



# BCO IDEAS COMPETITION 2026

## *Solving tomorrow's challenges, today*

The BCO Ideas competition challenges young professionals, aged up to 35, to present bold, innovative solutions for the future of workspace. The competition provides a unique opportunity for emerging talent in our sector to showcase their intelligence and ideas to the BCO community and wider workplace industry.

## Entry requirements

We ask entrants to respond to one of the below challenges, within their submission:

- **The impact of AI on work and design**

How is AI reshaping how we design, build, and work?

- **Retrofit vs. new-build**

With most building stock already in place, how do we deliver sustainable buildings viably without demolition?

- **Circular economy at scale**

How do we move beyond pilots to embed circularity across materials, supply chains, and value?

- **Values vs. specifications**

What does good look like beyond technical specifications? How can we align values to design and operational principles?

We recognise that some ideas will address more than one of these topics, but we ask entrants to pick a central topic that their idea aligns most closely with.

Entrants are asked to submit a maximum of 1,000 words within the provided template, explaining their idea including, but not limited to:

- **What:** your idea is and what problem/challenge is it addressing
- **Why:** your idea going to transform the future of workspace
- **How:** your idea be implemented within the workplace

Images or diagrams to help explain your idea can be submitted as additional materials alongside your 1,000 word entry.

Please include **your name** and **full contact details** on the form, including the title of your idea as well as a short synopsis.

The entry form can be found via the BCO website and should be submitted by email to **mail@bco.org.uk**.

### **Please note:**

- This is an individual competition and submissions must be submitted individually rather than from groups.
- The competition is open to non-members, with winner required to join BCO NextGen as they progress through the project.

# Why enter?

## A re-imagined programme with more support and real impact

Backed by the BCO community with award-winning training from Ginger Leadership Communications, this refreshed programme is designed to turn strong thinking into industry-shaping ideas that support best-in-class workspace for people, planet and UK PLC. What's new this year is a clear pathway from ideas to action, with greater structure and visibility throughout.

## What finalists can expect

All finalists will benefit from enhanced support from day one, including:

- A structured development journey
- A three-day training programme focused on ideas formation and storytelling
- 1:1 guidance from Ginger Leadership Communications
- Mentoring from industry leaders and previous finalists

This initiative offers a powerful platform to showcase your ideas to both the BCO and the wider workplace industry.

## Big ideas deserve a big finale

Finalists will present their ideas at a TED-Talk-style event in October, attended by BCO members and industry professionals. For the first time in the project's history, the winning idea will progress into a newly launched BCO Incubator, which will help transition an ideas into a reality.

This is a standout opportunity to build confidence, grow your network, develop high-impact ideas and take a meaningful step forward in your career.

### OFF GRID

DO WE REALLY NEED A ZOMBIE APOCALYPSE TO BE SELF SUFFICIENT?

Social value in the built environment is pushing office life in London to new heights. But what about depths? How can we better utilise the space below our feet to help foster community & sustainability. Off GRID looks to dig deep & invest in a subterranean environment that provides social & sustainable value.

- Waste - A Food, Water & Paper Problem**  
In most commercial buildings, waste is managed through daily collections. Food waste is hauled away, paper is shredded, and water disappears down the drain. But why should these valuable materials be removed and transported for recycling when they can be processed on-site?  
By integrating rooftop rainwater collection with greywater from its points and mechanical systems, water can be filtered in a basement purification plant and reused for toilets, showers, and cleaning, reducing demand on mains supply. Paper and cardboard, which can be recycled several times before fibres degrade, can be pulped and repressed in compact micro plants, supporting the ongoing need for office paper. Meanwhile, food waste can be composted on-site to create nutrient-rich fertiliser for plants, helping close the loop on organic waste.
- Produce - If you can make it, so can we**  
As tracking embodied carbon becomes more common, we're now taking a closer look at the logistical impact of everyday office essentials. Vertical farms are already delivering fresh produce to our desks.  
By cultivating climate-controlled buildings, we could grow supporting in-house caterers. Looking ahead, even more innovations in regenerative materials, transforming byproducts into building materials, and bringing production closer to the office.
- Community - Dig deep. Create more**  
Companies are increasingly recognizing the value of offering more than just a workstation, yet true engagement often remains confined within individual company bubbles. Many

### CINTECUTURE: WHEN MILLENNIAL AND GEN Z TRENDS SHAPE RETAIL AND HOSPITALITY DESIGN

Visual Appointments: Virtual Avatars (BCO Best Gen Member)  
Concept Development: 2024  
Date of Announcement: May 29, 2022

- Personalized Premium Hospitality**
  - Unique Experiences and settings at work that make every work day special.
  - Generative and Immersive Experiences that encourage members to share, connect, and enhance their workday.
- Operational Connectedness**
  - Organizational Brand Identity
  - Immersive Engagement
  - Experiential Hospitality and Design being leveraged to be produced in central hubs open to faster-response transactions.
- Health & Wellness**
  - A central creative hub to foster people to start their conversations, instead of simply to meet someone, nearby and create an array of rooms to meet specific, a healthy work day and communication can increase dwell time hence generate wellness in a more effective way.
- Experiential Connectedness**
  - Create Immersive Experiences that provide an immersive experience setting the stage members to work at. This highly organizational-based events, have staff to the simple setting, at work setting from office efforts, as well as life. This organizational health, with work-life balance by helping to work.
- Social Media**
  - The Intersection of Wellness, Analytics, and Social Currency
- Human Resilience**
  - Building Resilience and Adaptability by utilizing the right technology and team setting to allow a more enjoyable experience across of organizational typical meeting workplace.

### Making Family Work: Redefining the Future Workplace

- Parenting and careers overlap**
  - 1. Dedicated work zones support parents and children together, balancing life
  - 2. mothers encouraged to breastfeed for as long as possible
- Work-life Sustainability**
  - Family-Integrated Offices support parents through inclusive design, flexible childcare, and sustainable, enabling careers and family life to thrive together
- Children learn about sustainability through direct experience and daily engagement**
  - 1. Children learn about sustainability through direct experience and daily engagement
  - 2. Fosters eco-conscious values through education, action, and generational impact cycle
- Flexible, quiet pods and wellness spaces support parents' hybrid work, promoting balance and mental well-being**
- Inclusive designs**
- Success, collaboration & inventivity**

# Key competition dates and information

## Launch:

- Tuesday, 12 May 2026

## Deadline for Submissions:

- Monday, 15 June 2026

## Finalists revealed:

- Wednesday, 1 July 2026

## Public Speaking training:

- Day 1: Thursday 30 July 2026
- Day 2: Thursday 13 August 2026
- Day 3: Thursday 27 August 2026

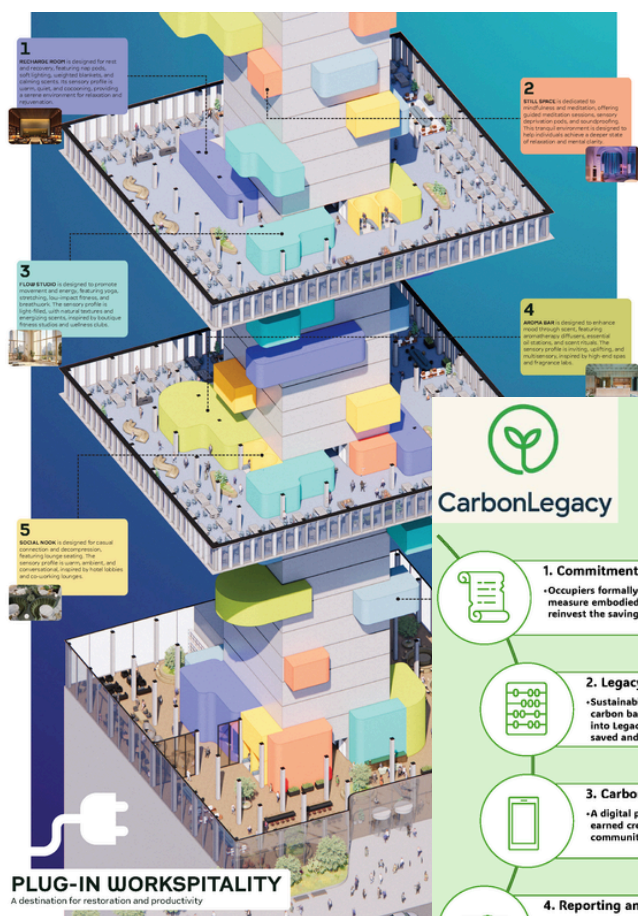
## Finalist Showcase event:

- Thursday, 22 October 2026

## Judging Criteria:

- Creativity + innovation **25%**
- Idea originality **25%**
- Deliverable and scalable **25%**
- Environmental and social impact of proposal **25%**

We want to stimulate diverse thinking from all disciplines across the industry and encourage members and non members from all sectors to enter.



### REGEN Leases

Turning Rent into Positive Impact

**What is a REGEN Lease?**  
A standard commercial lease plus a loyalty scheme for the planet and community.

**Impact menu**  
Landlord and tenant agree on a set of actions such as:  
• Cutting energy use by 15%  
• Installing recycling bins  
• Hosting 12 mentoring sessions for local teenagers

**Rent rebate**  
Every 100 points takes £1,000 off the annual rent, with a 20% maximum rebate.  
Smart meters, photos, or attendance logs to the shared dashboard can be used to prove performance. Points are earned by tenants and landlords automatically as they are achieved.

**How does it work in practice?**

- 1. Agree the targets**  
"Cut annual electricity by 20 MWh, run a monthly mentoring for local students, and install two rapid bike chargers."  
Great - those give me 5,000 points worth £5K in potential rent savings.
- 2. Use the online dashboard (mobile-friendly)**  
• Smart meters feed energy data automatically.  
• Occupier uploads photos of the workshop and attendance sheets.  
• Clean capital allowance tax relief for the bike chargers.  
• Check the discount energy rate, making the building more valuable and easier to finance with green loans.

Standard Commercial Lease with Rewards System for Sustainability and Community Action

40% of Carbon Emissions  
Demand for Greener Spaces  
Tax Incentives for Green Upgrades

Goals Agreed  
Progress Monitored  
Audited Quarterly  
Discount Applied

### CarbonLegacy

- 1. Commitment**  
• Occupiers formally opt into CarbonLegacy by pledging to measure embodied carbon in their fit-out projects and reinvest the savings into local community projects.
- 2. Legacy Credit Calculation**  
• Sustainability consultants help set a verified carbon baseline, and any savings are converted into Legacy Credits based on tonnes of CO2e saved and a tailored reinvestment value.
- 3. CarbonLegacy App**  
• A digital platform tracks carbon savings, displays earned credits and connects Occupiers with local community groups seeking funding or support.
- 4. Reporting and Certification**  
• The app generates ESG-ready reports and provides recognition through certifications and integrations with schemes like BREEAM, WELL and LEED.

Review carbon savings in the form of 'Legacy Credits'

Download Reports

Track and Browse Investment Projects