For more than a decade, office designs have graciously embraced the concepts of minimalistic and functional designs along with hot-desking, glass cubicles and informal breakout areas to increase productivity. Today the debate about the office of the future is re-examining the role of the physical space vis-a-vis workplace transformation.
The solutions are becoming highly specific to the modern workplace with the advent of technological innovations like Artificial Intelligence (AI) and the Internet of Things (IoT). Whilst there is no one prescriptive way forward, the only thing constant is maximizing benefits for the occupants while reducing energy and waste, using sustainable practices and reconfigurability to respond to rapid changes.

Designed by Morphogenesis, the office for Grant Thornton in Aerocity, New Delhi is in close proximity to the International Airport terminal with a constant flow of mobile workforce from all over the world. This modern workplace blurs boundaries not just between work, life and play, but also between individuals and teams, primary workspaces, activity spaces, and notions of owned and shared work areas. The design of the new Grant Thornton office is holistic in nature and symbolises the advent of innovation within corporate offices and work cultures in India.

The work paradigm of the future is truly reflected in this constantly evolving and reconfigurable office. It represents a collaborative, solution-oriented approach that aims to promote engagement for enhanced deliberation and discourse. Spaces such as hive for work desks and jump spaces allow for mobile workstations, meetings, conferences, training, and workshops in almost all areas. These spaces have been designed to boost performance and can be reconfigured in a matter of minutes by the end-user themselves. Furthermore, they can be modified into one linear hall to accommodate more people or be sliced off into different parts with sliding doors based on the individual’s or the team’s needs. Technology is also built into the furniture and walls, including screens and digital whiteboards that connect seamlessly. The dynamic graphic signage system visible through the office forms the very ethos of this open, ergonomic and eclectic office. The multiplicity and multifunctional nature of the work format further results in space optimisation by over 20%.

The interiors of the office move on from being static to being networked and tentacled. The design creates a concerted and agile environment resulting in an open and heterogenous executive space. A contrasting palette of warm and cold materials have been used to reflect the robust nature of the company’s work profile while giving a rugged yet elite feel to the space. An eclectic mix of corporate furniture with natural wood live-edged tables and signature pieces create a high-impact environment. The reception lends to the identity of the office space, with a symbolic free-flowing entrance foyer that is emblematic of the company and its brand identity. Inspired by the company’s logo, the reception desk is a sinewy S-shaped form that morphs into the visitors’ seating area.

This textural healing is not limited to inside the office, the same language trickles in the outdoor section as well where the terrace sits in the embrace of plant fitted walls on all sides and a large purple tree as the signature piece. Charging points accompany all seating areas, including the bar. The use of greens, self-shading devices and mist cooling fans create a conducive microclimate on the terrace, thereby allowing it to be used throughout the year.

The office for Grant Thornton is an exemplification of ‘the new in reconfigurable’ . The design is a response to an agile, culturally sensitive and highly productive workforce that needs a space that resonates with them – one that enables fluid conversations, hyper-connectivity, community driven tenor and sustainability in the working environment.