

# concrete

**project:** THINK plantage middenlaan, amsterdam  
**client:** THINK - school of creative leadership

**designer:** **concrete**  
office address: oudezijds achterburgwal 78a  
postal code: 1012 dr  
city: amsterdam  
country: the netherlands  
telephone: +31 (0)20 5200200  
e-mail: info@concreteamsterdam.nl  
website: www.concreteamsterdam.nl

**project location:**  
address: plantage middenlaan 45, 1018dc  
city: amsterdam  
country: the netherlands  
e-mail: amsterdam@thnk.org  
website: www.THNK.org

**project information:**  
project team concrete: rob wagemans, tobias koch, ruud davidse, isabelle bronzwaer

**general information:**  
contractor interior: roord binnenbouw, bespoke furniture  
completion: 2022  
surface area: 165m<sup>2</sup>

photography: wouter van der sar for concrete

## design story

### concrete completes THINK's latest office: a flexible and playful workplace

THNK is a school for creative leadership in Amsterdam. Its goal is to develop leaders capable of delivering innovative solutions for the world's greatest challenges. THINK is written without an 'I' because, according to the company's ethos, working together is necessary to solve the problems that our society faces. Concrete designed an office space that embodies this communal spirit: a place where people can come together to brainstorm, create and empower each other.

THNK was founded in Amsterdam in 2010 and since then, Concrete has designed three THINK headquarters. The company moves offices every few years by using interim locations: this reflects the idea that a change in environment encourages a change in mindset. The design has naturally evolved because of the new locations and the transformations undergone by the workplace in current times. The new location is at the Artis Amsterdam Zoo, in the Plantage district. THINK employees and visitors can admire the zoo's exotic animals and luscious gardens from the windows. The building was built in the nineteenth century and it used to be the library of the zoo, where rare books and documents were collected, including some letters written by Charles Darwin. Because of the heritage status of the building, its interior has been preserved. The space is made up of one room with a linear, rectangular configuration. There are very high ceilings, interrupted by a mezzanine that allows one to walk around the entire perimeter.

THNK employees need to use their office space in many different ways. Therefore, Concrete designed a solution that combines all functionalities into one spatial element that is flexible in use. The playful wooden sculpture is stand-alone and can be re-adapted to new locations and functions. The element offers spots for people to work individually or in a team. THINK often hosts presentations and workshops with larger groups of people. For these events, the presentation area, which is part of the element, can be adapted: wood benches on wheels can be easily relocated, stacked, or even stored away to make more space.

Sustainability is an important value of THINK, thus the interior is adaptable and multi-functional. The wooden furniture piece can be disassembled and moved into parts to a future office, leaving no permanent trace. Most of the furniture is recycled or upcycled. Tables from the previous location are used again, and the chairs got a second life by being re-upholstered.

The space is characterized by natural, toned-down colors: white walls, an antique wooden floor, and a lot of daylight. The furniture piece is made of light wood, with pops of color in bright red and cobalt blue, characteristic colors of THINK. Large plants contribute to the liveliness of the space and make the office feel tropical. After all, giraffes and flamingos can be seen from the windows. The umpire chair in the center of the space allows one person to tower over everybody else, to be seen by a crowd, or to observe from a distance. It invites people at THINK to change their perspective, literally.