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 ING CUSTOMER  
EXPERIENCE CENTER

FOKKEMA & PARTNERS ARCHITECTEN.

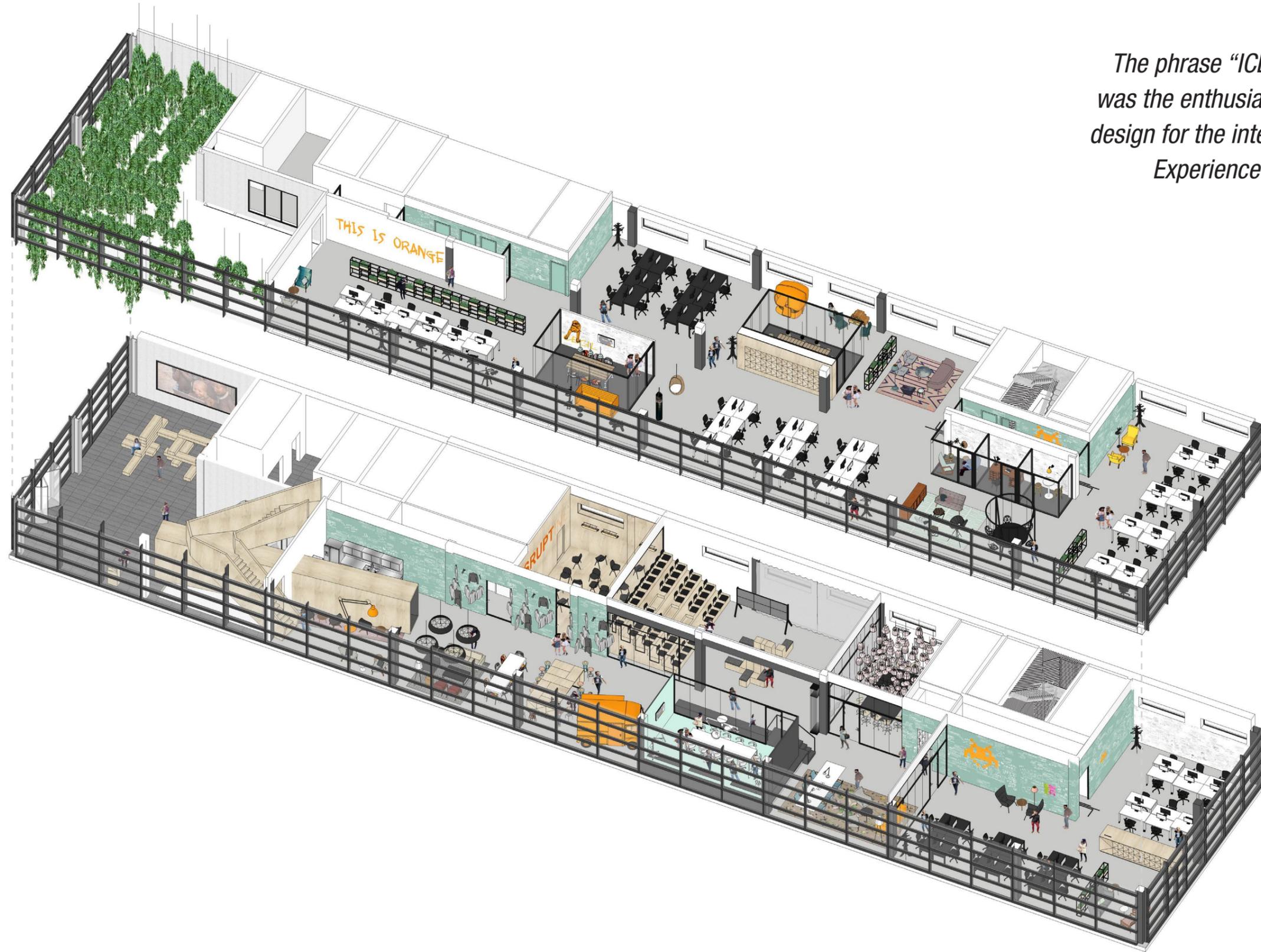


## ING Customer Experience Center (ICEC)

*The challenge was to inspire both visitors and users by designing something completely out of the ordinary, stimulating open-minded attitudes.*

The phrase "ICEC is different!" was the enthusiastic start of the design for the interior of the new Experience Center for ING. The experience center is used to enhance innovation of the bank. At the same time it gives customers an experience of what the future of banking could be like. For the design this implied all sorts of different spaces needed to be developed. Special connections - such as the tunnel and staircase - as well as a succession of experiences in the interior design, stimulate cross-pollination between teams, startups and partners.

**Client** ING ICEC | **Location** Bijlmerdreef 24, 1102 CT Amsterdam, The Netherlands | **Program** A stimulating Experience Center to enhance innovation by stimulating an open-minded attitude | **Size** 1.300 m<sup>2</sup> | **Start Date** June 2015 | **Completion Date** March 2016 | **Architect** Fokkema & Partners Architects | **Photography** Studio Sint en ING Group



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### Transition zone

As one of the departments of the bank responsible for innovation, the old ICEC was situated far from the ING campus near Amsterdam Arena. The interviews with the employees showed this was seen as an advantage because visiting the ICEC was quite a journey. Before arriving the mindset and attitude of visitors had already been changed on the way. Not only the physical distance, but also the different atmosphere in the other part of Amsterdam helped to dissociate with the rest of ING and to give ICEC their own identity.

To move ICEC into the heart of the campus of ING felt as a risk because of the loss of this advantage. The challenge was to create the same distance to the ING campus, but within the same building. To solve this problem one of the main goals was to design the new entrance as a "contamination zone". One of the other goals was to raise a feeling of amazement which starts upon entering ICEC through an obscure, 15 meter long tunnel, that gets more narrow towards the end and feels almost like a wormhole. This way of entering the Experience Center, ensures one will be contaminated with all of the innovation taking place inside. Once on the other side of the tunnel you arrive at a socialization hub that embraces everyone present.

### Temporary design

From the beginning of the project the intention was that ICEC only would stay here for three years. We saw this challenge as a way of thinking and an opportunity to improve the design. Instead of removing the existing suspended ceiling, we decided to paint several parts and to hang black mesh steel ceiling islands underneath to give it a more sturdy feel. The materials used in the design are simple and easy to process. The large objects, such as the tunnel, the staircase and the grandstand are built out of plywood, which is easy to build with and enhances the appearance at the same time.

The design brief asked for a natural connection between the two stories of the project. Because of the relatively short period ICEC will use the space it proved to be too difficult and expensive to make a large void to connect these two stories. Instead we decided to design the connection to the upper floor by a timbered plywood staircase wrapped around the tunnel. Doing this in the already double-height entrance hall ensured that only two holes in a non-constructive wall had to be made in order to solve the problem.

The choice for vintage furniture was inspired by the temporary use of the space and increases the bold feel of the design.

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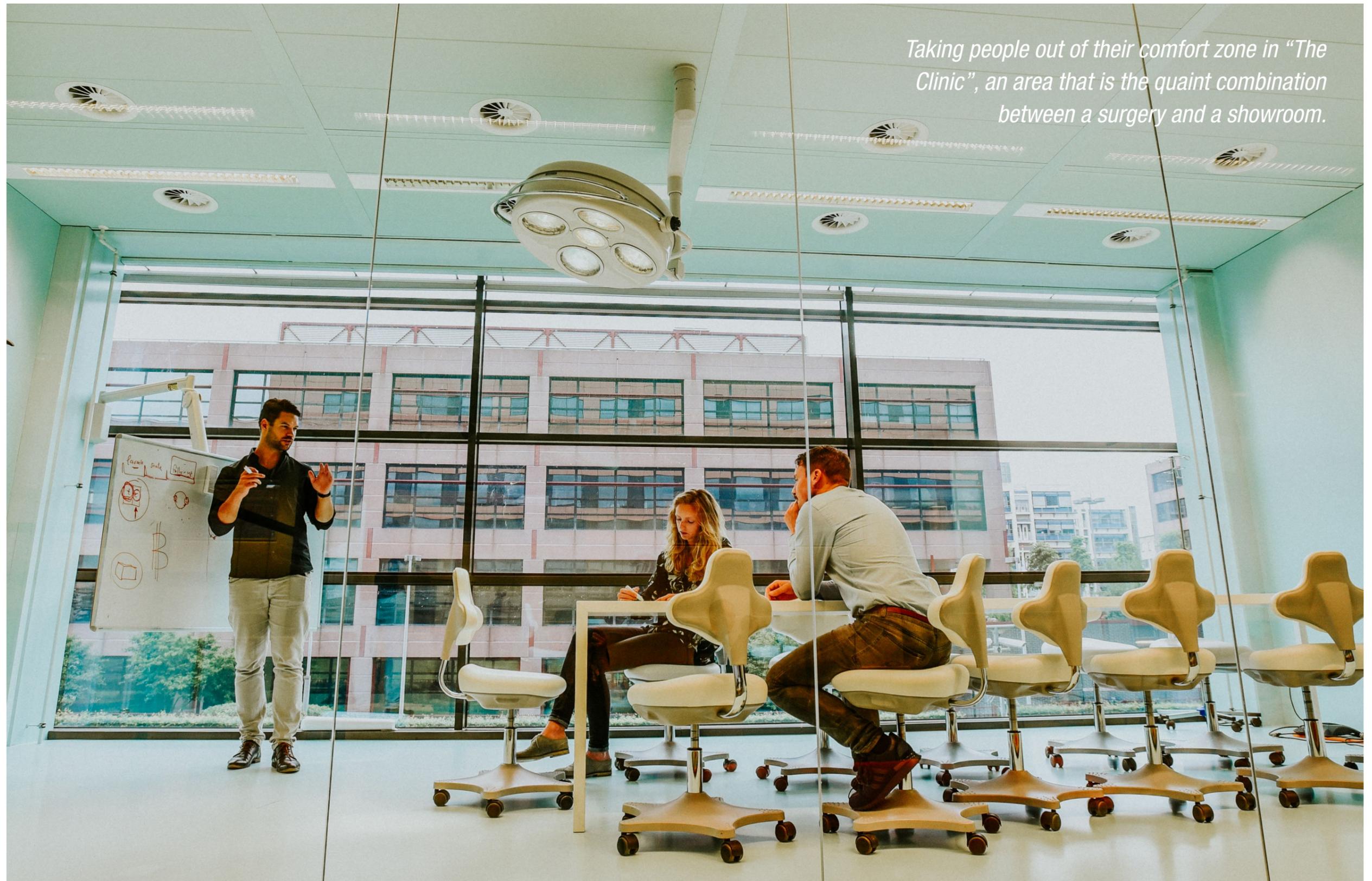
**Socialization hub**

Positioned right after the entrance tunnel, it is not only being used for regular lunches but also for informal meetings during workdays. The large plywood sliding table can be extended in several directions providing cozy little spots to sit around and discuss something.

In case of a large event the space can be used as a foyer. Due to the professionally equipped kitchen behind the tunnel a caterer can easily serve fresh food to even the biggest groups. A vintage Citroën van was dipped in an old ING orange color to serve as a coffeebar.



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**Flexible use**

In the heart of the design lies a big Sandbox room with a capacity of up to 100 people. This space with glass sliding doors around the grandstand provides the option to present to audiences from an intimate group up to 80 people. In the maximum setting the high steps of "The Clinic" can be used as a small tribune to fit even an extra 20 people.

To provoke everyone present to take part in one of the creative workshops, four different break-out rooms have been designed, all radiating their own peculiar atmosphere. From a cozy, completely timbered plywood space to "The Clinic", a space that is the quaint combination between a surgery and a showroom. The different spaces can be used in a showcase in which ICEC shows a sequence of experiences to the customers. The large contrast between the different break-out rooms contributes to the distinction of the way it will be used.

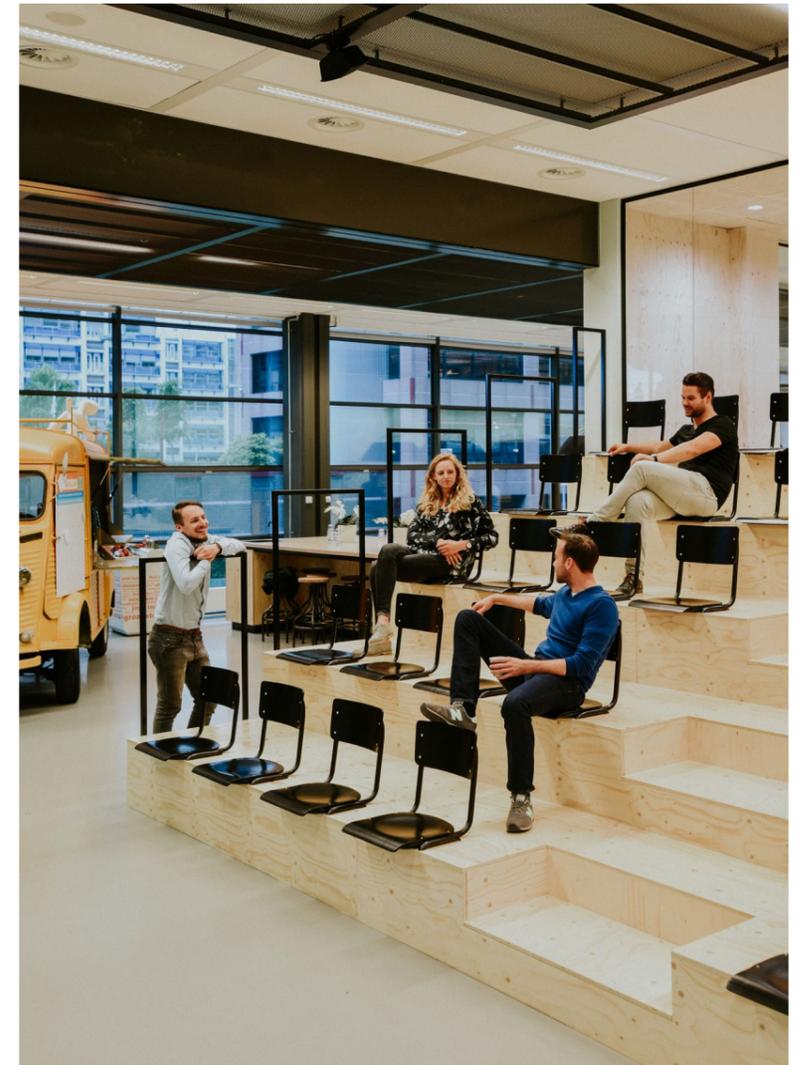
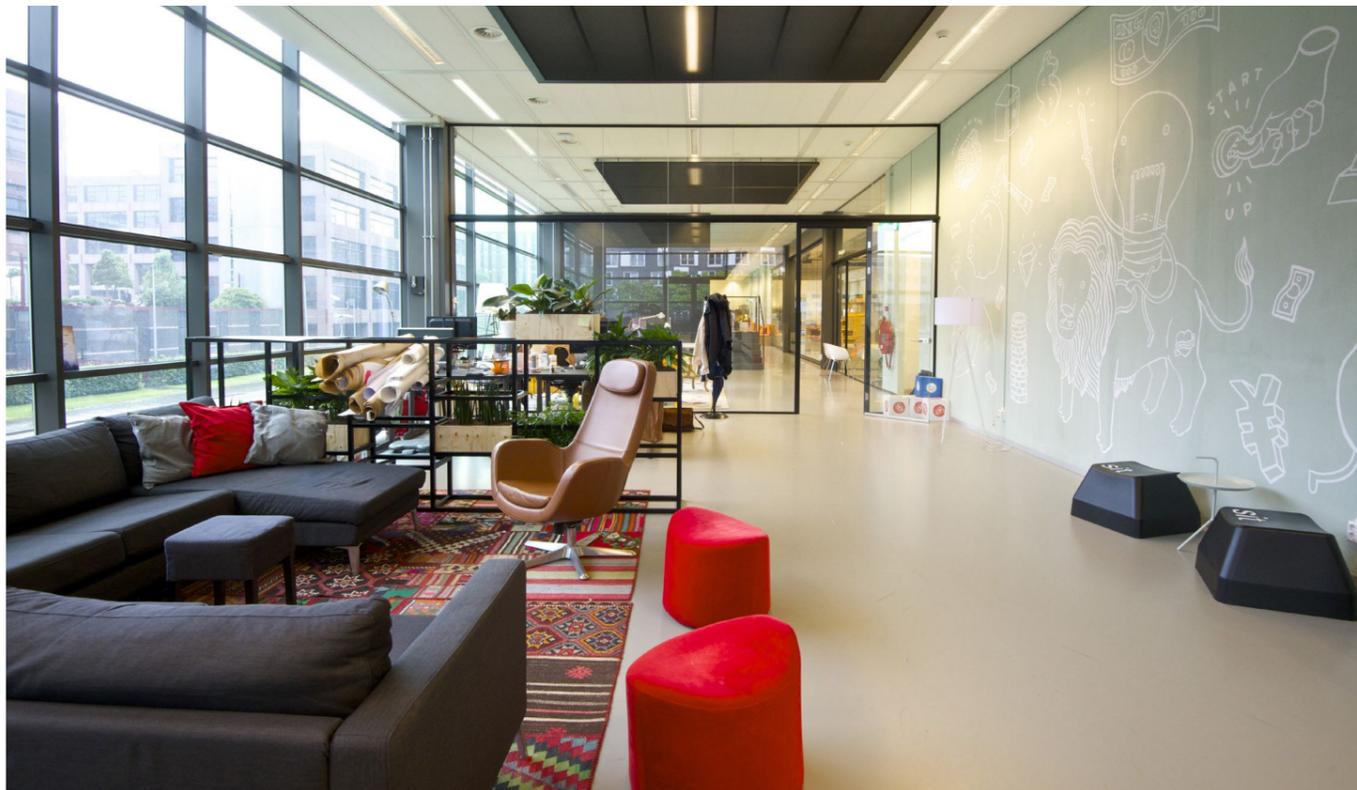
The "Jordan", named after the famous basketball player Michael Jordan, is an enclosed space in which the walls, the ceiling as well as the floor have been completely clad in plywood. Except for the high windows it is impossible to look outside, giving the space an alienating feel. Only from the top of the grandstand you can peek over your shoulder to look down into space. The enclosed feel it gives to the space helps people to come up with new ideas, because of the absence of distraction from outside. The space is popular for playing basketball or a game of ping-pong in order to break away from the daily routine. Besides that people will use it to make a private phone call or a large meeting.

The feeling of being in full sight from the inside as well as from the outside helps taking people out of their comfort zone in "The Clinic". The difference to the enclosed space of "The Jordan" will even be increased by the podium the space is situated on.

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ICEC - ING Customer Experience Center



The workplace in the project is following the sturdy bold design of the entrance area, confirming the own identity of ICEC within the ING campus.



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