

schiaavello

CASE STUDY



Creating a community experience: Grant Thornton's connective new Sydney workplace

Sydney, Australia

After many years at Grant Thornton's Kent Street office, an opportunity provided itself for the accounting firm to seek out a new Sydney CBD location for their 500-strong team. In planning for the new space, the organisation's workplace strategy centred around building community and embracing workpoint diversity, all in a sought-after location, noting:

1. Location quality and proximity to better amenities will be an important stay or go decision. A move to an up-lifted building location will meet future business objectives around talent attraction, productivity, and client connection.

2. Connectivity within the workspace is the key cultural marker for Grant Thornton, offering a greater employee value proposition. Key element in the future design will be vertical stair connection to foster in-house community and inspire an organic return to office.

3. Diversity and choice of workpoint and collaborative settings will allow Grant Thornton to evolve to a more agile community with a focus on hybrid ways of working. Future building and internal workspaces would allow more experiential and more fluid areas of working.

Centred around connection

With a new space secured within George Street's premium Grosvenor Place, leading workplace design firm Bates Smart were engaged to bring Grant Thornton's vision to life - one which centred around connection.

"Grant Thornton sought to create a welcoming and engaging environment where employees could connect with colleagues and host clients in a more meaningful way," says Emma McGifford, Associate at Bates Smart.

"The return to the workplace was a key consideration, with the new space designed to entice employees back with a compelling location, enhanced amenities, an interconnecting stairway, and a thoughtfully designed workspace that supports their day-to-day activities."

Given the nature of Grant Thornton's work, the focus was placed on individual workstations rather than large, flexible collaboration areas. The design itself prioritises seamless adjacencies between desks, meeting rooms, and focus spaces, ensuring accessibility and efficiency.

"Equity in spatial planning was a key driver - resulting in a centrally located locker zone within the core, and a rhythmic built form that maintains consistency while complementing the existing architecture," explains Emma.



Custom drumbase table



Bespoke Board Room table

A foundation of natural, enduring materials

Seeking to draw inspiration from the natural beauty of Sydney Harbour's sandstone landscapes, Bates Smart looked to "the resilience of compacted rock formations to the softness of a single grain of sand" when developing their overall design concept: Creating a Thoughtful Experience - Through Materiality and Form.

"The space embraces visitors with gentle curves, indirect lighting, and warm, textural materials. Every element was carefully selected to create an environment that feels approachable, calm, and inviting, built upon a foundation of natural, enduring materials," notes Emma.



Integrated throughout the fitout

Recognising the importance of workpoint selection, Grant Thornton explored several showrooms before selecting Schiavello's Neo Workstation. This was paired with a custom-designed snowflake drum base workstation, prototyped and developed specifically for Grant Thornton, to introduce greater diversity in workspace settings.



Neo Workstations and bespoke planters

Schiavello's workstation and locker systems were integrated throughout Grant Thornton's two-floor fit-out, playing a key role in enhancing the employee experience. These systems were complimented by task chairs, meeting rooms and a bespoke Board Room table.



Vecos Smart Lockers

"Since completion, feedback from employees has been overwhelmingly positive. During a recent visit, many team members shared their appreciation for the space's warmth, the activated breakout areas, abundant natural light, stunning harbour views, and of course—the ever-popular brew hub coffee machines," says Emma.

