

# Case Profiles

The following profiles of U.S. coworking facilities demonstrate the concept's flexibility and range of applications, which vary depending upon the target users.

- **Workbar** in Boston and Cambridge, Mass., is making the leap from being a boutique coworking center to becoming a multisite brand as well as diversifying into “distributed workspace” locations within the excess space of corporations through its Outerspaces program.
- **NextSpace** in San Francisco is part of a chain of coworking centers that recently expanded from California to Chicago, the first of several planned to locations nationwide.
- **Impact Hub** is a worldwide network of social entrepreneurship-centered coworking spaces, with centers in San Francisco, Boston, and 40 other locations.
- **Serendipity Labs** in Rye, N.Y., is a hospitality-driven, corporate-oriented center that doubles as a franchise pilot site and demonstration lab for licensing coworking billing, scheduling, security and membership database management operational systems to others.
- **State Street Bank** in Boston is a coworking-style workplace and an example of the mainstreaming of the coworking concept within corporations.

# Impact Hub

## Boston and San Francisco

Impact Hub is a worldwide network of themed coworking centers that began as a single location in London (previously known simply as HUB) in 2005. Its objective is to promote social entrepreneurship through community, inspiration and collaboration, in locations from Amsterdam to Johannesburg, Singapore to San Francisco. The rapidly expanding, diverse global network now has more than 7,000 members in more than 40 locations. Eight Impact Hubs have opened to date in the U.S., including centers in Berkeley, Boston, Boulder, Oakland, Peoria, San Francisco, Seattle, and Washington, D.C. This profile focuses on Impact Hub San Francisco (formerly Hub SoMa, one of three Impact Hub centers in the Bay Area) and the recently opened Impact Hub Boston. Impact Hub San Francisco is a tenant of Forest City and Hearst Corporation's 5M Project, a mixed-use, innovation-driven development that also includes tenants such as Tech Shop, Yahoo, Square and Intersection for the Arts (a gallery in partnership with Impact Hub).



Photo by Shaina L. Semiatin

## The Basics

### Type:

Social entrepreneurship coworking center, innovation lab, entrepreneur community center, collaborative network, business incubator

### Twist:

Provides members with a worldwide network of social entrepreneurship support, contacts and expertise

**Market:**

- Change makers and entrepreneurs whose objective is to make a social impact
- Impact Hub San Francisco's members include established small businesses (45 percent), startups (40 percent) and nonprofit groups (15 percent).

**Formation:**

**Impact Hub Boston:**

Cambridge Innovation Center founded this group with the goal of making it an independent entity as soon as it is sustainable. To attract members, it held a Meetup “unconference” in December 2012, followed by a series of exploratory meetings and presentations that drew from the Meetup’s more than 500 members and mailing list of more than 700. In the month prior to opening, it held a series of workshops to build community, including two informational meetings, a “share and connect” session, two open coworking days, and a “co-creation workshop” on shaping the community. Future “Town Hall meetings” will be held to involve members in community governance.

**Impact Hub San Francisco:**

Founded by the leadership of Good Capital, an expansion fund for social enterprise, which already had been providing monthly programs in its offices, as well as a social entrepreneurship conference (SOCAP), and wanted to further build its network and sphere of opportunity

**Business Structure:**

**Boston:**

Limited liability corporation. Also intends to apply for certification as a B Corp (B Corps are certified by the nonprofit B Lab as meeting rigorous standards of social and environmental performance, accountability and transparency.

**San Francisco:**

Limited liability corporation and a certified B Corp

**Financing:**

**Boston:**

Cambridge Innovation Center is underwriting Impact Hub Boston until it stabilizes and becomes member sustained.

**San Francisco:**

Raised debt, convertible to equity, from an investor base; some investors have converted to equity shares. Employee compensation accounts for about 15 percent of the shares.

### **Membership:**

#### **Boston:**

Target membership of 200 based on a 2:1 ratio of members to seats

#### **San Francisco:**

900 members

#### **Both:**

Members have global reciprocity at other Impact Hubs via passes (by request)

### **Fee Structure:**

#### **Boston:**

- \$350/month for open desk coworking space, with 24/7 access
- \$30/month for events only, to be offered in 2014
- Additional membership types, including dedicated desks, may be introduced as determined by demand

#### **San Francisco:**

- Level Connect Membership: \$30/month for online community access, discounted events and meeting rooms, and day passes (for an additional \$30/day)
- Level Impact 10 Membership: \$70/month for 10 hours of open desk space access (9 a.m.–6 p.m. weekdays), all of the above, plus optional mailbox rental and printing services
- Level Impact 25 Membership: \$135/month for 25 hours of workspace access, all of the above, plus free printing, coffee and tea, optional discounted storage
- Level Impact 50 Membership: \$215/month for 50 hours of workspace access, all of the above
- Level Impact 100 Membership: \$375/month for 100 hours of workspace access, all of the above, plus free mailbox, printing, storage, 24/7 access
- Level Impact Unlimited Membership: \$495/month for unlimited workspace access, all of the above
- Office Memberships: \$1,800 to \$3,200/month for an office; includes membership for up to 4 persons
- Note: Impact Hub 25 and 50 members have 24/7 access to Impact Hub Berkeley and 9 a.m.–6 p.m. weekday access to Impact Hub San Francisco. All Impact Hub 100, Unlimited, and Office members have 24/7 access to both locations. Eventually, they also will have access to Impact Hubs in Brooklyn, Manhattan and Philadelphia.

### **Timeline:**

#### **Boston:**

- Planning “unconference” held December 2012
- Soft opening October 2013
- Grand opening January 2014 (projected)



Photo by Joseph Schell

**San Francisco:**

- Founded September 2009
- Opened (with 9,000 square feet) in 2010
- Expanded to 22,000 square feet by 2012

**Income:**

**Boston:**

Expects two-thirds from membership and one third from events

**San Francisco:**

75 percent of membership income from coworking members, 25 percent from private office members, plus about 10 day passes/month

**The Facilities**

**Location:**

**Boston:**

101 Main Street, Cambridge, Mass., in the Kendall Square area, one block from a subway stop and MIT

**San Francisco:**

901 Mission Street, Suite 105, two blocks from the Powell Street subway (BART) station

**Location Criteria:**

**Boston:**

Adjacent to a subway station and near parent organization Cambridge Innovation Center

**San Francisco:**

Near a subway station, inexpensive space, flexible lease arrangements, expansion potential, accommodating landlord and within 5M project and Mission Innovation District

## Features:

### **Boston:**

- 4,600 useable square feet (5,700 rentable square feet) on the ground floor of a Class A office building
- 102 seats
- Two meeting rooms
- Convertible coworking/event room
- High-speed Internet, Wi-Fi

### **San Francisco:**

- 22,000 square feet on the first and second floors of the San Francisco Chronicle Building; one-third coworking space, one-third designated office space, one-third meeting rooms. All but the offices can be transformed into event space.
- 120 seats
- 21 offices
- Eight conference rooms
- 14 phone rooms
- Two event spaces
- High-speed Internet, Wi-Fi

## Design Elements:

### **Boston:**

Street-level space with a separate storefront entrance for after-hour events, south-facing windows, high ceilings, open plan, Herman Miller furniture system

### **San Francisco:**

Emphasis on environmental sustainability, including a Plyboo (bamboo plywood) desk system and cabinets, concrete floors, flared columns

## Amenities:

### **Boston:**

- Kitchen
- Others to be determined as membership develops

### **San Francisco:**

- Art gallery (by partner Intersection for the Arts)
- Multiple lounge areas
- Two kitchens/cafes
- Games, library
- Lockers
- Mailboxes
- Showers
- Bike parking



Photo by Joseph Schell

### Support Services:

#### **Boston:**

Teleconferencing, Wi-Fi and printer set-up are included

#### **San Francisco:**

- Teleconferencing
- IT staffer

#### **Both:**

- HubNet, an Impact Hub member-only, online social networking tool
- HubSpace, an Impact Hub member-only, online meeting space booking tool

### Operations:

#### **Boston:**

- Two full-time staff members
- One part-time manager

#### **San Francisco:**

- Eight full-time staff members, who also staff Impact Hub Bay Area's Berkeley coworking center

### Lease Terms:

#### **Boston:**

Two-year term with no extension options

#### **San Francisco:**

Five-year term with extension options at below-market rent designed to attract other innovators to the 5M Project

### Addressing Challenges

- At Impact Hub Boston, launching the space — including the tenant fit up, building the membership and finding the right staff — were challenging processes.
- At Impact Hub San Francisco, managing rapid growth has been an ongoing effort. Combining the Impact Hub San Francisco and SOCAP brands to each brand's mutual advantage also is an ongoing effort.
- One of Impact Hub Bay Area's nationwide objectives is to increase the influence of its network by adding critical mass through growth to East Coast locations and through virtual memberships with premium online content.