



The Future of Work Virtual Reality Lab (FoW VR Lab) – Project Completion

DSI Infrastructures & Labs

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Project Summary

At the University of Zurich's Center for Leadership in the Future of Work the project team established the Future of Work Virtual Reality Lab. Here, innovative and immersive studies have been developed to gain insights into human behavior in the future workplace. This includes studies that have examined how employees feel about working in a digitally enhanced workspace (i.e., the «Metaverse», as it was originally referred to), as well as using virtual reality technology to recreate fictional organizational settings in which to study employees in a more natural way. Based on empirical research, the project team has demonstrated that its virtual reality studies into organizational phenomena have yielded significantly more ecological validity (on top of having great internal validity) in comparison to traditional research methods employed within this field.

The lab is comprised of a lab manager (Dr. Anand van Zelderren), two research assistants (Benjamin Hafner & Katharina Sander), and comes equipped with state-of-the-art headsets (e.g., Meta Quest 3s), providing the necessary infrastructure to support virtual reality studies both with UZH scholars as well as external collaborators. The primary accomplishments include the realization of the Open Science «Openverse» initiative, innovating lectures during the course 'Role of Technology in Shaping a Human-Centric Future of Work', attracting a research visitor from the University of South-Eastern Norway, and eight completed virtual reality studies and two more planned early next year. Of these projects, two manuscripts have been submitted to «Science» (one in R&R and one in review), with two other manuscripts currently in submission at other top-tier outlets.

The lab will continue to exist – at least for another year – with a new name: The Future of Work Spatial Computing Lab.