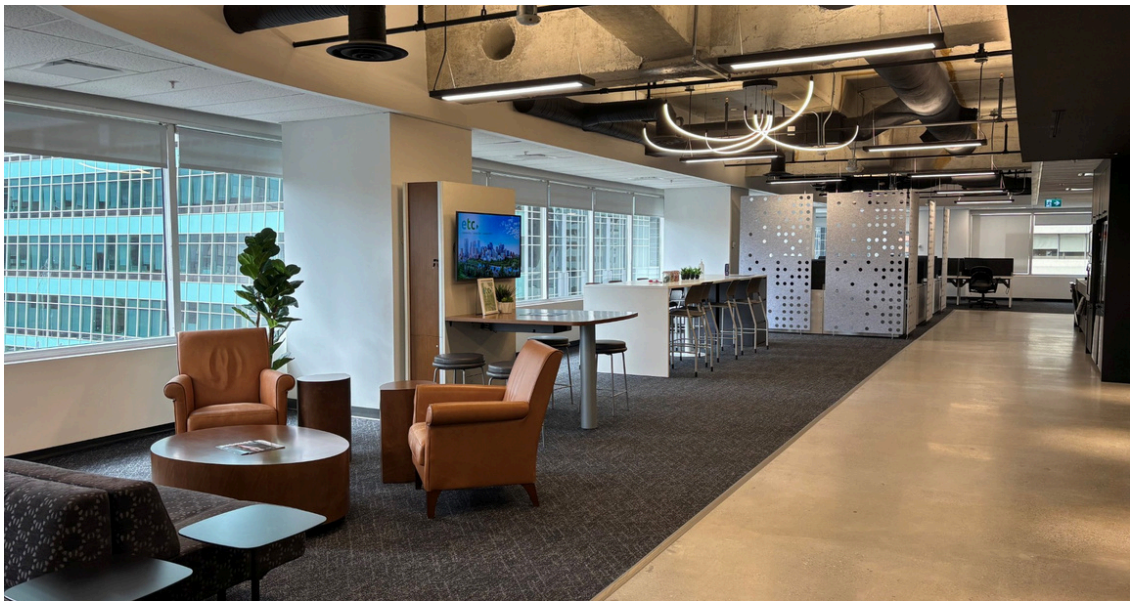
GUNN MCQUEEN



From Chaos to Collaboration: How the ETC Foundation Created Their Ideal Workspace in Record Time

When the ETC Foundation needed to relocate, it faced a challenge that many organizations dread: finding and fitting out a new space while establishing and defining its new operations and staying within budget.

What could have been a disruptive speed bump to their services became an opportunity to create a more functional, collaborative environment that better served their mission.

The Challenge: More than just a move

The ETC Foundation operates at the intersection of energy innovation, academia, and investment. Their work, which focuses on bringing together advisory services for energy startups, creating critical connections, and providing support for clean tech entrepreneurs, requires space that fosters collaboration and accommodates varying group sizes and work styles.

The timing of starting up the Foundation and needing to move at the same time led them to evaluate "move-in ready" spaces. The reality of move-in-ready space quickly became apparent.

While the base building infrastructure was in place, adapting it to accommodate the Foundation's higher occupancy requirements and unique operational needs would require significant coordination and investment.

The Foundation needed to create distinct work zones for different functions, accommodate surge events when larger groups would gather, and maintain cost-effective operations—all while supporting the collaborative culture essential to their mission.

> **Our focus had to be on getting the ETC running immediately. Gunn + McQueen enabled us to do that while they managed the challenge of a fast move.**
>
> *Nan Ho-Covernton -Executive Director*

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The Solution: Strategic Partnership and Agile Execution

Recognizing that this project required a team that could help manage all the moving parts from building to furniture and would provide everyone with a single point of contact, the ETC Foundation brought in Gunn + McQueen to provide comprehensive project guidance and coordination.

Our approach began with a thorough analysis of their existing furniture inventory and operational requirements. Rather than defaulting to expensive new purchases, we developed a strategic furniture plan that maximized the value of their existing assets. Through creative space planning, we repositioned their furniture into more effective office suites that better supported their clients' and collaborative needs.

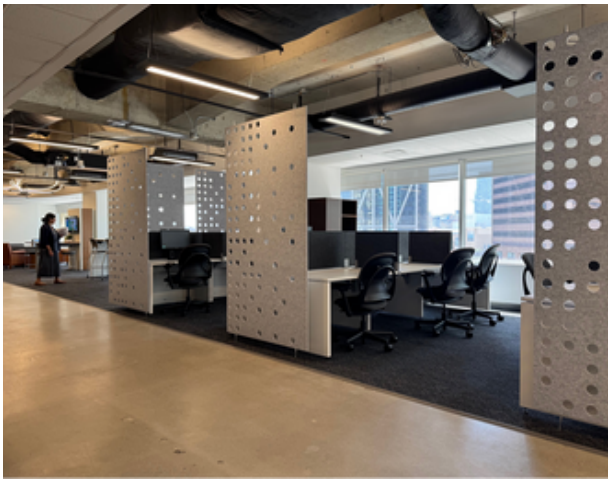
> **Gunn+ McQueen provided everyone with a single point of contact. That was key for us.**
>
> *Property Manager, Aspen Properties*

The base building modifications required careful coordination with multiple stakeholders. We managed the process of implementing necessary changes to support higher occupancy, ensuring all mechanical, electrical, and safety systems could handle the increased capacity. This coordination was critical to avoiding delays and cost overruns that could have derailed the tight timeline.

Our team introduced new planning concepts that addressed the Foundation's unique operational challenges. We created flexible work zones that could accommodate daily operations while easily adapting to surge events when larger groups needed to convene. The layout balanced individual work areas with collaborative spaces, supporting both focused work and the cross-pollination of ideas essential to energy innovation.

Cost management remained a priority throughout the process. Beyond maximizing existing furniture value, we sourced cost-effective "new to you" furniture solutions as well as new touchdown zones that maintained quality while keeping expenses controlled. Every procurement decision was evaluated not just for immediate cost, but for long-term value and operational efficiency.

Perhaps most critically, we developed and implemented change management protocols that ensured business continuity throughout the transition. The Foundation couldn't afford operational disruptions during this crucial establishment phase, so we coordinated the move, space modifications, and setup to minimize downtime.



The result: On time, On budget, On mission

The ETC Foundation successfully relocated to its new space in the Ampersand Building. More importantly, the new workspace better supports their mission of fostering energy innovation and collaboration.

The strategic furniture repositioning and procurement approach delivered significant cost savings while creating a more functional environment. The flexible work zones accommodate both daily operations and special events, supporting the Foundation's role as a convener in Calgary's energy transition ecosystem.

The project demonstrated that with the right expertise and approach, even challenging relocations can become opportunities for operational improvement. The Foundation's leadership now has confidence that their space decisions support rather than hinder their critical work in energy transition.

The ETC Foundation is now positioned in a workspace that matches their ambitious mission, proving that even under pressure, thoughtful planning and strategic execution can deliver exceptional results

Our thanks to the following teams who worked with us on this project:

ETC Foundation
Aspen Properties
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Designcore Engineering
Highland Moving
McCrums Office Furnishing
TMP Engineering
Western Electrical