A Convening Space for Changemakers

For over a century, The Rockefeller Foundation has aimed to address the root causes of humanity’s greatest challenges. The LEED-certified renovation of our global headquarters reflects our deep roots in New York City while showcasing our lasting impact across the geographies and people at the heart of our work. Our new offices promote more collaboration and innovative thinking than ever before, creating a hub for passionate problem-solvers to blaze a path to making opportunity universal and sustainable for all.

Entering from Fifth Avenue, visitors are welcomed into an environment inspired by our Bellagio Center in Italy, where brilliant changemakers from disparate traditions meet to tackle the most complex issues of the day. Above the reception desk, the deep aquas and upside-down Y of the glass chandelier evoke the profound beauty of Lake Como. Nearby, a golden illuminated stone panel warms the space. Surrounded by these reminders, our entrance invites visitors
to boldly reimagine what is possible once they pass through our doors.

Opposite the reception desk, two chairs are complemented by a rug made of organic and recycled wool fibers. The presence of the color orange in the pillows and the rug references New York’s Dutch history as New Amsterdam.

Upon leaving the lobby, visitors ascend stairs to the next floor. Overhead, the tawny browns and cloud shapes of the light fixture were inspired by Italian roofscapes and stucco at sunset, encouraging visitors to develop their own daring ideas for transformational change as inspired by the Bellagio Center.

The agrarian pattern of the wood ceiling reminds visitors of our focus on food production, and our commitment to nourishing humanity with food that is good for people and the planet. These patterns guide visitors from space to space and are repeated throughout our offices in ceilings, walls, and floors. In addition to glass, stone, and other natural materials, we used organic wood or recycled wood as part of our commitment to sustainability and respect for the planet’s resources.
On the next floor, at the Security Lounge, visitors see the first of several wool rugs that appear throughout the offices. This particular rug represents our interests in agrarian technology, the design replicating a satellite image captured by the analytics platform Atlas AI. This rug underscores our commitment to using science and data to address inequities in food production and distribution, which disproportionately affects people of color and under resourced communities.

Continuing on to the coffee bar and lounge, the eye is drawn to a large patterned rug, the design based on an aerial satellite image of the Mississippi River. Both the rug and the backlit panel of the coffee bar represent our investments in the Green Revolution, which has increased agricultural production through irrigation and fertilization technology, saving over one billion people from starvation. The open space and informal seating encourages lively exchange and personal connections, initiated in this room and continuing beyond it.

The light fixture suspended above the coffee bar represents photosynthesis. Called Origin, its color and
the shapes of its individual panes of glass were inspired by closeup images of wheat.

On the same floor, the multi-purpose room offers flexible room configurations, allowing for large meetings or smaller gatherings as needed. The space is equipped with the latest audio-visual technology, allowing participants to see and engage with guest experts and speakers in real time regardless of geographic location. This room creates unprecedented opportunities for The Rockefeller Foundation to facilitate the exchange of ideas that advance equity and enable individuals, families, and communities to flourish in any corner of the world.

Finally, the Nobel Prize Wall commemorates the 157 individuals and organizations that have been supported by The Rockefeller Foundation and our sister philanthropies since our inception. The unembossed rounds reflect the faces of visitors, encouraging them to see themselves on the wall on a future date. In Braille, the gleaming brass medallions spell out The Rockefeller Foundation’s guiding principle: “Make opportunity universal.”
A glass chandelier above the reception desk evoking Lake Como

Image credits: MYODO Design Works, Portland, OR
A large patterned rug based on an aerial satellite image of the Mississippi River
Stone walls along the entry staircase