



Press release Frankfurt, September 22, 2020

TWR2020 Transdisciplinary Workplace Research Conference: Experiment of the first REALLY hybrid transdisciplinary conference on new working worlds out of the COWORKSTATT Frankfurt extremely successful!

The second conference on transdisciplinary workplace research of the TWR Network (twrnetwork.org) was an experiment! But after three intensive and innovative days, one thing is certain: The experiment was a success. Started in the summer of 2019 with the 'Call for Abstracts' to science and practice, the radically changed circumstances from March 2020 on required agile management, new ideas and courage - not only from the organizers Dr. Annette Kämpf-Dern and Prof. Dr. Mascha Will-Zocholl. Together with the experienced team of Omega Veranstaltungstechnik from Weimar, the 70 virtual and 30 physical participants from 17 countries who were present in Frankfurt from 16-19 September 2020 were able to engage in an exchange that crossed borders and disciplines in every respect. To this end, all events - from the architecture tour and the round tables on Covid19, key notes and more than 70 presentations, up to joint cooking, the running dinner and the excursion to the intelligent building of smart engine | wtec - were actually held in hybrid form and live on site. The flexible office, the COWORKSTATT in Frankfurt-Griesheim, proved to be the ideal place for the discussion about modern and contemporary workplaces. The fact that the whole thing was very well received by the participants is shown by the extremely good responses.

What exactly happened during the conference?

During the pre-conference event, which was attended by about one third of the participants, round tables on the topic 'Future of work after COVID19' focused on the question, what consequences the pandemic has for the design of workplaces. The round table, which was moderated by Malte Kopmann (RBGS Group) and Wilco Poppelier (Drees & Sommer), put the question of what the office of the future might look like in concrete terms. Another round table, chaired by Prof. Cheuk F. Ng (Athabasca University/ Canada), examined the question of what challenges, opportunities and risks the increased home office work could mean for the users themselves and the future use of buildings.

The first 'official' conference day started with the key note by Workplace Trendscout Raphael Gielgen (Vitra GmbH). He invited the participants to join him on his journey into the future and presented his roadmap that may well point the way forward. Afterwards, all participants took part in a total of 12 sessions, which were offered in four simultaneous streams. All streams took place in a simultaneous virtual zoom and physical (studio) room. Thus, all participants, whether physically or virtually participating, were in the same room

and were able to exchange, present, ask questions and discuss "borderless". At the same time, chat, audio and video could and were used without restriction. In addition to the temporary zoom chat, which served more for moderation purposes, the participants also very actively used the provided discord server, as well as Twitter and LinkedIn.

Thematically, the first day focused on healthy and collaborative workplaces as well as new ways of working and digitalization topics.

Informal highlight of the first day was the joint conference dinner, which was also open to participants not present on site. This was implemented by adding two to three virtual participants to each table in Frankfurt. Some of them did not even let themselves be held up by different time zones and were at least present with drinks. By physically and virtually changing the rooms and participants after each course, this was also a great opportunity for networking and getting to know new faces, some of whom had already been seen as speakers or questioners during the day.

The second day of the conference began with a split keynote by Dr. Nigel Oseland of Workplace Unlimited, Pia A Döll, President of the Association of German Interior Designers (bdia e.V.), Prof. Dr. Tobias Just, President of the German Society of Property Researchers (gif e.V.) and Marcel Özer, Team Leader EPEA | Part of Drees & Sommer. Together, the speakers contributed to presenting the question of the future design of workplaces from different perspectives (users, planners, investors, society), complementing each other. This was followed by a poster session with exciting work by young researchers, before eight further sessions presented new research findings on health and well-being at the workplace, productivity measurement, cultural and management aspects, learning locations and virtual work environments.

On Saturday, 19.06.2020, the remaining participants went on an excursion to the company smartengine | wtec in Bad Homburg, which tests and further develops the practical design of office workplaces with innovative ideas, including new lighting concepts and various types of motion, light and room air quality sensors. There, the participants were welcomed by Managing Director Daniel Massey (wtec) and Head of Innovation Johannes Nußbaum (Art Invest).

The proceedings with the short papers of the conference will be available on the website at the beginning of October. Further information on the program, the supporting partners Drees & Sommer, COWORKSTATT Frankfurt, gif e.V. as well as bdia and the Transdisciplinary Workplace Research Network can also be found there: www.twr2020.org.

Participants' Comments:

- **“... a first hybrid conference with scientists on site and additional online experts from all over the world - an immediate success.”**
(Daniel Stephen Massey, smartengine wtec, Bad Homburg, Germany)
- **“It was very innovative, productive and fascinating.”**
(Dr. Renuka Thakore: Research, Innovation and Partnerships, University College of Estate Management, Reading, UK)
- **“TWR Conference Setup: Zoom for virtual participants, cowork space in Frankfurt for physical participants, Discord app for all to breakout and interact, virtual cooking and dinner. ... First hybrid/blended conference for me. Brilliant so far!”**
(Dr. Matthew Tucker: Liverpool Business School, John Moores University, Liverpool, UK)
- **“Attending online! My first hybrid conference. Excited to be with this wonderful community of workplace researchers.”**
(Dr. Kerstin Sailer: The Bartlett School of Architecture, University College London, London, UK)
- **“You really pushed the idea of a hybrid conference to the limit.”**
(Toni Reichert: Institute for Innovation Research and Management, Westphalian University of Applied Science, Bochum, Germany)
- **“A hybrid conference experience! Joining online but as excited as being physically present.”**
(Dr. Vitalija Danivska: Faculty of Built Environment, Tampere University, Finland)
- **“Another fantastic conference! Of all the ones I attend, this is the one I feel most affiliation with.”**
(Dr. Nigel Oseland: Workplace Unlimited, Berkhamsted, UK)
- **“It was a wonderful experience. Nothing less than being there in person.”**
(Dr. Renuka Thakore: Research, Innovation and Partnerships, University College of Estate Management, Reading, UK)
- **“Love the creativity involved in making this conference happen.”**
(Gemma Irving: UQ Business School, University of Queensland, Australia)
- **“Thank you soooo much to all of you who made extraordinary effort to make this happen. ... It has been a great experience.”**
(Antonio Cobaleda Cordero: Design & Human Factors, Chalmers University of Technology, Gothenburg, Sweden)
- **“Thank you for a super (hybrid) conference! Looking forward for 2022!”**
(Anne Kathrine Overgaard: The Faculty of Health Sciences, University of Southern Denmark, Odense, Denmark)
- **“Many thanks for the great organization of the TRW2020 conference. I can only roughly understand how much effort and passion you put into this event. Congratulations on this achievement!”**
(Dr. Christian Schlicht: Facility Management / Center Management, ECE Projektmanagement, Hamburg, Germany)
- **“It was a-w-e-s-o-m-e! ... To be honest, this is the first online conference where I felt fully connected to all the participants. ... Thanks to the organizers for their bravery and a beautiful work!”**
(Daria Vakhrusheva: Center for Advanced Governance, Moscow, Russia)

Additional information:

The **TWR Transdisciplinary Network** is an international network of scientists and scientifically interested practitioners with an interest in Workplace / Working Environments. All disciplines are represented for a holistic view: Planning & Design, Health & Wellbeing, HR, Sociology & Psychology, Information & Communication Technology, Building Services Engineering, Management and many more. www.twrnetwork.org

The **TWR2020 Workplace Research Conference** is the second conference of the TWR Network. After its premiere in 2018 in Tampere, Finland, it now took place - for the first time in hybrid form - in Frankfurt am Main, Germany, as well as virtually. The location for 2022 will be announced in the coming weeks.

The Conference takes place every two years and is hosted by members of the TWR network board. This year, Annette Kämpf-Dern and Mascha Will-Zocholl took over responsibility for the conference. The format of the conference is characterized by transdisciplinarity in view of the large number of scientific disciplines represented and also by a practice-science transfer. All conference participants participate on an equal footing. This year's format was designed as a hybrid event to provide a unique experience for both physical and virtual participants. About one-third of the participants from the coworkers' workshop in Frankfurt and two-thirds from all regions of the world took part.

Dr. Annette Kämpf-Dern is active as a science and education entrepreneur of the Built Environment, both in research and teaching (e.g. Bauhaus-Universität Weimar; Real Estate & Leadership Foundation e.V.) and as a start-up founder (e.g. COWORKSTATT Frankfurt; SIM-OFFICE), real estate manager, project developer, consultant and conference organizer in the private sector.

As Professor of Social Sciences at the HfPV, **Prof. Dr. Mascha Will-Zocholl** is concerned with the digital transformation of the world of work and thus in particular with questions concerning the transformation of work, the reconfiguration of workplaces and spaces, and the ideas and experience of meaning in work.

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