

JOBLINGE Munich: A Launchpad for Lifelong Success

How JOBLINGE and Steelcase partnered to design an inspiring learning space for young people that supports growth, belonging, and opportunity

 Read 4 minutes

In Munich, a new kind of learning space is helping young people take confident steps toward their future. Building on the success of its Frankfurt basecamp, JOBLINGE has created a dynamic environment designed to empower youth as they navigate the path from school to the successful completion of their apprenticeships.

Through mentoring, tutoring, and life skills training, JOBLINGE offers holistic support to help participants find the right apprenticeship for them, complete it successfully, and enter the workforce. Reports show that in Germany, nearly 30% of apprentices drop out of their programs, and there's a gap between the 70,000 apprenticeship vacancies and the young people seeking apprenticeships. JOBLINGE's mission is to change that.

The new Munich basecamp is designed to embody this mission with an inspiring space designed to support learning and community. Made possible through a bold vision, agile execution, and a strong partnership with Steelcase, the space came to life in less than six months and is already making a difference.

From Vision to Reality: A Space with Purpose

The idea was clear from the start: create a multifunctional, inspiring learning space that supports young people during their apprenticeship and as they navigate their path after school. Charlotte Knull, cross-regional basecamp consultant at JOBLINGE, led the strategic vision, while Mara Brekenfeld, former team lead for Munich basecamp (until July 2025), brought it to life on the ground.

"We wanted a space that could do it all — support tutoring and quiet study, as well as collaboration and synergy" Charlotte explains. "It had to be flexible, welcoming, and tailored to the needs of our trainees."

Once sponsorship from five corporate partners was secured, the project accelerated. Charlotte and her team identified the location and invited Mara to co-lead the setup. Together with Georgeta Macovei, Steelcase Learning Consultant, they quickly tackled challenges and transformed the space.

"It was intense," Mara recalls. "We had to plan everything — from the layout to the lighting. But it was also incredibly energizing to see it come together so quickly."

"We wanted a space that could do it all — support tutoring and quiet study, as well as collaboration and synergy. It had to be flexible, welcoming, and tailored to the needs of our trainees."

Photo: Stefan König © BMW AG

Turning Obstacles into Opportunities

Finding the right space in central Munich was a major hurdle. The team needed a location that was affordable, accessible, and large enough to accommodate coaching rooms, classrooms, event areas, and a library. The contract process was equally complex, involving multiple stakeholders and tight nonprofit constraints.

“The space was completely open when we got it,” says Georgeta. “We had to design from scratch — partitioning areas, defining functions, and making the two floors feel connected.” With creativity and collaboration, the team overcame these challenges. Carefully selected furnishings and thoughtful design choices, such as calming green walls and natural tones, brought warmth and cohesion to the space. “We didn’t want it to feel like patchwork,” Georgeta explains. “We wanted it to feel intentional, inspiring, and alive.”

Photo: Stefan König © BMW AG

A Learning Space That Supports Every Step of the Journey

The Munich basecamp is thoughtfully designed to support what young people need during their post-school and apprenticeship journey. The space features a calm, quiet library perfect for focused study, while the flexible classroom encourages collaboration and active learning. A coffee area provides a welcoming setting for informal conversations, networking, and social interaction. Coaching rooms offer privacy for one-on-one support. And an event space serves as a vibrant venue for regular workshops, performances, and community gatherings.

A Strong Partnership: JOBLINGE and Steelcase

As a long-standing community partner, JOBLINGE worked together with Steelcase in a dynamic collaboration to bring the vision to life. “We had weekly meetings, constant emails — it was a true partnership,” Mara says. “Insights from Steelcase were invaluable and they helped us with everything from color palettes to furniture placement.” From the earliest planning stages, Georgeta and the Steelcase ChangeMakers team in Munich provided design expertise, logistical support, and a deep understanding of how space influences behavior.

“We had weekly meetings, constant emails — it was a true partnership. Insights from Steelcase were invaluable and they helped us with everything from color palettes to furniture placement.”

MARA BREKENFELD | former team lead for Munich basecamp (until July 2025)

Steelcase also coordinated technology and furniture deliveries, shared best practices, and invited JOBLINGE staff to workshops and events to foster ongoing learning. “We hit the jackpot working with Steelcase,” says Charlotte. “They didn’t just help us build a space. They helped us build a community.”

Real Impact: Empowering Young People Every Day

The Munich basecamp is a space where young people feel seen, supported, and empowered. It’s buzzing with activity from morning to night, with daily workshops, mentoring, and tutoring sessions.

Recent surveys confirm the new space’s success: participants describe the space as inviting, calm, and inspiring. They appreciate the colorful, ergonomic furniture, the flexibility to choose where and how to work, and the supportive presence of staff. The library supports focused study, the classroom encourages collaboration, and the get-together area fosters community.

“Space influences how people feel,” says Georgeta. “The JOBLINGE space in Munich reimagines what learning can look and feel like — shifting away from traditional classrooms toward human-centered environments that encourage curiosity and growth and foster a sense of belonging.”

“The JOBLINGE space in Munich reimagines what learning can look and feel like — shifting away from traditional classrooms toward human-centered environments that encourage curiosity and growth and foster a sense of belonging.”

GEOGETA MACOVEI | Steelcase Learning Consultant

Evolving Spaces, Expanding Future

The Munich basecamp is already proving to be exactly what it set out to be: a space that inspires, supports, and empowers. Every day, young people walk through its doors and find not only a place to learn but also a community that believes in them.

With six basecamps now operating across Germany, each tailored to its local context, JOBLINGE is scaling its impact. Hybrid and digital workshops are expanding, enabling trainees from different cities to connect and grow together. And as the needs of young people change, these spaces are intentionally designed to evolve over time and support learning and community now and in the future.

"There's so much that goes on behind the scenes to bring a space like this to life," Charlotte shared. "But then you see young people walk in, feel at home, and start to believe in themselves. That's when you know it was all worth it."