

Le **LENTIC (HEC Liège – ULiège)** recrute

Un(e) doctorant(e) (4 ans, temps plein) en sciences de gestion

L'Université de Liège est la plus grande université publique francophone de Belgique. Elle réunit plus de 5700 membres du personnel sur 4 campus, dont 3600 enseignants et chercheurs actifs dans tous les domaines des sciences humaines et sociales, des sciences et techniques et des sciences de la santé. Elle accueille près de 27 000 étudiants de 123 nationalités différentes dans l'une des villes les plus multiculturelles et dynamiques d'Europe, à moins d'une heure de Bruxelles et Cologne, à deux heures de Paris et à trois heures de Londres et Amsterdam. Actrice de la transition sociale et environnementale, l'ULiège accompagne les étudiantes et étudiants dans leur rôle de citoyens responsables (formation aux enjeux du développement durable, Green Office...) et promeut une recherche éthique, transdisciplinaire et ouverte. Engagée dans son territoire, elle contribue à son développement socio-économique et y développe de nombreux partenariats, notamment avec le CHU de Liège. Mondiale et solidaire, elle participe à l'[alliance européenne UNIC](#) et dispose de l'un des réseaux de collaborations les plus étendus au monde. L'ULiège offre des trajectoires de carrière attractives [dans un environnement de travail de qualité](#), promouvant le bien-être, la diversité et l'égalité des chances. Depuis 2011, elle est fière de porter le label européen [Human resources strategy for researchers](#) (HRS4R) qui traduit son engagement en faveur de procédures ouvertes, transparentes et basées sur le mérite. En outre, elle reconnaît la qualité et la diversité de la recherche conformément aux recommandations de la [Coalition for Advancing Research Assessment](#) (CoARA). L'ULiège favorise l'internationalisation de son personnel académique et facilite l'accueil de chercheuses et chercheurs internationaux via son centre EURAXESS.

Le LENTIC (Laboratoire d'Etudes sur les Nouvelles formes de Travail, l'Innovation et le Changement – www.lentic.be) est un centre de recherche et de recherche-action spécialisé de HEC Liège, Ecole de Gestion de l'Université de Liège, regroupant des chercheurs en management, sociologie, psychologie et sciences de la communication. Les activités menées par le LENTIC se concentrent autour de quatre axes thématiques principaux : digitalisation, changements organisationnels, gestion des ressources humaines et mutations du marché du travail. Le LENTIC effectue des missions d'étude, de conseil et d'accompagnement dans des organisations de toute taille, du secteur marchand aussi bien que non marchand, en Belgique comme sur la scène internationale, sur ces différents axes de travail. La spécificité de l'approche théorique et méthodologique du LENTIC peut être appréhendée à partir des multiples missions de recherche et de recherche-intervention que son équipe a accumulées depuis plus de 30 ans.

Grâce à un projet de recherche financé par le FNRS, intitulé « *Enjeux stratégiques et identitaires des réorganisations des espaces de travail à l'ère post-Covid* », le LENTIC propose une **bourse de doctorat d'une période de quatre ans**, à réaliser sous la supervision de Grégory Jemine, chargé de cours à HEC-Liège. Si la recherche vous passionne, que vous détenez un master en management ou en gestion des ressources humaines, et si vous souhaitez vous engager dans un projet de recherche captivant, ancré dans la réalité des entreprises, au sein d'une équipe dynamique, alors cette opportunité est faite pour vous !

PROJET DE RECHERCHE : « STRATEGY WORK AND IDENTITY WORK IN POST-PANDEMIC WORKSPACES »

Les effets de la crise sanitaire sur les espaces de travail ont été relativement peu étudiés jusqu'à présent. De nombreux défis, tels que la généralisation du télétravail, l'émergence de formes de travail dites « hybrides », et les difficultés persistantes rencontrées par certaines entreprises pour susciter le retour sur le lieu de travail, suggèrent un intérêt croissant des managers pour des projets de transformation de leurs espaces de travail. Dès lors, ce projet vise à **étudier la manière dont organisations publiques et privées élaborent de nouvelles stratégies d'organisation et de réorganisation de leurs espaces de travail**. Le projet questionne à la fois la capacité d'organisations pionnières en la matière à faire survivre leurs espaces de travail dit « innovants » (bureaux ouverts, partagés, « activity-based », etc.) en contexte de crise et post-crise, ainsi que l'émergence de nouvelles stratégies d'organisation de l'espace. Le projet propose d'étudier les espaces de travail 1) comme un objet stratégique dont peuvent se saisir les managers pour légitimer leurs ambitions de "modernisation"; 2) comme un terrain propice à la redéfinition des identités organisationnelles, collectives et professionnelles. Ce faisant, le projet ambitionne de mettre à jour la manière dont les stratégies organisationnelles incorporent l'espace de travail, et les transformations identitaires qui en découlent.

Le projet de recherche sera mené au sein d'un **consortium belgo-suisse**, composé du Professeur Grégory Jemine (HEC-Liège) et d'un(e) doctorant(e) d'une part, et du Professeur Eric Davoine (Université de Fribourg) et du Professeur Bertrand Audrin (EHL Business School), qui superviseront un(e) second(e) doctorant(e) (en Suisse) d'autre part. Au total, le projet se structurera autour de la réalisation de huit études de cas (dont quatre en Belgique et quatre en Suisse), certaines étant réalisées dans des organisations pionnières en matière de « *New Ways of Working* », d'autres dans des organisations qui planifient depuis peu des réorganisations de leurs espaces de travail. Ces études de cas impliqueront un suivi dans la durée de projets de changement de type « *NWoW* », au-travers d'observations (de réunions, de groupes-projet, etc.), de la réalisation d'entretiens semi-directifs avec les parties prenantes, et d'une analyse de la documentation produite par les acteurs de terrain. En parallèle, un travail de revue de la littérature sur ces objets sera également réalisé. In fine, l'ambition du projet est de **mieux comprendre la manière dont les organisations repensent leurs espaces de travail suite à la crise**. Les résultats seront partagés lors de conférences internationales, et publiés dans des revues scientifiques de qualité.

Le projet de recherche dans sa version complète (en anglais) est disponible en annexe de la présente offre.

VOTRE FONCTION ET VOS MISSIONS

En tant que doctorant(e), votre fonction consistera à mener à bien un travail de recherche personnel sous la forme d'une thèse de doctorat. La fonction suppose de réaliser principalement les tâches suivantes :

- ▶ Suivre et compléter votre formation doctorale dans le domaine des sciences de gestion ;
- ▶ Mener un travail de recherche scientifique (comprenant une revue de la littérature, de la collecte de données par entretiens, observations et analyse de documents, ainsi qu'une analyse de ces données) ;
- ▶ Rédiger des articles scientifiques et une thèse de doctorat sur les résultats de la recherche ;
- ▶ Disséminer les résultats de la recherche dans des conférences et congrès scientifiques ;
- ▶ Participer activement à la vie scientifique et d'équipe du LENTIC (séminaires, projets de recherche connexes, etc.)

VOTRE PROFIL

Vous êtes :

- ▶ Titulaire d'un Master en Gestion des Ressources Humaines, Sciences de Gestion, ou tout autre diplôme universitaire équivalent assorti d'une bonne connaissance du monde de l'entreprise, obtenu a minima avec une Distinction (moyenne de 14/20) ;
- ▶ Passionné(e) par la recherche, par l'étude des organisations et des dynamiques sociales/RH en entreprise, et prêt(e) à vous engager dans un processus de recherche doctoral ;
- ▶ Curieux/curieuse, intéressé(e) par les projets de transformation organisationnelle et par l'évolution des espaces de travail et des modalités d'organisation du travail ; une connaissance préalable de ces sujets est un atout ;
- ▶ Capable de suivre et d'élaborer un raisonnement théorique, de faire preuve d'un esprit d'analyse, et d'adopter un positionnement critique ;
- ▶ Familiarisé(e) avec les méthodes qualitatives de collecte et d'analyse des données ;
- ▶ Capable de travailler de manière autonome, responsable et éthique ;
- ▶ Doté(e) d'excellentes compétences rédactionnelles et passionné(e) par le travail d'écriture ;
- ▶ Capable de vous exprimer parfaitement en français, tant à l'écrit qu'oralement (niveau C2) ; à l'aise avec l'anglais (niveau B2) et disposé(e) à parfaire votre anglais écrit et oral au cours des quatre années de thèse (de plus en plus, la recherche s'inscrit dans un contexte international où l'anglais est la langue privilégiée).

CONDITIONS D'ENGAGEMENT

La bourse de doctorat pourra être attribuée **à partir du 1^{er} août ou du 1^{er} septembre 2024**. Vous bénéficierez d'une bourse de doctorat de quatre ans à compter de la date à laquelle elle vous sera octroyée.

- ▶ Bourse de doctorat de quatre ans, selon les conditions prévues par le FNRS ;
- ▶ Environnement de travail enrichissant, ouvert, et collaboratif, au sein de l'équipe du LENTIC, un collectif d'une vingtaine d'académiques et de chercheurs basés à HEC Liège ;
- ▶ Participation à des projets de recherche et de recherche-intervention stimulants en entreprise ;
- ▶ Grande flexibilité dans l'organisation du travail, avec possibilité de télétravail, d'auto-organisation du travail et d'horaires flexibles ;
- ▶ Déplacements ponctuels à des fins de collecte de données et de participation à des congrès scientifiques.

COMMENT POSTULER ?

Merci d'**envoyer votre dossier de candidature pour le 30 avril 2024 au plus tard** au Professeur Grégory Jemine (LENTIC – HEC Liège) à l'adresse gjemine@uliege.be. Celui-ci comprendra :

1. Un CV complet mis à jour ;
2. Une lettre de motivation (max. 1 page) détaillant de manière synthétique votre intérêt pour le projet de recherche, ainsi que l'adéquation entre votre profil, vos ambitions professionnelles, et l'offre d'emploi ;
3. Un relevé de vos notes et grades de Master ;
4. Une production écrite de votre choix permettant d'apprécier vos capacités rédactionnelles et d'analyse (mémoire ou partie de mémoire, travail de fin d'études, ou tout autre travail de recherche individuel).

PROCÉDURE DE SÉLECTION

Notre politique institutionnelle est basée sur la diversité et l'égalité des chances. Nous sélectionnons les candidat(e)s en fonction de leurs qualités quels que soient leur âge, leur orientation sexuelle, leur origine, leurs convictions, leur handicap ou leur nationalité.

Les candidat(e)s présélectionné(e)s seront recontacté(e)s pour une interview. Toute candidature recevra une réponse pour le 1^{er} juin 2024 au plus tard.

RENSEIGNEMENTS COMPLÉMENTAIRES

Des renseignements complémentaires sur ce poste peuvent être obtenus auprès du Professeur Grégory Jemine (gjemine@uliege.be). Nous vous invitons également à vous renseigner sur le LENTIC et ses activités (www.lentic.be) ainsi que sur le doctorat en Sciences économiques et de gestion à HEC (https://www.hec.uliege.be/cms/c_8483902/fr/hec-doctorat-en-sciences-economiques-et-de-gestion).

INFORMATION RELATIVE AU TRAITEMENT DE VOS DONNÉES À CARACTÈRE PERSONNEL

Les données à caractère personnel recueillies à l'occasion de votre candidature seront traitées par l'Université de Liège afin d'organiser le recrutement et la sélection. Ces données seront traitées sur base de l'exécution de mesures précontractuelles (art. 6-1, b. du RGPD). Ces données seront conservées durant toute la durée de la procédure de sélection et, au maximum, 9 mois après la publication de l'offre d'emploi. Ces données ne seront pas transmises à des tiers. Conformément aux dispositions du Règlement Général sur la Protection des Données (UE 2016/679), vous pouvez exercer vos droits relatifs à ces données à caractère personnel (droit d'accès, de rectification, d'effacement, à la limitation, et à la portabilité) en contactant le Délégué à la Protection des Données de l'ULiège. Vous disposez également du droit d'introduire une réclamation auprès de l'Autorité de protection des données.

2) DESCRIPTION OF THE RESEARCH PROJECT

STRATEGY WORK AND IDENTITY WORK IN POST-PANDEMIC WORKSPACES

The COVID-19 pandemic has deeply affected European economies as well as both private organizations and public institutions. Through the generalized move toward compulsory remote working, many firms experienced unprecedented transformations in their work practices and processes. Early studies of the emergency transition towards remote working illustrated that many of the measures taken were not temporary, with many employees – up to 85% in Baert and colleagues' study (2020, p. 35) – believing that teleworking was here to stay. While remote working has received much attention from researchers and practitioners in the past months, research projects on the longer-term impacts of the crisis on organizations have remained rather scarce. More specifically, **the future of organizational workspaces in a post-pandemic world has generated surprisingly little interest so far**. Yet, early signs suggest that **large-scale transformations of workspaces and work contexts are about to unfold**. A recent survey conducted among more than a hundred HR Directors of Belgian firms revealed that 41% of them had plans to “rethink” (i.e. shrink) their workspaces in the coming years (Jemine, 2023). This is indicative of a latent resurgence of interest among top managers for projects of workspace transformation – usually labelled “New Ways of Working” (NWoW) in the literature (e.g. Kingma, 2019), which, in many cases, have been abandoned or neglected in the past two years. It suggests that organizational leaders are increasingly looking to initiate strategic actions aimed at scaling down their workspaces and rethinking their work organization. This, in turn, is vowed to result in new spatial arrangements that might have a significant impact on social relations and managerial practices (Kornberger & Clegg, 2004). Consequently, this proposal builds on the observation that **both public and private organizations from the third sector are increasingly prone to redesign and adjust their workspaces** as a response to the pandemic and the rampant forms of hybrid work characterized by a mix of on-site and remote working (Ipsen et al., 2021).

1. RESEARCH GOALS

This project pursues three interrelated objectives:

1. To study the **persistence of “old” forms of *New Ways of Working* and the ability of pioneer organizations to make innovative workspace transformations survive an exogenous shock** such as the pandemic (O1);
2. To investigate **the strategy work allowing “new” forms of space reorganizations to emerge in the wake of the pandemic** (O2);
3. To examine **organizational spaces under the lens of identity work**, unveiling how space reorganizations affect organizational, team, and professional identities (O3);

2. STATE OF THE ART

2.1 *New Ways of Working* after the pandemic

“*New Ways of Working*” (NWoW) is a term that was popularized by consultancy firms in the last decade to designate **large-scale projects of modernization that are primarily focused on the design and implementation of so-called “modern” workspaces in knowledge-intensive organizations** (Jemine, 2021). Such workspaces commonly embed open spaces, flexible spaces and activity-based work environments (Lai et al., 2020). However, NWoW also emphasize greater flexibility of space and time at work (Audrin, 2019) and build on a series of managerial beliefs pertaining to how work should be performed (Jemine, 2021). Prior to the pandemic, several public and private organizations in Europe committed to NWoW projects, by moving to new buildings, scaling down their workspaces, and deploying remote working and paperless policies (e.g. Audrin, 2019; Jemine et al., 2021; Kingma, 2019). Some of these cases were highly mediatized, notably in HR circles and architectural communities, which provided additional visibility and legitimacy to NWoW as being a successful concept of workspace reorganization (Jemine et al., 2021). The term has since gained popularity in the professional world, while also drawing increased attention from scholars in several fields, such as organization studies (e.g. Kingma, 2019), human resources management (e.g. Gerards et al., 2018), real estate studies (e.g. Brunia et al., 2016), and information technology studies (e.g. Demerouti et al., 2014).

The pandemic, however, effectively froze the development process of many NWoW projects, since knowledge workers were, for a large part, subject to governmental injunctions to work remotely (Carillo et al., 2021). The full-scale experiment of compulsory telework that took place in most European countries temporarily concealed spatial and infrastructural issues, which remained a secondary concern at best (Ipsen et al., 2021). However, despite this lull, **the question of organizational workspaces came back**

on the strategic agenda with full force once governmental measures were lifted. A survey conducted among HR Directors of Belgian firms showed that 41% of them had intentions to reduce their workspaces in the coming years (Jemine, 2023). As further evidenced by numerous professional publications¹, managerial interest in the “post-pandemic workplace” has been rising in the past months. A significant question thus pertains to the **managerial strategies that will be favored to rethink post-pandemic workspaces.** Due to the surge of telework, employees and managers increasingly expect that their future working conditions will be flexible and tailored to their needs (Baert et al., 2020). The concern for “hybrid” forms of work – i.e. mixing on-site and remote forms of work – has been growing, raising questions related to the preservation of team cohesion, work coordination, and organizational engagement. Working in the office has also grown into an increasingly contested norm (Jemine, 2023). Besides, the pandemic has contributed to the rise of new concerns regarding the design of healthy and safe offices (e.g. respective of social distancing norms and hygiene standards). As a consequence of these interrelated challenges, many organizations are faced with the **intricate task of rethinking their work environments.**

2.2 Organizational space as strategy work and identity work

The theoretical orientations adopted in this paper are **inspired by the most recent debates on organizational spaces that took place in the academic community**, as we notably draw on a symposium on New Ways of Working organized last year by the *Academy of Management* (Barth et al., 2022) and on research recommendations as recently elaborated in top-tier journals (see Wright et al., 2022, in the *Journal of Management Studies*, and Alfes et al., 2022, in the *International Journal of Human Resource Management*). Recent research indicates that two aspects of *New Ways of Working* have been particularly overlooked and would deserve further research attention.

A first limitation of extant research is that it has mostly focused on workers’ experiences with and within new organizational spaces (Wright et al., 2022), paying less attention to the processual and emergent becoming of these spaces and to their production (Ratner, 2020). By contrast, this project sets out to **better understand organizational spaces as major strategic issues.** Increasingly, organizations are incorporating organizational spaces within their firm strategy. “Modernizing” space is an opportunity for organizational leaders to induce cultural change (Kornberger & Clegg, 2004), to reshape what is on display and what is removed from sight (Siebert, 2023). In that view, NWoW appears to be a “handy term” providing normative and prescriptive guidance to strategy practitioners willing to rethink their workspaces (Giroux, 2006), while maintaining enough ambiguity to support conflicting interpretations in a changing context (Carter et al., 2008). Hence, organizational spaces can be seen as the embodiments of an organization’s strategic orientations in a material form (De Vaujany & Vaast, 2013). However, the strategy work and decision-making processes leading to reshaping organizational spaces have rarely been studied for themselves. The study of NWoW projects in a post-pandemic context offers a valuable opportunity to investigate how and why decision-makers design spatial strategies that can help them make sense of a complex and uncertain future (Audrin, 2019). This is why the project is primarily interested in exploring **how strategy-makers (i.e. organizational decision-makers, project leaders, top and middle managers) incorporate materiality and space in their strategic plans.** The project aims to unveil how organizational space is pivotal to strategy processes and how it becomes an object of negotiation, debate, and conflict between multiple actors at all organizational levels (Jarzabkowski & Spee, 2009).

Another promising avenue of research identified in recent works (e.g. Alfes et al., 2022; Barth et al., 2022; Wright et al., 2022) pertains to the **effects of new workspaces on the identities of organizations and their members.** Organizational spaces can be seen as “identity playgrounds” (Cnossen & Stephenson, 2022) used to redefine organizational, team and professional identities. The effects of new work settings characterized by shared desks, open plans, remote and “hybrid” working on the construction of shared identity beliefs have remained largely underexplored so far (Fohim & Jacobs, 2022). Some studies already explored the interrelations between workspace changes and collective identities at work and propose to further investigate the phenomenon of re-spacing collective identities at work (Ajzen & Taskin, 2021). We posit that new work settings are likely to **affect collective identities at three different levels.** First, new workspaces challenge *organizational identities*, understood as the distinctive features of an organization according to its members (Gioia et al., 2013). Researchers concur that New Ways of Working tend to promote individualistic behaviors through workers’ empowerment, flat hierarchies, and virtual communications (Taskin et al., 2017). The extent to which these changes challenge and transform organizational identities – often characterized by collectivism, traditional hierarchies and face-to-face communication – remains poorly understood. Similarly, it has been often repeated that *team identities*, understood as the sense of belonging that workers develop and through which they form a collective

¹ See for instance : <https://hbr.org/2021/06/5-models-for-the-post-pandemic-workplace> or <https://www.dezeen.com/2022/03/25/dynamic-spaces-vitra-sessions/>

(Darics & Gatti, 2019), could be threatened by NWoW projects and the distance between workers that they induce. At last, *professional identities*, related to workers' concepts and images of themselves, would also be "undermined" by new work environments redefining performance standards, means of control and means of communication (Baldry & Barnes, 2012; Siebert et al., 2018). In this context, we argue that **identity construction processes (identity work) in new work environments are worth further attention**, especially since it has been shown how critical organizational identity was in building and sustaining employees' motivation and organizational commitment (Afshari et al., 2020).

3. RESEARCH PROJECT

On this basis, this proposal sets out to **offer an in-depth investigation of the strategy work and identity work performed by organizations that have committed to redesigning their organizational workspaces**. The project distinguishes between two types of situations. The first concerns **organizations that had already committed to a large-scale reorganization of their workspaces prior to the pandemic**. Because NWoW projects are ambitious change projects that unfold over many years (Audrin, 2019), it is likely that the pandemic unsettled the original strategic plans of NWoW trendsetters. Most notably, the media has suggested that, since open spaces would be "*perfect spreaders*" for viruses² and a "*potential health hazard*"³, the pandemic could soon mean the end of such spaces. Yet there is currently no data available on how the crisis affected the work of pioneering organizations who committed to NWoW-like projects beforehand, and potential changes in their strategic intents remain unstudied. **A first objective (O1) of this research project is to question the strategic intents and emerging identities of NWoW pioneers and the survivability of NWoW and its underlying ideals in a post-Covid context.**

A second situation of interest pertains to **organizations for which the pandemic was a trigger for strategic projects of space modernization**. Prior to the COVID-19 outbreak, NWoW projects were challenging to design because they required purposeful efforts from strategic actors to convince their peers that a combination of flexible workspaces, telework, and cultural changes could make their organization more efficient (De Leede, 2017; Jemine et al., 2021). However, post-pandemic NWoW projects unfold in different contexts, where telework has been extensively experienced and where working at the office has grown into a receding norm (Carillo et al., 2021). Strategy-makers now face a whole new set of challenges (as identified in the previous section) that call for new strategies of space reorganization. **A second objective (O2) of the research project, therefore, lies in unveiling new strategies of workspace reorganization in a post-pandemic context, as well as the identity work that ensues.**

The research project ultimately aims to study the **persistence of "old" forms of NWoW** and the ability of pioneering organizations to make strategic adaptations to their workspaces to deal with an exogenous shock (O1) while accounting for **"new" forms of NWoW that emerge in the wake of the pandemic (O2)**. By doing so, it sets out to offer an original and empirically-grounded approach to workspace reorganization projects in a societal context where organizational spaces are being increasingly pressured and questioned (Aroles et al., 2019). On the theoretical level, the proposal focuses on **organizational spaces as pivotal objects of 1) strategizing processes, emphasizing the challenges that arise when workspaces become the locus of strategizing, and of 2) identity work, unveiling the effects of these workspaces on organizational, team, and professional identities (O3).**

4. RESEARCH DESIGN

The research project will be conducted by two research teams in Belgium (Université de Liège) and in Switzerland (Université de Fribourg) and will be based on a total of eight case studies (four in each country). A unique feature of this project proposal is that **the authors have already conducted four case studies in pre-Covid years of four organizations that might be seen as national trendsetters when it comes to *New Ways of Working***. These cases appear to be fairly comparable since two of these organizations are public media companies (the RTBF in Belgium, the RTS in Switzerland) and the two others are large, private insurance firms (AXA in Belgium, La Mobilière in Switzerland). Fieldwork was conducted with these four organizations between 2016 and 2019 as part of two separate Ph.D. theses (Audrin, 2019; Jemine, 2019). We believe that this setting offers a **unique opportunity to examine how these four organizations, who were seen as pioneers in terms of workspace reorganization prior to the crisis, are now adjusting their strategies and identities to cope with new challenges** induced by the pandemic (O1). The **existing network of contacts** between the two research teams and these four organizations should considerably facilitate the data collection process and strengthen the relations between both research centers and these organizations. In line with the second research objective (O2), **two additional case studies will be conducted in each country within organizations that are now**

² <https://www.zmescience.com/science/domestic-science/will-covid-19-kill-the-open-plan-office/>

³ <https://www.nationalgeographic.com/science/article/will-coronavirus-end-the-open-office-floor-plan>

committing to large overhauls of their organizational spaces. We plan to conduct our field study in two major, private energy companies (TotalEnergies and Bouygues Energies), in the Belgian and Swiss subsidiaries of these two large French companies (which is an interesting context for studying strategy work and identity work). Both of them undertook major projects of space reorganization following the pandemic. Finally, our two last foreseen cases are the Office National de l'Emploi (ONEM) in Belgium and the IPT in Switzerland, both comparable public and para-public institutions that are also in the process of rethinking their workplaces. We do have established connections from former training or research projects in all four case organizations, which will facilitate data collection.

The focus will be set on “strategy work”, i.e. activities of all sorts of organizational actors that result in new organizational strategies (Vaara & Whittington, 2012), and “identity work” (Brown, 2015), i.e. practices aiming to (re)construct new identities. To study strategy work, data collection will mainly include **semi-structured interviews** (approx. 10 per case) and **non-participant observations of project teams’ meetings** in presence of **the actors in charge of strategizing new organizational spaces**. In the case of the pioneering organizations (O1), the preferred persons of contact will be strategy-makers (e.g. members of the executive board, top managers, project managers, middle managers, and HR managers) as well as collective actors interfering with strategy-making (e.g. union representatives). The priority will be given to interlocutors who have been previously involved with the NWoW project or who are still reference persons on these matters within the organization. Regarding organizations that are now initiating a NWoW project (O2), the focus will be set on the strategy-making instances and on the project teams established to carry out the project. The aim of the interviews and observations will be to provide insights into where pioneers of NWoW stand after several years of implementation (in the case of O1) and to seize top managers’ emerging rhetoric on *New Ways of Working* and other strategies of reorganizing the workspace (in the case of O2), reflecting on the **place of space in the work of strategic practitioners** (Jarzabkowski & Spee, 2009). Moreover, to study identity work, we will pay particular attention to the role of materiality and discourse in the construction of shared identities. In addition to semi-structured interviews with strategy-makers, we plan to **focus our attention on two specific work teams within each case to understand how their identities shifted as the result of workspace transformations**. Within each team, we plan to carry out additional interviews with workers complemented with observations of daily work practices (e.g. team meetings) whenever possible. Hence, each case study will encompass interviews with strategy makers (+/- 10 per case), observations of strategic meetings, interviews with members of two organizational teams (+/- 15 per case), and observations of daily work practices within these teams. This will provide us with a **solid empirical foundation to advance our understanding of the role of space in strategy work and identity work**. A timeline of the stages of the research project (which will be conducted by two PhD students, one in each country), is provided below:

		2024 Q1	2024 Q2	2024 Q3	2025 Q1	2025 Q2	2025 Q3	2026 Q1	2026 Q2	2026 Q3	2027 Q1	2027 Q2	2027 Q3
Data collection (Belgium)													
1A	AXA												
1B	RTBF												
2A	TotalEnergies												
2B	ONEM												
Data collection (Switzerland)													
1C	La Mobilière												
1D	RTS												
2C	Bouygues Energies												
2D	IPT												
Collaborative tasks													
1	Joint paper on cases 1A-1D												
2	Joint paper on cases 2A-2D												
Independent tasks													
1-3	Literature review												
1-3	Data analyses												
1-3	Dissemination												
1-3	Theses writing												

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