the coworking space design.
<http://www.idesignarch.com>

How bridging spaces in the city can create new connections, a new urban flow and opportunities for working collaboratively.

Background

On an afternoon visit to Lloyds bank in Manchester I was surprised to find that the old banking hall was being used by new business in a shared and collaborative venture. Coworking areas were provided so that startup companies and freelance workers could cheaply and efficiently work alongside the bank in a shared space. This realization made me question why we do not use other dead or underused spaces in the city to maximize its use and efficiency.



Fig. 4
Lloyds Bank Elevation
<https://www.lloydsbank.com/>

Context

In this century the way we work is a shifting landscape. There are no longer typical offices and the ways we operate in business are shifting as we embrace the digitalized gig economy, where migratory workforces are encouraged to operate from small offices or even home. Office costs have an influence on this development but also shifts towards freelance lone working which are becoming more attractive and achievable. However lone working has its limitations and there is a need to create networks and collaborative environments that will encourage teams to evolve around project based demands where both the skills may be required and physical workforce to finish a job.

Rationale

The whole idea for my project started from a small design I visited at my University in Jordan. A tunnel makes a connection between two buildings and the university used to open stores beneath it so it generated extra income for the University. Rents for the spaces were very low and this helped startups get going.



Fig. 4
Ponte Vecchio bridge in Florence
<https://www.visitflorence.com/>

My idea turned a corner after seeing a bridge in Italy called the Ponte Vecchio in Florence. Here an historic bridge was developed with shops either side thus enclosing the bridge space which linked the historic centre with a famous Royal Parkway. The flow of foot traffic was forced past the shops in what became the first piece of branded retail design in the world.

After visiting Manchester I explored the city looking for other spaces to inspire a project site in underused spaces and ones that could benefit economically in

creating collaborative connections. In Manchester there are many startup creative companies that have set up in the Northern Quarter. However as popularity grows so do the prices of space. My project will create a new model for the very bottom of the creative working ladder.

Key areas of research

The principal areas of research have focused on help me to form a more informed response to creating co-working spaces in the city by asking the following questions:

- What is co-working?
- What were the reasons for the initiation of the concept of coworking?
- Can dead spaces provide inspiration for co-working in the city?
- Is England in need of such scenarios for work?
- Why is it important for the creatives to co-work in redundant or underused spaces?
- What are the design principles of the Creative Co-working Workspace?
- What is Creative design thinking and how it can be applied in the workplace?

Ideas and Development

Design is in its early days but my intention is to bridge two underused spaces of the city that are currently disconnected. The bridge will work much like the Ponte Vecchio in that it will create a shop front for the Co-workers who will inhabit pockets of space along its length. These creative pockets will provide opportunities for sharing projects so teams can quickly group as projects pop up. Importantly this new flow will create a sense of busyness that has the added benefit of creating workplace excitement and working dynamics.

Intended Outcomes of Project

The project intends to highlight a major problem that faces workers in England. There are growing problems with office costs and there are opportunities for creatives to inhabit underused spaces at very low cost. In looking at the opportunities for new working patterns I am also keen to realise the advantages of co-working and the wellness and productivity potential of new dynamic solutions.



Fig. 5
Manchester-Northern quarter.
<https://www.manchestereveningnews.co.uk/>

References

- Capdevila, I. (2013) 'Knowledge dynamics in localized communities: Coworking spaces as microclusters'.
Moriset, B. (2014) 'Building new places of the creative economy. The rise of coworking spaces', proceedings of the 2nd Geography of Innovation, International Conference 2014, Utrecht University,

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