

女強人專屬空間

Rooms of their OWN

In San Francisco, female-focused co-working offices have drawn attention for their posh amenities and sleek décor, but the real value is in the connections they create

在三藩市，專為女性而設的共享工作空間，憑藉高雅設施和時尚裝潢而大行其道，不過當中的人際關係網絡，才是其真正的價值所在

BY SARAH FELDBERG
PHOTOGRAPHY MARC OLIVIER LE BLANC





CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: THE HIVERY'S BEAUTIFUL LIGHT-FILLED SPACE; A MEMBER PHOTO WALL AT THE HIVERY; THE HIVERY FOUNDER GRACE KRAAIJVANGER; A MEETING ROOM AT THE HIVERY

順時針頂圖起：THE HIVERY的室內空間滿透自然光線；THE HIVERY設有一幅貼有照片的牆壁；THE HIVERY創辦人GRACE KRAAIJVANGER；THE HIVERY其中一間會議室

It's an unseasonably warm April afternoon, and just over the Golden Gate Bridge in Mill Valley, co-working space The Hivery is buzzing. In the main salon, women are scattered around, doing battle via laptop in front of wide windows. In the lobby, they're gathered around a high table, preparing for tonight's sold-out author talk. There's a palpable energy reverberating from all these bodies, these conversations, these bright walls with pops of yellow.

"This place is a total catalyst," says Tatyana Kabealo, The Hivery's director of events, steering me under the massive skylight in the loft's atrium. "If you stand right in the middle and make a wish, it'll come true."

I don't believe in wish-granting architecture, but The Hivery is a dream realised for founder Grace Kraaijvanger, a professional dancer turned tech marketer who had envisioned a safe, creative space to connect with other women long before the term "co-working" joined the vernacular and communal office startup WeWork was valued at \$20 billion. In 2014, she transformed a shared office into a "female-fuelled" work space emphasising creativity, support and collaboration. The Hivery became not just the first women's co-working space in the Bay Area, but one of the first in the nation.

With its legion of startups and astronomical rents, the San Francisco Bay Area has been a hub of both the co-working movement and its female-focused offshoot. Over the last few years, the doors have opened on a handful of spaces that cater explicitly to women. For US\$50-\$295 (HK\$392-\$2316) per month, they offer the standard trappings of shared work environments – conference rooms, phone booths and printers with endless toner – but with extra amenities like acupuncture and breast-milk pumping rooms and activities like branding workshops and yoga classes. Their most valuable asset, however, may be the hardest to define: a community.

As remote work and the gig economy have grown, so too have shared offices designed to meet the needs of entrepreneurs and freelancers. According to consulting firm Emergent Research, there were about 4,000 co-working spaces across the United States in 2017, with a total of 542,000 members. Over the next five years, the firm expects those numbers to swell to 6,200 offices serving more than 1 million workers. Those workers are after more than quiet desks and plentiful coffee. They're also seeking human connection – the daily interaction office denizens take for granted but that disappears for those who do business from the living room couch. When Emergent surveyed co-working space members, 83% reported feeling less lonely since joining a shared workspace.

Across the city in Potrero Hill, Temi Adamolekun knows firsthand how isolating it can be to launch a company. Four years

個出奇地和暖的四月下午，金門大橋對岸米爾谷市的共享工作空間The Hivery，氣氛非常熱烈。女士分佈在主空間的不同角落，在寬闊的窗戶前以手提電腦努力工作。在大廳裡，她們圍坐於高桌旁，準備今晚的作家講座，而該講座的門票早已售罄。那些人物、那些對話、那些明亮的牆壁和點綴其中的黃色細節，均煥發著一股無可抵擋的活力感覺。

「這裡是各種事物的催化劑。」The Hivery活動總監Tatyana Kabealo帶我到處參觀，在閣樓中庭的偌大天窗下走過。「假如你站在正中間許個願的話，相信願望必會成真。」

我並不相信有任何建築設計可以助人達成願望，但The Hivery絕對實現了創辦人Grace Kraaijvanger的夢想。Kraaijvanger由專業舞蹈員轉型為高科技市場營銷人員，早在「共享工作空間」一詞還未普及時，以及初創企業WeWork市值攀升至200億美元之前，她就已經設想出一個創意空間概念，讓各方女性可以放心地互相交流。2014年，她將一個合租辦公室改造成為「匯萃女性人才」的工作空間，強調創意、互相支持與合作。The Hivery不僅是三藩市灣區首個女性共享工作空間，更是全美首創。

三藩市灣區的初創企業多如天上繁星，加上租金高昂，故此共享工作空間甚為盛行，並逐漸衍生出女性市場。過去數年間，多個全新啟用的辦公空間均開宗明義以女性客戶為對象，月租介乎50至295美元（約合392至2,316港元），除了提供共享工作環境的標準設施，包括會議室、私人電話亭、無限補充碳粉的打印機之外，也加入針灸室和專為新任媽媽而設的母乳室，另外更會舉行品牌工作坊和瑜珈班等活動。然而當中最寶貴之處，亦是最難具體界定的優點，就是讓用家建立起一個特別的社群。

隨著居家工作和「零工經濟」之興起，市場上也出現了共享辦公室模式，迎合企業家和自由工作者的需求。根據顧問公司Emergent Research的資料顯示，2017年全美國大約有4,000個共享工作空間，會員人數共有542,000人。該公司預料在未來五年，全國將有6,200個共享辦公室，服務逾100萬名人士。他們除了重視安靜的辦公環境和咖啡供應外，也志在擴闊人脈——在職人士認為是理所當然的人際互動，會隨著工作地點轉移至客廳沙發而頃刻消失。Emergent Research訪問了一些共享辦公室用家，當中八成三的受訪者認為，自加入共享行列之後，便紓減了孤單的感覺。

在市內另一地區波特雷羅山，Temi Adamolekun深明創業者那種孤軍作戰的滋味。四年前，她開創了自己的公關公司，經常在附近的咖啡店或家中廚房的飯桌旁工作。Adamolekun說：「如果有一個專為工作而設的地方，跟私人生活分隔開來的話，絕對有助提升生產力。」

THE HIVERY

38 Miller Ave,
#20, Mill Valley;
thehivery.com



WHO JOINS

Women at all ages and stages. Founder Grace Kraaijvanger says, "We have women in their early twenties who want to start new businesses, empty nesters that are leaving long careers and want to make massive pivots and everything in between."

會員結構

任何年齡及處於任何事業階段的女性。Kraaijvanger表示：「這裡既有想創業的20來歲女性，也有一些離開工作崗位已久並且子女亦已成家立室的年長女性——她們都希望為人生帶來重大轉變。在我們的活動參與者之中，有一位女士更已屆92歲高齡。」

PERKS

Midweek meditation and signature events like "swarms" and "circles" where members gather to swap ideas or listen to talks from invited guests.

優勝之處

設有週中冥想班及其他特色活動，例如讓會員聚在一起交流意見或請來演講嘉賓的群體活動。

WHAT'S NEXT

The Hivery's second location will open in San Francisco later this year, and there are plans to expand in the East Bay, South Bay and Marin County. Kraaijvanger is also prepping to launch a new matching algorithm within the member directory to help people find coaches, mentors and peers. "It's almost like a dating service for our members that will bring them together and help them connect with each other."

未來動向

The Hivery旗下第二個共享工作空間將於今年稍後在三藩市開幕，而品牌亦計劃進一步發展至東灣、南灣及馬林縣。另外，Kraaijvanger正準備推出一套全新會員配對系統，協助會員找尋合適的教練、導師和同伴。「這種恍如為會員而設的交友服務，將她們聚集在一起，並協助她們彼此連繫。」

RADIANT WORKSPACES

1796 18th St (Suite C),
San Francisco;
radiantspaces.work



WHO JOINS

Female entrepreneurs, from graphic designers and social media managers to indie filmmakers and brand ambassadors.

會員結構

女性企業家。由平面設計師、社交媒體經理、獨立製片人，以至品牌大使等。

PERKS

A network of female founders and business owners who can offer advice or just commiserate. There are also Wednesday morning Coffee and Questions sessions – when everyone takes a quick break to gather and connect – and regular workshops on everything from clean beauty to raising capital.

優勝之處

由女性創始人與企業家組成的網絡，可為會員提供建議或純粹帶來關懷。在每週三早上舉行的「咖啡及答問」活動上，會員可藉此聚首及互相連繫。另外，這裡還會定期舉辦工作坊，涵蓋天然美容方法以至籌集資金等主題。

WHAT'S NEXT

Scaling up. That could mean a larger space in San Francisco, expanding beyond the Bay Area or creating an online programme to support people building companies in places where they can't pull up a chair.

未來動向

進一步擴張。換言之，品牌或會在三藩市設立更大的共享工作空間、擴展至灣區以外，或創造一套網上方案支援一些未能建立實體公司的人士。

ago, she founded her own public relations firm, working from local coffee shops and the kitchen table. “Having somewhere to go that’s dedicated to work – increasing the separation between work and personal life – is great for productivity,” says Adamolekun.

Frustrated with feeling unprofessional and juggling distractions, she started visiting co-working spaces around San Francisco, but found them “too big, too bro-y, too corporate”. Eventually, she joined a shared office, and when her officemate moved away, Adamolekun and her architect husband, Tobi, remodelled the space into Radiant Workspaces, a communal environment for female entrepreneurs.

Opened in April 2017, Radiant is sleek and intimate, with décor by female artists and designers, along with a wall dedicated to empowered women like tennis great Serena Williams and late architect Zaha Hadid. Members pause for Wednesday morning coffee chats, and Adamolekun holds regular workshops that tackle topics like holistic medicine and raising capital – from a distinctively female perspective.

“Women in the workplace have different challenges, different obstacles, different hurdles to cross,” she says, pointing out that women are often slow to seek investment in their businesses or do so much further down the line than their male counterparts. Even when they do pitch investors, women receive far less funding. Though 36% of businesses in the United States are female-owned, less than 3% of companies that receive venture capital funding are headed by female CEOs.

“It’s really important to change that and have more people of color, more women coming to ask for money,” says Adamolekun. “We can just give each other different recommendations based on our very different and similar pain points.”

Creative director and copywriter Mary Michael Pringle was sceptical about joining a female-focused office when she first visited The Hivery. “Originally, I thought I was going to miss men, but I love it. You feel dominant. You feel like, you

“Less than 3% of companies in the United States that receive venture capital funding are headed by female CEOs”

「在美國，只有少於百分之三的創業投資公司，是由女性行政總裁領導」

有感工作環境不夠專業和有太多令人分心的事物，她開始在三藩市物色共享工作空間，但發現它們「面積太大、太過男性主導，並且商務形式過於傳統」。最後，她與別人合租辦公室，其後拍檔遷出，Adamolekun便與任職建築師的丈夫Tobi合力將寫字樓改造成Radiant Workspaces，它是一個為女性企業家而設的共享空間。

Radiant Workspaces於2017年四月開幕，氣氛時尚親切，室內裝潢由女性藝術家和設計師操刀，其中一幅特色牆壁更向傑出女性致敬，包括網球名將莎蓮娜威廉絲，以及建築大師札哈哈蒂。每週三早上，會員都會參與咖啡小聚，而Adamolekun亦會定期舉辦工作坊，以女性角度分析整全醫學及籌集資金等主題。

「職場女性面對各種挑戰，需要越過重重障礙。」她指出，相比起男性企業家，女性在尋求投資者方面，進程通常比較緩慢，或較遲促成協議。即使她們成功向潛在投資者遊說，所獲得的資金也比男性低得多。雖然美國有三成六的企業由女性持有，但只有少於百分之三的創業投資公司，是由女性行政總裁領導。

「我們必須改變現狀，讓更多有色人種和女性籌資創業。」Adamolekun說。「我們可以根據自身面對的特殊情況和棘手問題，互相提出建議。」

創意總監兼商業撰稿人Mary Michael Pringle首次踏進The Hivery時，對於應否加入女性辦公室還心存疑慮。她說：「起初我在想，我應該會掛念男性，但事實證明，我愛煞了這個概念。你會感到更強大，更有權力，巴不得將一大盒衛生棉條擺放出來，一種強烈的志同道合感油然而生。」Pringle補充，她經常與女性共事，讓她更堅持自己的理想，身邊戰友也非常了解平衡工作與家庭的挑戰。

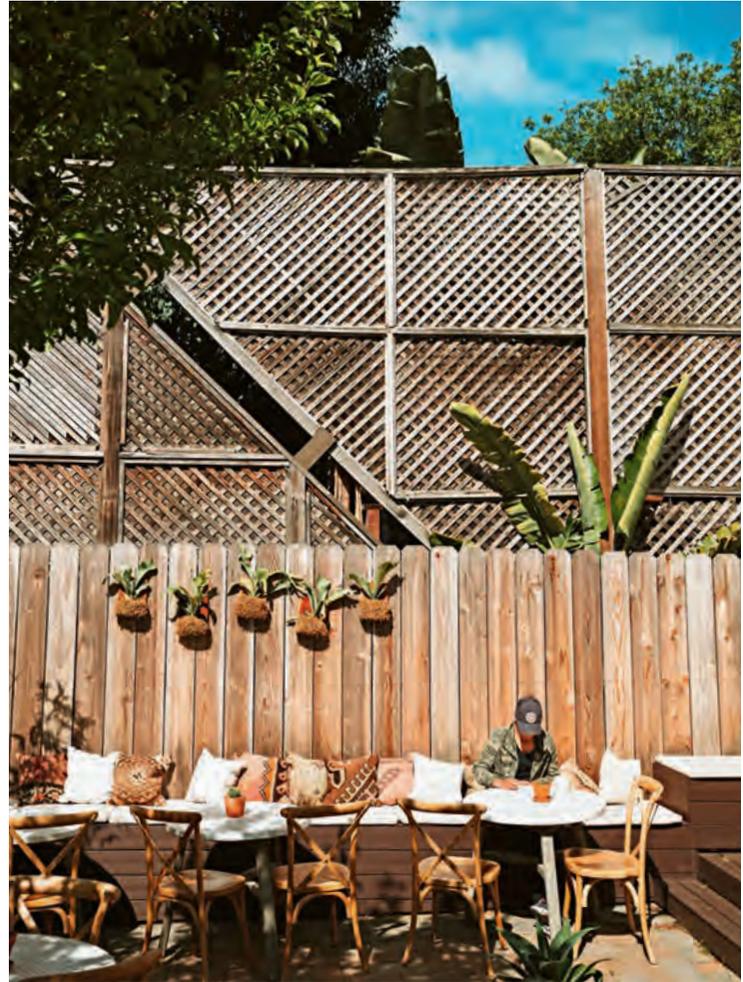
The Hivery創辦人Kraaijvanger每次環顧她的工作空間，都會感受到那種同舟共濟的精神。「每天都有會員告訴我，她們會互相投入資金，成為合作夥伴，互相聘請和協力合作。」

除了消除孤立感和互相支持外，有些女性工作空間更打破辦公室的傳統框架。剛於一月投入服務的The Assembly，設於三藩市教會區一座上百年歷史的教堂內，在高效率工作空間以外開拓更多可能性。偌大寬敞的辦公室由聖堂改造而成，當中的健身室會為會員提供免費課程，雪櫃裡有大量健康美食儲備，另外亦有由當地女性藝術家創作的雅致裝潢，以及綴以手繪乳房圖案的母乳室。到了晚上，還會設有古著牛仔褲期間限定店，以至市長候選人答問環節等活動。

A MEMBER HARD AT
WORK IN ONE OF
THE ASSEMBLY'S
COSY SPACES

會員於THE ASSEMBLY
的舒適空間內埋首工作





CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: A MEETING AREA AT RADIANT WORKSPACES; OUTDOOR SEATING AT THE ASSEMBLY; STAINED GLASS WINDOWS AT THE ASSEMBLY; MOLLY GOODSON, FOUNDER OF THE ASSEMBLY; THE ASSEMBLY'S CO-WORKING SPACE RESEMBLES A COSY LIVING ROOM



順時針左上圖起：
RADIANT WORKSPACES其中一個會議室空間；THE ASSEMBLY的戶外座位；THE ASSEMBLY的彩繪玻璃窗；THE ASSEMBLY創辦人 MOLLY GOODSON；THE ASSEMBLY的共享工作空間恍如舒適的起居廳



know what, have a huge box of tampons out! I find the camaraderie there so powerful,” says Pringle, adding that she works regularly alongside women who hold her accountable to her goals and commiserate over the challenges of balancing business and family.

Hivery founder Grace Kraaijvanger recognises that camaraderie every time she looks around the space. “Every day I have members telling me that they’re funding each other, partnering together, hiring each other and collaborating with one another.”

Some women’s spaces seem to be pushing the boundaries of what an office even is. At The Assembly, which opened in January in a 100-year-old church in San Francisco’s Mission District, serving women goes beyond offering a productive workspace. Along with a main sanctuary-turned-airy-office, the space includes a fitness studio with free classes for members, a fridge stocked with healthy meals, Instagram-ready interiors by local female artists and a pumping room adorned with hand-drawn breasts. Evening activities range from a vintage jeans pop-up to a Q&A session with a mayoral candidate.

Founder Molly Goodson, a former editor and executive at women’s media company PopSugar, sees The Assembly less as a stand-in for the offices of yore, and more as a new-school, health-and-wellness clubhouse, where members can sweat, work, have lunch with a friend or meet someone new. In some ways, it feels like a very stylish YMCA.

“I want you to walk in and say, ‘Oh, I can sit and do art over here; there’s a class going on downstairs; there’s people just meeting each other in the kitchen and having lunch together,’” says Goodson, adding that with people moving more frequently and being less connected to neighbourhoods or religious groups, The Assembly’s most important benefit may actually be its members.

“The concept of wanting to belong somewhere is not new,” Goodson says. “[People] think they’re coming because they want this workspace, and they realise what they really want is a community most of all.”

Kraaijvanger agrees. “What gets people in the door is [the feeling that] working from home is lonely,” she says of The Hivery, which will expand to San Francisco this year.

But what makes them stay is the community, the network of women that become mentors, support systems and friends. Kraaijvanger points to one woman who launched a wellness coaching business and found other members interested in nutrition and stress management. “Before you know it, their clients are built into the community.”

This spring, a painted billboard appeared on the edge of the Financial District, advertising the arrival of yet another women’s co-working space – The Wing, a rapidly expanding brand known in New York for its celebrity clientele and Chanel bathroom products. In other industries, competitors might bemoan the addition of an out-of-town giant, but all three founders are eager to see the market grow and diversify, so that every woman can find the space she needs.

“I think the movement is beautiful. I think the movement is needed,” says Kraaijvanger. “I think the time is yesterday.” ✨

其創辦人Molly Goodson曾於女性媒體公司PopSugar擔任編輯及行政人員，她認為The Assembly並非昔日辦公室的代替品那麼簡單，而是一間新型康體會所，讓會員盡情流汗、工作、與朋友共晉午餐，又或者結識新朋友。某程度上，這裡就像一間格調時尚的青年會。

「我希望踏進來的人都會有這樣的反應：噢，我可以坐下來做點藝術創作，或者參加樓下的興趣班；廚房那邊還有些人在聊天和一起吃午餐呢。」Goodson如是說。她補充，隨著人們的流動性越來越高，與社區或宗教團體的聯繫日漸減少，The Assembly的會員或許就是其最寶貴的資產。

Goodson表示：「渴求歸屬感並非新鮮事。她們以為尋找工作空間是主因，但其實大部分人真正需要的是一個社群。」

Kraaijvanger深表同意，並如此論及The Hivery：「人們之所以加入成為會員，是因為覺得在家工作是一件孤單的事。」The Hivery將於今年擴充至三藩市。一群擔當良師益友和支援網絡的女性，就是讓會員留下的原因。Kraaijvanger指出，其中一位女士創辦了保健業務，發現其他會員也希望學習營養學和壓力管理。「在你主動尋找客源之前，其實客戶早就潛在於社群之中。」

今年春季，一塊大型廣告牌出現於金融區，宣傳另一女士共享工作空間The Wing正式登陸。這個發展迅速的品牌，在紐約以名人客戶和提供Chanel個人護理產品見稱。在其他行業，競爭者或許會抱怨別市大型品牌之來襲，但本文中三位企業家都樂於見證市場蓬勃發展和變得多元化，讓每位女性都能找到她們所需的空間。

Kraaijvanger說：「我覺得這是一場美好的革命，而且需求甚殷。我認為，這股趨勢早就應該盛行。」

Hong Kong Airlines flies to San Francisco four times weekly.
For more information, visit hongkongairlines.com

香港航空每週設有四班航次來回香港與三藩市。
查閱更多訊息，請瀏覽hongkongairlines.com

THE ASSEMBLY

449 14th St,
Mission District,
San Francisco
theassembly.com



WHO JOINS

Women with an interest in health and wellness. More than half of Assembly members have 9-5 jobs elsewhere and use the space as a gym/clubhouse/retreat in the heart of the city.

會員結構

對康體感興趣的女性。來自運動品牌Lululemon和Outdoor Voices的員工會在這個前身為教堂的空間裡鍛鍊身體。超過半數的The Assembly會員均於外面擁有朝九晚五的正職，並將此空間視為落市中心的健身室兼俱樂部及休閒場所。

PERKS

Unlimited classes in the onsite studio, free acupuncture on Tuesdays, a monthly members’ brunch and priority access to most nightly events, from photography classes and pop-up shops to card and cocktail nights and cake decorating.

優勝之處

場內的活動室提供數之不盡的課程。逢週二設有免費針灸服務，每月設有會員專享早午餐。會員可優先參加幾乎每晚舉行的活動，如攝影班、期間限定店、紙牌遊戲之夜及蛋糕裝飾班等。

WHAT’S NEXT

Building more programming – think on-site services like manicures or eyebrow waxes and off-site activities like surf trips and fitness retreats.

未來動向

推出更多活動，例如美甲和蜜蠟修眉等場內活動，以至滑浪旅程和健身訓練營等場外活動。Goodson說：「我很樂意帶領我們的女性會員踏上背包客之旅。The Assembly旨在將會員凝聚在一起，但其後的體驗不必總是在這裡進行。」