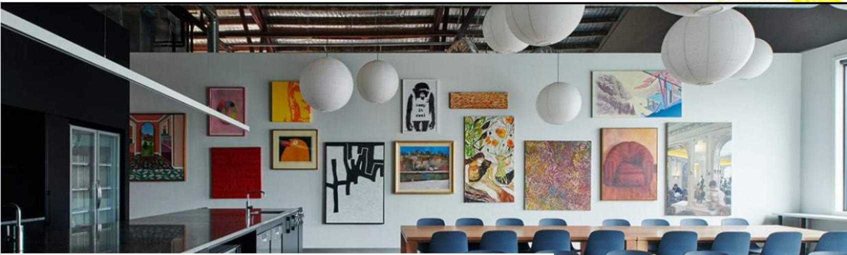

OUR COMMUNITY HOUSE: NEW MELBOURNE CO-WORKING SPACE BY STUDIO TATE.

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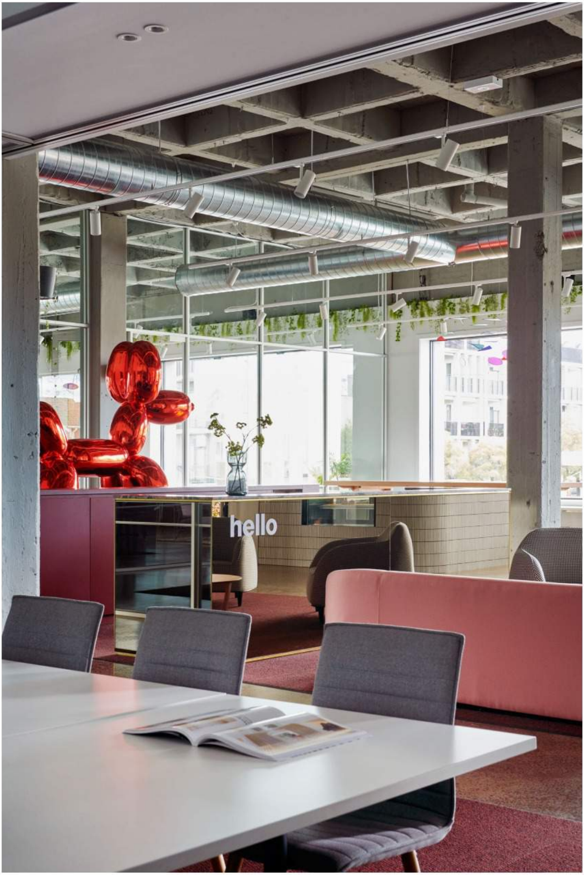

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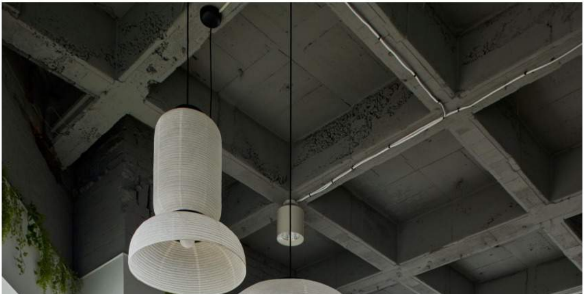
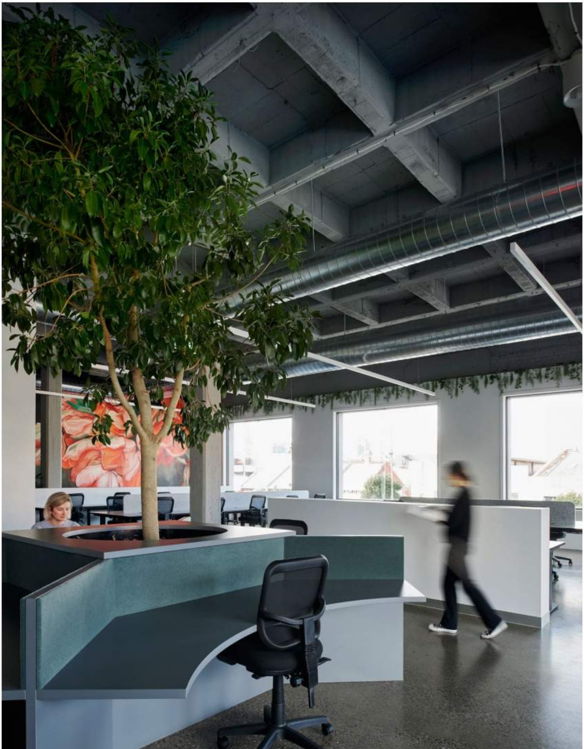
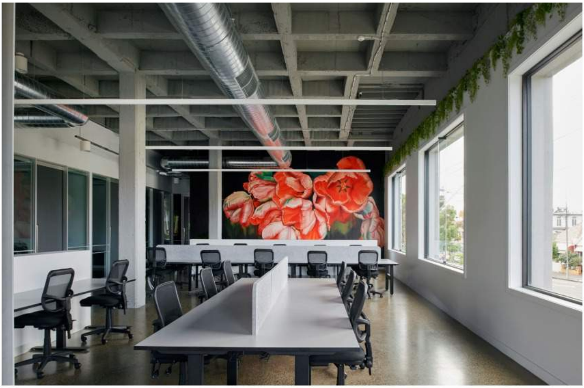






Melbourne-based social enterprise **Our Community Group** has opened a landmark **co-working space** in North Melbourne, 'Our Community House', designed by **Studio Tate**. The group harnesses expertise in data science to support like-minded organisations, with the House conceived as a physical manifestation of this digital footprint; uniting design and data to amplify the work of some of Australia's leading socially-minded groups and individuals.

Located in the former National Union of Workers headquarters, the space is home to 60 employees with a further 180 co-working desks available by application for not-for-profit organisations, government, philanthropic and corporate grant-makers, and other 'enlightened' businesses. The building is divided into four co-working zones, including a mix of private offices, open-plan workstations and breakout settings, allowing for customizable offerings dependent on the requirements of each tenant.

"Transformation was the central theme of our design narrative," says Studio Tate principal interior designer Alex Hopkins. *"We sought to create a space that provided a framework for the not-for-profit sector to evolve and grow, and drew inspiration from the transformative nature of art, colour, light and nature."*

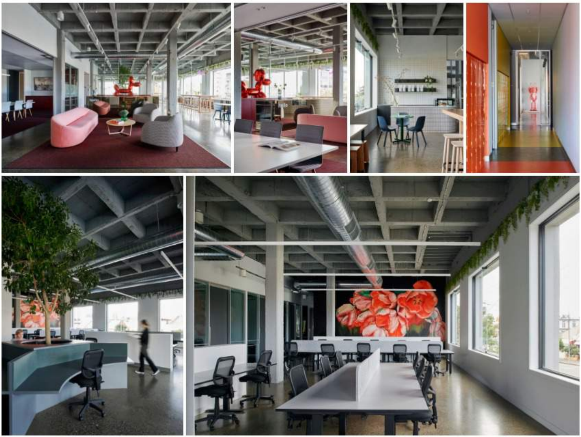
Hopkins adds, *"With limited resources, not-for-profits and social start-ups often work in less than desirable conditions, so the 'House' was an opportunity to demonstrate how intelligent design can positively impact communication, productivity and wellbeing in this sector."*

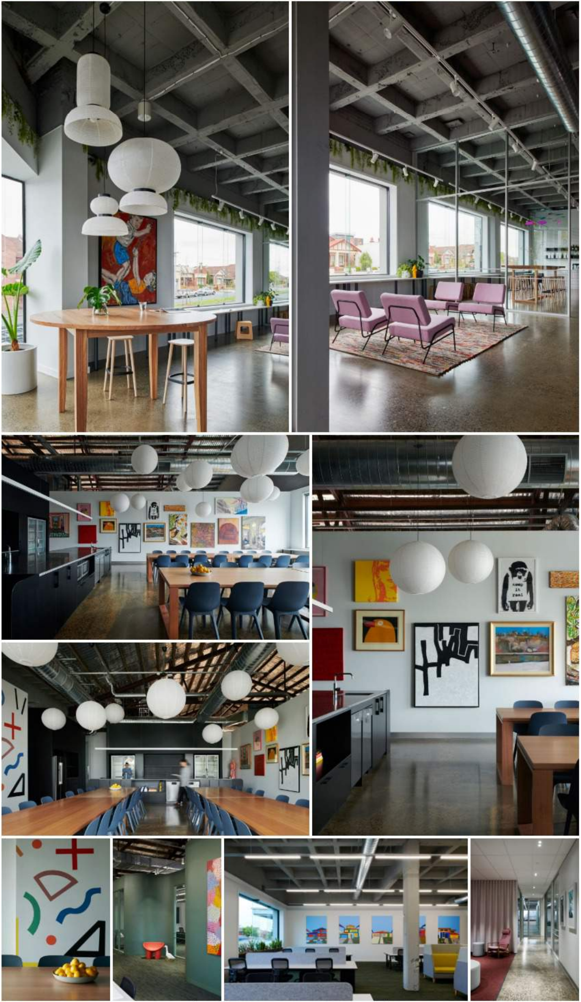
Brutal concrete columns at the front of the building and exposed trusses and high-pitched ceilings at the rear were softened through the use of bold blocks of colour that define zones and orientation. Focusing on raw materials and simple forms, Studio Tate celebrated the bones of the existing building as an ideal background for a comprehensive art collection, displaying a rotating offering from Our Community Group Founder and Managing Director, Denis Moriarty. Permanent art includes an expansive mural by local street artist David Lee Pereira.

Intelligent planning, including uniting what was originally two buildings, maximized access to natural light and allows for views from one end of the building to the other. Tenants enjoy progressive, 'workplace of the future' amenities including parent and milk-expressing rooms, gender-inclusive bathrooms, solar heating and cooling efficiencies, ergonomic sit-to-stand desks and even an in-house rocket scientist.

With using data for social good at the core of Our Community's ethos, a permanent staff of three data scientists – astrophysicist, neuro, and mathematics – run free workshops for tenants and undertake five socially-minded projects every year. All findings and outcomes will be made available online, continuing the charge to empower advancement through information sharing.

See more projects from Studio Tate on Yellowtrace here.





[Images courtesy of **Studio Tate**. Photography by **Thomas Brooke**.]