

WORKTECHTM Chicago

WORK / WORKPLACE / TECHNOLOGY / INNOVATION

EXPLORE THE FUTURE OF WORK AND THE WORKPLACE

ACCENTURE, 500 W MADISON ST, CHICAGO

THURSDAY JULY 16TH

09:00 - 16:15

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A warm welcome to WORKTECH26 Chicago

WORKTECH is the fastest growing forum for all those involved in the future of work and the workplace as well as real estate, technology and innovation.

Across organisations today, the workplace agenda is becoming more complex. It is no longer only about what the future of work looks like, but how work is being reshaped through data, experience, culture, and operational change.

This is the lens shaping WORKTECH26 Chicago. This year's programme explores how organisations are moving from strategy to execution—delivering workplace transformation at scale while balancing performance, experience, and value.

Across the agenda, we will explore the rise of workplace intelligence and how organisations are connecting data, systems, and human experience to improve decision-making. We will also look at how transformation is being embedded through feedback loops, pilot environments, and operating models built for adaptation, and how trust is strengthened through lived experience where feedback and iteration shape workplaces that evolve over time.

We look forward to welcoming you for a day of insight, debate and inspiration.

Warmest regards,
Samantha

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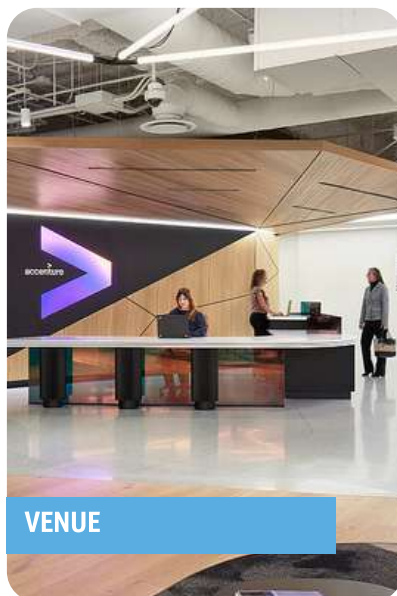
SPEAKERS



SESSIONS



CONFERENCE AGENDA



VENUE



WHO ATTENDS



KEY INFORMATION

MEET THE SPEAKERS



WORKTECH26 Chicago will attract some of the biggest and brightest names to debate, discuss, and divulge the latest thinking on the future of work and the workplace.

The conference will feature leading international thinkers from industry and academia. Our speakers represent some of the world's biggest brands and best universities and research departments, alongside radical visionaries from new innovative organisations.

Through interdisciplinary speakers and learning experiences, we focus on bringing cutting edge ideas and inspiration to the workplace community to enhance creativity and move thinking forward. Instead of focusing on peer to peer innovation through imitation, we aim to curate a unique programme, bringing together experts in the fields of people, place and technology and relevant adjacencies to reflect on the future of work and workplace.

Alongside the conference series, the WORKTECH Academy knowledge hub explores the future of work through six key themes: people, place, technology, design, culture and innovation. Creating leading commentary, research and publications that places scientific research at the heart of key business problems. www.worktechacademy.com

Full list of speakers

Angie Bilstad [Northwestern Mutual](#)
Dr. Tracy Brower [Steelcase](#)
Amanda Cardy [GE HealthCare](#)
Erin Cousins [ArtLifting](#)
Curtis Fenton [RSM](#)
Eric Gannon [Gensler](#)
Kristin Godard [Rocket Companies](#)
Todd Horner [Rocket Companies](#)
Troy Johnston [RightCrowd](#)
Molly Ketcham [Accenture](#)
Alexis Kim [SmithGroup](#)
Amy Longhi [AlixPartners](#)
Tomás G. Mac Eoin [Hereworks](#)
Megan Mackinson [JLL](#)
Melissa Marsh [Plastarc](#)
Xavier Menendez [Accenture](#)
Jason Pugh [Gensler](#)
Tope Sadiku [McDonald's](#)
Amanda Schneider [ThinkLab](#)
Lisette Smyrnios [Accenture](#)
Sara Slone Becker [Ferrara Candy](#)
Luke Tanen [Chicago Innovation](#)



Xavier Menendez, Accenture



Sara Slone Becker, Ferrara



Amanda Schneider, ThinkLab



Tope Sadiku, McDonald's



Lisette Smyrnios, Accenture



Curtis Fenton, RSM



Justin Pugh, Gensler



Amanda Cardy, GE HealthCare



Angie Bilstad, Northwestern Mutual



Data, Trust, and Transformation: Inside GE HealthCare's Continuous Workplace Evolution

Amanda Cardy, Global Workplace & Facilities Transformation Lead, GE HealthCare

A pre- and post-occupancy survey is only the starting point—trust is built when employees see their feedback directly influence their physical environment. This case study explores GE HealthCare's workplace evolution, highlighting why "future-proofing" requires intentional financial and operational planning beyond day one. Learn how a local "Learning Lab" pilot became a catalyst for global transformation, informing design standards, operational models, and innovative technology.

Designing with Purpose: How Data-Informed Inclusion Drives Workplace Performance

Erin Cousins, Art Advisor, ArtLifting, Sara Slone Becker, Senior Workplace Manager, Ferrara, and Curtis Fenton, Strategy Execution Senior Director, National Professional Standards Group and National Abilities Employee Network Group Leader, RSM

As organizations invest in intelligent workplace technologies, the human experience must remain at the center of design strategy. This panel explores how leading firms are using data, behavioral insights, and intentional design — including the strategic integration of art — to build cultures where inclusion is measurable, not just aspirational. Drawing on real-life examples, panelists will share how connecting accessibility and inclusion initiatives to experiential workplace data translates purpose into performance. Attendees will walk away with actionable insights on how adaptive workplaces can be designed to make every employee feel valued, visible, and empowered to do their best work.



Critical Connections: The Surprising Power of Place, Proximity and Presence

Dr. Tracy Brower, PhD Sociologist, Author, Keynote Speaker, Senior Contributor to Forbes, Vice President of Workplace Insights, Steelcase

At the same time that engagement is at an 11-year low, people are also reporting that they crave greater connections to their work and their colleagues. In the midst of it all, the work experience has an increasingly important role to play, and we can have a significant impact. Join us to hear fascinating new evidence for the power of place and proximity and their effects on performance, engagement and retention. We'll discuss the sweet spots for balancing flexibility with presence and the factors that go beyond RTO to create sticky experiences and places people (really) want to be and bring their best.

CONFERENCE AGENDA

09:00 - 16:15

08:30 | WORKTECH26 CHICAGO CONFERENCE OPENS

09:00 | CHAIRPERSON'S OPENING REMARKS & WELCOME ADDRESS

Tope Sadiku, **Director, Operations Standards, Global Operations, McDonald's**

Molly Ketcham, **Global Health, Safety & Environment (HSE) Managing Director, Accenture**



THEME: THE STRATEGIC INTELLIGENT WORKPLACE: FUTURE OF WORK IN ACTION

09:15 | STATE OF THE MARKET: TRENDS & INSIGHTS

Kick off the day by examining the forces driving change in the workplace landscape today. This dynamic discussion will set the scene, surface key challenges, and explore emerging trends and strategic insights, offering a shared perspective on the future of work and the opportunities that lie ahead.

09:20 | OPENING KEYNOTE: INNOVATION IN ACTION - HOW AGENTIC AI IS DRIVING REAL ESTATE INSIGHTS AND DECISIONS AT SPEED

Xavier Menendez, **Managing Director, Real Estate & Workplace Solutions Lead, Accenture**



In this opening keynote, Xavier explores how Agentic AI is transforming real estate portfolio management by delivering insights at unprecedented speed. This session highlights how AI-powered decision-making is enabling senior leaders to move from data to action faster, reshaping how enterprise real estate strategies are defined and executed.

09:45 | DESIGNING THE FUTURE OF WORK: HOW INNOVATION AND HUMAN EXPERIENCE ARE RESHAPING THE WORKPLACE

Luke Tanen, **CEO, Chicago Innovation**
Eric Gannon, **Principal, Workplace Leader, Gensler**



The workplace is no longer just where work happens—it has become a strategic tool for innovation, culture, and competitive advantage. Join Luke Tanen, President and CEO of Chicago Innovation and Eric Gannon, Principal at Gensler, for a fireside chat exploring how leading organizations are reimagining workplaces in the age of AI, hybrid work, and rapidly evolving employee expectations. Through real-world examples and emerging trends, we'll discuss how thoughtful design can foster collaboration, strengthen organizational culture, accelerate innovation, and create environments where people and businesses thrive.

10:10 | COFFEE BREAK & WORKPLACE TOURS

Discover Chicago's premier vertical campus at Accenture Tower—an innovative, amenity-rich workplace designed to foster collaboration, flexibility, and wellbeing, hosted by Accenture during the lunch break.



THEME: WORKPLACE INTELLIGENCE 2.0: METRICS, MEANING & HUMAN IMPACT

10:55 | CRITICAL CONNECTIONS: THE SURPRISING POWER OF PLACE, PROXIMITY & PRESENCE

Dr. Tracy Brower, **PhD Sociologist, Author, Keynote Speaker, Senior Contributor, Forbes & Fast Company, Vice President of Workplace Insights, Steelcase**



At the same time that engagement is at an 11-year low, people are also reporting that they crave greater connections to their work and their colleagues. In the midst of it all, the work experience has an increasingly important role to play, and we can have a significant impact. Join us to hear fascinating new evidence for the power of place and proximity and their effects on performance, engagement and retention. We'll discuss the sweet spots for balancing flexibility with presence and the factors that go beyond RTO to create sticky experiences and places people (really) want to be and bring their best.

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11:20 | DESIGNING THE FUTURE OF WORK: INNOVATION IN SPACE AND EMPLOYEE EXPERIENCE

Todd Horner, **Vice President of Workplace Experience, Rocket Companies**
 Kristin Godard, **Director of Workplace Strategy, Rocket Companies**
 Megan Mackinson, **National Workplace Advisory Lead, JLL**

Join us for an engaging panel discussion exploring cutting-edge approaches to workplace design, space utilization, and employee experience. Hear directly from industry leaders who are reimagining how physical spaces support today's evolving workforce. Our panellists will showcase innovative workplace strategies and recently completed projects, discussing how they're designing spaces that prioritize both functionality and experience. The conversation will feature insights from Rocket Companies on their workplace initiatives, alongside architectural perspectives on translating workplace strategy into built environments.



11:50 | INTERACTIVE AUDIENCE DISCUSSION: PEER LEARNINGS



12:00 | EXPERT PANEL: SCALING WORKPLACE INTELLIGENCE — FROM FRAGMENTED SIGNALS TO STRATEGIC DECISIONS

Angie Bilstad, **Senior Director, Campus Strategy & Design, Northwestern Mutual**
 Lisette Smyrniotis, **Managing Director, Global Workplace, Accenture**
 Moderator: Melissa Marsh, **Founder & Executive Director, PLASTARC**

Workplace leaders have more data than ever, but the true value emerges when it is integrated and scaled across diverse global portfolios. At the same time, organisations are operating in environments where signals are often fragmented, conditions are constantly shifting, and decisions increasingly need to be made faster and with less certainty than traditional models allow. This session explores how practitioners are translating workplace and real estate strategy into day-to-day decision-making across complex organisations. Panellists will discuss how they interpret behavioural, operational, and portfolio signals in practice, and how they prioritise action when information is incomplete, timelines are compressed, and competing demands must be balanced. The focus is on how workplace intelligence is actually being used to support responsiveness, alignment, and confident decision-making across different organisational contexts.



12:30 | THE ACCESS CARD WAS NEVER THE POINT. THE TRUSTED IDENTITY BEHIND IT WAS.

Troy Johnston, **Vice President of Credential Technology, RightCrowd**



12:35 | WHAT'S REALLY P**SING THEM OFF? A STORY ABOUT WHAT MATTERS TO HUMANS AND WHAT TO DO ABOUT IT

Tomás Mac Eoin, **CEO, Hereworks, Innovator & Thought Leader**



12:45 | LUNCH BREAK & ACCENTURE WORKPLACE TOURS

THEME: HUMAN-CENTERED WORKPLACES: DESIGNING FOR CONNECTION, CAPABILITY & EXPERIENCE

13:45 | DATA, TRUST, AND TRANSFORMATION: INSIDE GE HEALTHCARE'S CONTINUOUS WORKPLACE EVOLUTION

Amanda Cardy, **Global Workplace & Facilities Transformation Lead, GE HealthCare**

A pre- and post-occupancy survey is only the starting point—trust is built when employees see their feedback directly influence their physical environment. This case study explores GE HealthCare's workplace evolution, highlighting why “future-proofing” requires intentional financial and operational planning beyond day one. Learn how a local “Learning Lab” pilot became a catalyst for global transformation, informing design standards, operational models, and innovative technology.



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09:00 - 17:00

14:10 | INTERACTIVE AUDIENCE DISCUSSION



14:15 | DESIGNING WITH PURPOSE: HOW DATA-INFORMED INCLUSION DRIVES WORKPLACE PERFORMANCE

Sara Slone Becker, **Senior Workplace Manager, Ferrara**
 Curtis Fenton, **Strategy Execution Senior Director, National Professional Standards Group and National Abilities Employee Network Group Leader, RSM**
 Jason Pugh, **Principal Architect & Urban Designer, Global Head of Inclusion, Gensler**
 Moderator: Erin Cousins, **Art Advisor, ArtLifting**

As organizations invest in intelligent workplace technologies, the human experience must remain at the center of design strategy. This panel explores how leading firms are using data, behavioral insights, and intentional design — including the strategic integration of art — to build cultures where inclusion is measurable, not just aspirational. Drawing on real-life examples, panelists will share how connecting accessibility and inclusion initiatives to experiential workplace data translates purpose into performance. Attendees will walk away with actionable insights on how adaptive workplaces can be designed to make every employee feel valued, visible, and empowered to do their best work.



14:45 | COFFEE BREAK & NETWORKING

15:15 | CURATED WORKPLACE; UNSCRIPTED EXPERIENCE: WHERE DESIGN MEETS DYNAMIC WORK IN THE ERA OF AI

Amy Longhi, **Director, Real Estate & Facilities, AlixPartners**
 Alexis Kim, **Vice President, Senior Workplace Strategist, SmithGroup**



What if workplaces were designed less as systems to optimize and more as curated experiences that shape how people think, feel and perform? As AI accelerates change, organizations must balance productivity, culture and human agency in increasingly dynamic environments. Drawing on AlixPartners' lived experience, this session explores how workplaces can support diverse work patterns and foster connection, judgement and meaning -- all while enabling culture to emerge through unscripted experiences within highly curated spaces. Through a live dialogue, speakers will unpack real decisions, trade-offs and insights, shifting the focus from standardized solutions to intentionally shaping adaptable, human-centric experiences as work becomes increasingly AI-infused.

15:40 | KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE - SIGNALS, SHIFTS & WHAT'S NEXT



Amanda Schneider, **Author, Founder & President, ThinkLab**



As the day concludes, join Amanda for an interactive knowledge exchange designed to reflect on the day's key insights and explore what they mean for the future of work, leadership, and collaboration. Drawing on her research and new book *Work for What's Next*, which explores generational shifts, workplace culture, and building trust in a rapidly changing world, this session will connect ideas across conversations, challenge assumptions, and invite participants to share perspectives and practical takeaways. Together, we'll explore how the day's discussions can inspire more human-centred, future-ready action long after the conference ends.

16:00 | CHAIRPERSON'S CLOSING REMARKS

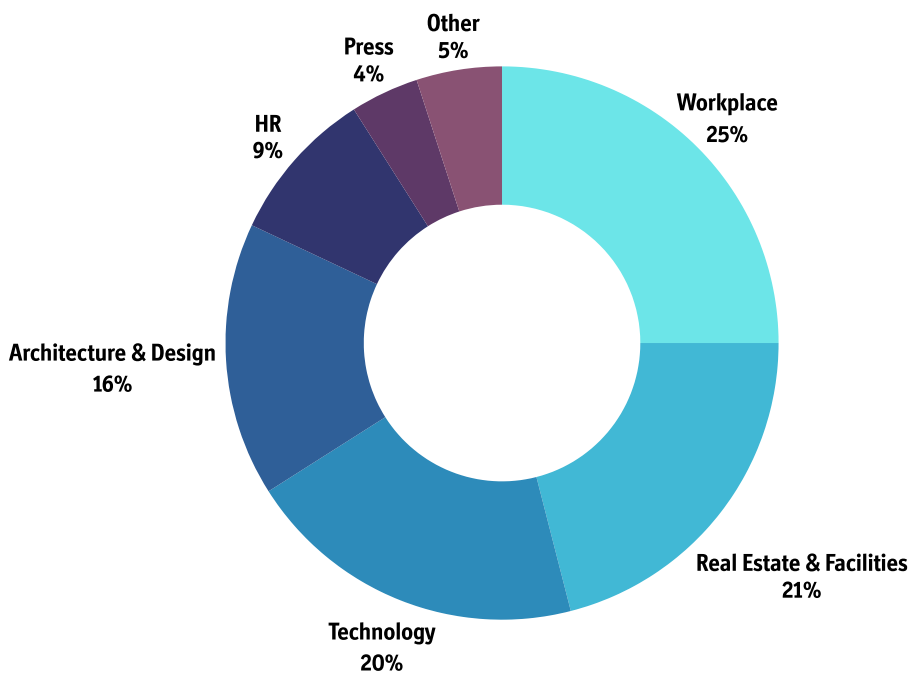
Tope Sadiku, **Director, Operations Standards, Global Operations, McDonald's**
 Molly Ketcham, **Global Health, Safety & Environment [HSE] Managing Director, Accenture**



16:15 | CONFERENCE CLOSES

WHO ATTENDS

Attracting senior level professionals from Workplace, CRE, IT, HR and Architecture & Design



A well-spoken and experienced group of presenters providing leading edge subjects current topics and statistics. A great place to learn about new ideas.

WORKTECH DELEGATE, DELOITTE



Informative, interesting views on workplace design, planning technology and workers



WORKTECH DELEGATE, BANK OF MONTREAL



BOOK NOW

www.worktechevents.com/events/worktech26-chicago/

KEY INFORMATION

Date & Venue

When: Thursday, July 16th

Where: Accenture, 500 W Madison St, Chicago

How to book:

Visit: www.worktechevents.com/events/worktech26-chicago/

Offer a Special Rate to Your Network

Become a marketing partner for this event and qualify for a special rate for your colleagues, complimentary passes for yourself, logo exposure for your organisation, and more.

If you are part of a group that would like to attend and are looking for a joint group rate please get in touch to arrange a bespoke ticket price.

Become a WORKTECH Ambassador

We're looking for people that love the future of work and the workplace and social media. People who are willing to become part of our team and help spread the word to the masses. There will be a free event ticket available to successful applicants. Apply here: <https://bit.ly/3lj8AsA>

For more information on the above initiatives, please contact:

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