

Case Study

Flexiform – Arts Council England, Manchester



Introduction:

YPO supported Arts Council England (ACE) in the delivery of its Manchester office refurbishment by providing access to a compliant and easy-to-use framework solution.

Through the YPO framework, ACE was able to directly award a contract to Flexiform, enabling the successful fit-out of its new offices within The Hive in Manchester, reflecting growing trends for hybrid working.

By using the YPO framework, ACE benefited from a streamlined procurement route that reduced administrative burden, maintained full compliance, and enabled the project to progress efficiently during a period of change.

The Brief:

Following changes to working patterns after the pandemic, ACE reviewed the use of its Manchester office space. With fewer staff attending the office on a regular basis, ACE identified an opportunity to downsize while creating a more attractive and homely working environment to encourage colleagues back into the office.

To deliver this, ACE required a trusted supplier capable of supporting the workspace refurbishment. Using YPO's framework enabled ACE to appoint a sustainable supplier quickly and compliantly through a direct award process.

Requirements:

To support the proposed new ways of working and enhance the employee experience, ACE wanted to create a more welcoming and functional space.

Key features included:

- Increased number of meeting spaces
- Fully accessible areas
- A dedicated well-being room
- Quiet areas for focused work
- Flexible work areas

Meeting these requirements also meant that modern furniture was required to redesign the space.

The Challenge:

Although the brief focused on improving the workspace experience, ACE was mindful that sustainability remained a key consideration throughout the project.

A primary challenge was ensuring that existing furniture, which no longer suited the new layout, could be managed responsibly rather than replaced.

The Solution:

Through YPO's compliant framework, ACE directly appointed Flexiform to deliver the works. Flexiform provided a tailored solution, offering services ranging from space planning to installation, supported by an all-in-one, office fit-out approach.

Rather than disposing of the existing furniture, items were relocated to another office location, extending their lifespan and aligning with ACE's sustainability targets.

Flexiform's on-site installation team adapted some pieces of furniture by creating cut-outs for in-desk power charging, making it much more suitable for agile working.

The Outcome:

By utilising YPO's framework, ACE was able to:

- Secure a compliant and efficient route to market.
- Directly award to an experienced supplier without lengthy procurement processes
- Support sustainability goals through furniture reuse and adaptation.

- Deliver a refreshed, flexible workspace designed to encourage staff back into the office.

The YPO framework played a key enabling role in the project, providing confidence, compliance and flexibility, while allowing Flexiform to focus on delivering a solution tailored to ACE's needs.

Testimonial 1:

"We have worked with Flexiform before and I'm very glad that we collaborated on our new Manchester office space in 2024. From the space's layout and furnishings to the exemplary accessibility standards, we have a truly welcoming office that feels like a home from home, where colleagues can focus or collaborate in a space made for them to do their best work. A huge thank you to Aaron and the team!"

- ***Gill Royle, Senior Facilities Manager, Arts Council England***

Testimonial 2:

"Flexiform and Arts Council England are thrilled with the office fit out, with a striking creative workspace for staff and visitors. A huge thank you to the YPO who facilitated the Framework that allowed all this to happen. We look forward to continuing our partnership with Arts Council England and YPO."

- ***Rob Waterhouse, Senior Contracts Manager, Flexiform***