

Peter Crowther appointed President of the British Council for Offices

1 year ago



Peter Crowther, Co-Founder at HERE, has been elected President of the British Council for Offices (BCO) with immediate effect, following yesterday's BCO annual general meeting. He succeeds Despina Katsikakis, Executive Partner & Global Lead, Total Workplace at Cushman & Wakefield.

The presidential team also sees Helen Hare, Director of Projects at GPE, take on the role of Senior Vice President, following on from Crowther in the role. Andy McBain, Head of Future of Workspace & Design at NatWest Group, becomes the new Junior Vice President.

Crowther brings to the role expertise in navigating the intersection between the office and other sectors, as well as a passion for creating and delivering innovative and sustainable workplaces. His career spans more than 25 years in real estate. In his previous role as Chief Development Officer at Bruntwood SciTech, Crowther led the evolution of the company's development portfolio since he joined in 1997, including the advent of its commercial, science and technology joint venture with Legal & General in 2018.

In April 2024, Crowther co-founded HERE, with fellow Bruntwood alumnus Kate Lawlor. HERE is a development management and advisory company focused on the acquisition, reinvention, repositioning and ongoing management of operational real estate – with a focus on commercial offices and laboratory spaces.

Crowther first joined the BCO in 2010, acting as a member of the BCO's Northern Regional Committee. He was also a member of the National Awards Judging Panel between 2012 and 2017, acting as Chair of the panel in 2015.

Last month, Crowther chaired the BCO's Annual Conference in Birmingham, which was themed "creating

vibrancy". Crowther was instrumental in involving the BCO's NextGen cohort – the 25% of BCO members who are aged 35 and under – in the organisation of conference panels on topics including how culture shapes workplaces.

Crowther's focus as BCO President will be on how the sector can continue to evolve in response to the challenges posed by climate change and rapid technological advancements through solutions such as retrofit and the integration of AI, while improving occupier-experience for all.

During her 12-month presidency, Katsikakis championed the role of the office in supporting environmental, social and economic resilience and providing inspiring places for people to thrive. Katsikakis took part in the organisation of the BCO's inaugural ESG conference and oversaw the launch of the BCO's new research agenda in January this year. This significant update included the development of the BCO's '2030 vision for the office', concentrating on four pillars: economy, business, technology, and ESG.

Katsikakis also led the undertaking of a new research initiative to define the parameters of customer experience and create a new BCO awards category, acknowledging that the future of the office will be characterised by a greater focus on people and experience.

Other changes to the BCO's Presidential Team include Helen Hare's promotion to Senior Vice President. Bruce Paterson, Founding Partner at Quantem, continues in his role as Honorary Treasurer.

Peter Crowther, President of the BCO and Co-Founder at HERE, said: "It is an honour to take on the role of BCO President. As we adapt to the new realities of hybrid, tech-enabled working conditions, the role of the office will continue to adapt to best meet the needs of today's and tomorrow's workers. I look forward to working with the BCO committees across the regions and the NextGen as we explore new models for office design and operation, and how commercial real estate can feed into the broader development of UK cities."

Despina Katsikakis, Immediate Past President of the BCO and Executive Partner & Global Lead, Total Workplace at Cushman & Wakefield, said: "My warmest congratulations to Peter for his appointment as President of the BCO. It has been a pleasure to hold the position of BCO President over the past year and to be part of the organisation's ongoing evolution. For me, finding new platforms for collaboration and testing ideas is one of the most important ways forward and the BCO continues to play a vital part in the industry by giving members from different sectors the chance to come together to learn from each other. I am excited to see what Peter will achieve in the coming year and look forward to continuing to support BCO members through my new position as Immediate Past President."

Richard Kauntze, Chief Executive of the BCO, said: "I am delighted to welcome Peter Crowther to the role of BCO President. Peter has made his mark in the commercial sector as an innovative and ambitious leader, and I am a great admirer of Peter's collaborative and creative vision for the future of the workplace. It was a huge pleasure to work alongside him on the curation of this year's BCO conference in Birmingham, where his focus on social value and inclusivity was brought to the fore. I wish him the very best for this new role and look forward to seeing all he will accomplish during his presidential year.

"My sincere thanks go to Despina Katsikakis for her outstanding work over the past year. Despina has been a formidable leader for the BCO. Despina's work with the BCO's Research Committee to launch new research pillars to set the parameters for upcoming papers demonstrates her ongoing role in guiding the

office sector as it continues to evolve in response to changing occupier needs, economic shifts, the rapid progression of workplace tech and growing sustainability standards. Despina's human-centric approach, her inquisitive nature and her clear passion for creating spaces with wellbeing at their heart have left a lasting impression on the BCO."

"I would also like to thank Bruce Paterson for his dedication and continued work as BCO's Honorary Treasurer, congratulate Helen Hare, who now becomes our Senior Vice President, and welcome Andy McBain, our new Junior Vice President."