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OPENING UP FRONT ROOMS AS COMMUNAL OFFICE SPACES

 WORK & LIFESTYLE

Hoffice is a crowdsourced network of free working space, set up in the homes of its users.

As cloud computing becomes more mainstream, it's now possible for a large portion of the population to work from home, either as freelancers, remote employees or self-employed citizens. But working alone can be, at best, a little bit lonely and, at worst, completely unstimulating. Endless distractions and a lack of interaction can make even the most disciplined worker unproductive. Swedish platform **Hoffice** is hoping to offer a solution by crowdsourcing a network of free working spaces in the homes of its users — effectively bringing the sharing economy to office space.

Users begin by signing up to the Hoffice community via Facebook, which links them with other home workers in their area. They can then either choose to host a Hoffice event in their own home or attend a pre-existing one. The idea is to provide a loosely structured workday, in a sociable working environment that encourages productivity without ignoring other human needs — members are encouraged to start the day with meditation or relaxation exercises, for example. Work time is split up into 45 minute segments with 15 minute breaks — for exercise, conversation or games — in between.

At every event there will be a facilitator who is in charge of keeping the structure, but members are welcome to ignore it and work at their own pace. Workspaces are always free to use but members may be asked to contribute towards costs. Hoffice is a growing network with most groups so far operating in Scandinavia — potential members from unserved areas are encouraged to start their own group and invite local people to join.

We have seen lots of schemes — from [Boston](#) to [Oxford](#) — converting underused buildings into flexible workspaces, but Hoffice is the first to see the potential in urban houses. How else could people's homes be used as a shared facility?

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