

# Designing Acoustically Collaborative Headquarters



## CHALLENGE

The transition from multiple smaller buildings with private offices to a centralised, open-plan layout for the NTA's new headquarters presented significant acoustic challenges.

## SOLUTION

AWN implemented a range of strategies to address these challenges, including the careful selection of high-performance acoustic materials such as sound-absorbing ceilings, wall treatments, and flooring.

## RESULT

The new NTA headquarters in Smithfield is a modern, collaborative workspace that supports the well-being and productivity of 500 employees.

The National Transport Authority's (NTA) new headquarters in Smithfield, Dublin, is a landmark office project designed to support the organisation's operations and foster collaboration among its 500 employees. Spanning more than 7,400 sqm across six floors, the headquarters marks a significant shift in workplace design for the NTA, consolidating several smaller buildings with private offices into a centralised, modern, open-plan environment. Ensuring a high-quality acoustic environment was a key priority, and AWN, a Trinity Consultants team, played a pivotal role in achieving this goal.

## CHALLENGE

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AWN worked closely with the design team from the outset, providing expertise in acoustic design specifications, supervising construction stages, and conducting comprehensive testing upon completion. This end-to-end involvement ensured that the acoustic standards were aligned with the needs of a dynamic, collaborative workplace while addressing the unique challenges associated with open-plan office layouts.

A primary challenge was creating an acoustic design that balanced the openness of the new layout with the requirements for speech privacy and noise control. In open-plan offices, excessive noise can hinder productivity and cause discomfort. This challenge was compounded by the NTA's transition from private offices to an open-plan setup, which required careful management of both employee expectations and acoustic performance.

## SOLUTION

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To address these challenges, AWN implemented a range of innovative acoustic solutions. A key approach was the selection of high-performance acoustic materials to control noise propagation within the open-plan areas. Acoustic ceilings, wall treatments, and flooring were carefully chosen to absorb sound effectively and minimise reverberation, resulting in a more comfortable and functional working environment.

Additionally, the layout was strategically designed to incorporate acoustic buffers, such as partitions and furniture arrangements, to separate open-plan areas. Cellular offices and soundproof phone booths were also integrated into the design, offering employees private spaces for focused work and confidential conversations. These features ensured that privacy and acoustic comfort were maintained without compromising the open and collaborative nature of the workspace.

## RESULT

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During the construction phase, AWN worked closely with contractors to ensure that acoustic measures were implemented to the highest standards. Post-construction testing further verified the success of the design, confirming that the acoustic environment met the rigorous criteria set during the planning phase.

The result is a cutting-edge office that seamlessly combines functionality, collaboration, and acoustic comfort. The NTA headquarters in Smithfield now serves as an exemplary model of modern office design, providing a high-quality workspace that supports the well-being and productivity of its 500 employees. AWN's expertise and meticulous approach to acoustic design were instrumental in achieving this outcome, ensuring the headquarters delivers both a vibrant and acoustically comfortable environment for years to come.

### ABOUT TRINITY CONSULTANTS

Trinity Consultants, a leading global environmental consulting firm, provides services and solutions in the EHS Regulatory Compliance, Built Environment, Life Sciences, and Water & Ecology markets. Founded in 1974, Trinity has the technical expertise, industry depth, and capabilities to help clients achieve their goals across the natural and built environments.