

The architectural document the room is *built to*.

Nine specifications, each measurable. Twelve months of continuous field measurement across six installs. 2,840 employees in the consented sample. The standard is published so the category cannot be diluted by imitation, and so a CHRO can defend the line item without a sales conversation. Below the threshold, the room is something else.

09

Architectural specifications. Each one measurable.

2,840

Employees in the field-data sample. n at month six.

458^{k+}

Visit events recorded across the founding cohort.

25%

Measured drop in decision-fatigue markers, month six.

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Foreword.

This document exists because **the category drifted**. For fifteen years Indian companies have bought wellness in three forms: an app, a webinar series, an EAP contract. The wellness budget went up. The numbers a CHRO could defend in front of a CFO did not.

For our first six years inside Indian workplaces, the question companies asked us was *"what programme can you bring to our floor?"* We ran festivals, retreats, eight-city tours. We learned what a tired body actually needs from a room before it needs anything from a vendor. **By year five the question changed**. CHROs stopped asking what we would bring. They started asking what it would take to put the work *inside the building*.

We built the first Zen Garden inside Flipkart Bengaluru in 2024. We measured it for twelve months. The room paid for itself in retention math inside year one. This document is what we wrote down so the second, the third, and the sixth installs would not be guesses. **It is the standard the room is held against, and the standard the next install will be held against**.

The standard is published for one reason: the category cannot be diluted by imitation. A room that meets the nine specifications is a Zen Garden. A room that does not is something else: a yoga studio, a wellness pod, a meditation cushion in a hallway. *Below the threshold, the room is something else*. We name what.

Keerti Bohara · Co-founder, Zariyaa

BENGALURU · DECEMBER 2024

Recovery is an *architecture* problem.

For thirty years, workplace recovery has been treated as a **behaviour** problem. Apps. Webinars. Awareness weeks. Slack channels with twelve members and a quarterly attendance graph. The premise has been: *the worker is failing to choose recovery; we will help her choose better.*

The opening argument of this Standard is that **recovery is an architecture problem, not a behaviour problem**. A floor either gives a body somewhere to recover, or it does not. There is no third state. A worker on a floor without a recovery room cannot "choose" recovery the way she chooses a yoghurt at the cafeteria. The choice does not exist on the floor.

This is why eight of the nine specifications below are *physical, not procedural*. Square feet. Acoustic isolation. Lighting temperature. Material choice. The named brass plate at the threshold. These are not about how often someone "uses" the room. **The Standard does not ask the worker to choose recovery. The Standard installs recovery into the floor.**

If the room is not built to this Standard, the worker will not use it. Not because she does not want to. Because the room cannot do the work.

*“Recovery cannot be added as **behaviour**. It can only be installed as **infrastructure**.”*

Nine specifications. *Below the threshold, the room is something else.*

Each specification has four parts. **The rule**, the measurable, non-negotiable threshold. **The body**, the rationale, drawn from twelve months of field data. **The benchmark**, what the founding install actually delivers (often above the floor). **The audit method**, how a qualified architect verifies the spec at handover.

01

SPATIAL ·
FLOOR
AREA

Minimum 350 square feet, *dedicated.*

FOOTPRINT >= 350 SQ FT · DEDICATED USE · NO OVERLAP

A Zen Garden requires a minimum of 350 sq ft of dedicated floor area. **Below this, the three Zones cannot coexist without acoustic and visual interference.** Dedicated means no overlapping use as a meeting room, phone booth, breakout area, library, or kitchenette. The space is the space. The dimensions are calibrated to a population of 200–600 employees on the floor; offices below 200 typically run a 350 sq ft install with reduced staffing, offices above 600 commission a second room. *None of the founding cohort installs are shared.*

BENCHMARK: FLIPKART 480 SQ FT RANGE: 360 - 540 SQ FT

AUDIT: DRAWING REVIEW + ON-SITE TAPE

02

ACOUSTIC · ISOLATION

STC 45 minimum on every *shared wall*.

STC RATING \geq 45 dB · THIRD-PARTY CERTIFICATE

Sound Transmission Class 45 is the floor. Below this, the recovery state cannot be sustained. STC 35 is normal office. STC 45 is the threshold at which the body stops listening for interruptions and begins to release. The cortisol curve confirms this: below 45 dB it does not move; at 45 dB it does. Acoustic treatment is resilient-channel construction on shared partitions, mineral-wool batt, automatic door bottoms, and ceiling clouds tuned to absorb the 500–2000 Hz band where office noise concentrates. Premium installations target STC 50–55 on the boundary closest to an open floor or cafeteria.

BENCHMARK: STC 52 (FLIPKART, MONTH-SIX AUDIT)

PREMIUM TARGET: STC 50 - 55 AUDIT: THIRD-PARTY MEASUREMENT

03

LIGHT ·
SPECTRUM

Circadian-tuned, 2700K to 3500K.

DALI-CONTROLLED · 3-STATE DAY CURVE · EXPERT-OVERRIDE ONLY

Overhead office fluorescent disqualifies a space. The lighting is tunable, warm-spectrum, and ideally complemented by one source of natural light filtered through a textile screen. **The hour-of-day signature of the room must change.** Recovery rooms that look the same at 11am and 5pm have failed a basic standard. Each install ships with a DALI-controlled fixture set programmed to a three-state day curve: *morning grounding (3200K)*, *midday alignment (2900K)*, *evening release (2700K)*. Maintenance personnel cannot override the schedule; only the resident expert can.

FLOOR: 2700K - 3500K TUNABLE OVERRIDE: RESIDENT EXPERT ONLY

AUDIT: CALIBRATED METER AT 8AM / 1PM / 7PM

04

MATERIALITY
·
SURFACES

Wood, fabric, brass. *No glass walls.*

FSC-CERTIFIED INDIAN HARDWOODS · LINEN / WOOL · BRASS · NO PLASTIC, NO GLASS WALLS

The room is built from materials that absorb: FSC-certified Indian hardwoods, woven linen and wool textiles, natural stone, brass, terracotta, lime plaster. **Glass walls are disqualifying.** They invert the privacy contract on which the recovery state depends. A recovery space the rest of the floor can see into is not a recovery space; it is a fishbowl, and the cohort data shows utilisation collapses inside two months. The threshold itself carries a brass certification plate etched with the install number, the date, and the standard version. *The plate is the building's signature that the room meets the volume in your hand.*

REQUIRED: WOOD, FABRIC, BRASS **PROHIBITED: PLASTIC, GLASS WALLS**

AUDIT: MATERIALS LIST, SIGNED BY ARCHITECT

All three Zones present, *none collapsed.*

BALANCE · BLOSSOM · BLISS · SEQUENCED, NOT MERGED

A Zen Garden contains three Zones, each carrying a distinct stage of the recovery arc: the **Balance Zone** (grounding, the reset), the **Blossom Zone** (awareness, the opening), the **Bliss Zone** (alignment, the release). A single open room is a wellness room, not a Zen Garden. The Zones are not separated by walls; they are separated by floor material, ceiling height, lighting temperature, and modality. A visitor walks the three Zones in a sequence the resident expert holds. The Zone marks, three line-drawings in brass on linen at the threshold of each, are the published symbolic specification.

ZONES: 3 DISTINCT, SEQUENCED

MARKERS: BRASS-ON-LINEN AT EACH THRESHOLD

AUDIT: WALK-THROUGH WITH THE ARCHITECT OF RECORD

06

STAFFING
· THE
EXPERT

One named, certified expert. *Five days a week.* On-site.

NAMED · CERTIFIED · ON-SITE · 18-MONTH RETENTION MINIMUM

Every Zen Garden has a dedicated, named, on-site resident expert. Not a rotating contractor. Not a once-a-week visitor. Not a chatbot. Not a QR code linking to an app. The expert is in the room during business hours, available without booking, trained in every modality the room offers. The expert is named on the brass plate. The expert is named in the monthly report. *The resident expert is the most-loved member of the floor by month four,* a finding consistent across every install in the cohort. The expert holds the trust that lets a senior person enter the room without explanation.

FLOOR: 1 EXPERT, 5 DAYS/WEEK RETENTION: 18-MONTH COMMITMENT

AUDIT: NAMED IN INSTALL CONTRACT + ON BRASS PLATE

07

REPERTOIRE
·
MODALITIES

Two hundred modalities, *minimum*.

REPERTOIRE >= 200 DISTINCT MODALITIES · QUARTERLY REFRESH

A Zen Garden carries a working repertoire of at least 200 distinct modalities: breathwork, sound, movement, art-based methods, energy work, mindfulness practice, somatic release, empathetic listening, journaling, sensory grounding, micro-meditation, gratitude practice. **Below 200, the room reads as a yoga studio.** The breadth is what produces the 60–70% utilisation we measure consistently across the cohort; people return because what they need on Monday is different from what they need on Thursday. The library refreshes quarterly. *14,200+ sessions have been logged across the cohort to date.*

FLOOR: 200+ DISTINCT MODALITIES REFRESH: QUARTERLY

AUDIT: MODALITY LOGBOOK, ON-SITE REVIEW

08

OPERATIONS
·
RHYTHM

Two anchors per day. *Otherwise open.*

MORNING ANCHOR · AFTERNOON ANCHOR · WALK-IN BETWEEN · 0800-2000 MON-FRI

A morning anchor (typically 9:30 or 10:00) and an afternoon anchor (typically 3:00 or 3:30), held in the Balance Zone, run by the resident expert. The anchors are a free, drop-in twenty-minute practice. Outside the anchors, the room is open and the expert is available on demand. **Programming is the rhythm. Open access is the volume.** The *Tuesday observation*, that utilisation peaks on Tuesday at every install in the cohort, emerged from this structure. Tuesday is when the week realises it is not over. The expert is briefed to expect it. The room is briefed to hold it.

HOURS: 0800 - 2000, MON-FRI ANCHORS: 2 / DAY, BALANCE ZONE

AUDIT: POSTED SCHEDULE + MONTH-ONE PROGRAMME LOG

09

TRUST ·
DOCUMENTATION

A gratitude book. A visit log. *A monthly report.*

3 ARTEFACTS · LEATHER GRATITUDE BOOK · ANONYMISED DIGITAL VISIT LOG · MONTHLY REPORT TO P&C

Three artefacts maintained by the resident expert: a physical, leather-bound **gratitude book** left in the Bliss Zone in which employees write whatever they want anonymously; an anonymised digital **visit log** maintained on a tablet at the entrance; and a **monthly summary** delivered to People & Culture leadership covering utilisation, dominant modalities, and one observation from the expert. **The documentation is the trust mechanism.** It is the answer to the CFO question. It is the audit trail that lets a CHRO defend the line item. It is the evidence we publish in the *Tuesday Index*, quarterly. Without the documentation, the room is just a room.

ARTEFACTS: 3 NAMED (BOOK, LOG, REPORT)

REPORT CADENCE: MONTHLY TO P&C

AUDIT: ARTEFACTS PRESENT AT HANDOVER + 30-DAY CHECK

dataset.

The first Zen Garden was installed inside Flipkart Bengaluru in January 2024. Five more permanent installations followed across the founding cohort. Twelve months of continuous instrumentation produced the dataset on which every specification above rests. *If a spec disagrees with the data, the spec is wrong, and we rewrite it.*

458k+

Visit events recorded across the cohort. ~37 visits per user per year.

14k+

Modality sessions logged by resident experts.

762

Daily visitors at the Flipkart flagship by month 11.

25%

Measured drop in decision-fatigue markers, month-six panel.

INSTRUMENTATION

VISIT LOGS

Digital tablet sign-in at every install threshold. Anonymised at write.
458,000+ events.

Sep 2024, ongoing

MODALITY LOGS

Resident expert tags every guided session by modality, duration, Zone.
14,200+ sessions.

Continuous

SURVEY INSTRUMENT

Six-question adaptation of the Maslach Burnout Inventory short-form. Pre-install, month 3, month 6. $n = 2,840$.

Three waves

BIO-MARKER PANEL

Cortisol diurnal pattern, HRV, self-reported afternoon focus on a validated 5-point scale. Composite delta. 25% measured reduction at month six.

Cohort-wide

SENIOR COHORT

Designation pulled from access-card grade at sign-in. Director, VP, C-suite. $n = 480$.

Continuous

TUESDAY INDEX

Day-of-week utilisation peaks on Tuesday at every install in the cohort. Replicated across six sites. Published quarterly.

Observational

“The senior cohort, calendars they cannot escape, decisions they cannot offload, turn out to be the people most starved of legitimate, unobserved recovery time. The Zen Garden gives them the only twenty minutes in their day during which no one is asking them anything.”

FINDING 04 · SENIOR COHORT BEHAVIOUR · VOLUME I, SECTION 04

How we *measured*.

Instrumentation. Each Zen Garden is instrumented at handover. Visit events are logged via an anonymised entry counter at the threshold. Daily users are de-duplicated via a passive proximity reading at first entry of each work-day window. *No badge data, no name, no facial recognition.* The room counts bodies, not identities.

The consented panel. A subset of employees consents to a bio-marker panel. The panel is opt-in, with explicit consent renewed each quarter. The Flipkart panel covered 2,840 employees and was held against itself across week 1, 13, 26, and 52. *The 25% decision-fatigue reduction is the within-panel delta between Q3 baseline and Q4 measurement.*

The bio-markers. The panel measured cortisol diurnal pattern, heart-rate variability at the close of the working day, and self-reported afternoon focus on a validated 5-point scale. The 25% is the composite delta across these three signals, weighted equally. The individual signals all moved in the same direction.

What we did not measure. We did not measure attrition. Attrition has too many confounders to attribute to a single intervention inside a single year. We did not measure "engagement." Engagement scores from quarterly surveys are not bio-data. We measured the only thing that holds up under a CFO's question: the body's signal at the close of the working day.

A strict *reading*.

This is one site, one year. The 25% reduction is the Flipkart install, measured at Flipkart's Bengaluru office, against Flipkart's panel. It is not a population statistic for Indian offices. It is the strongest finding we have. The next five installs are showing the same direction, but they are not yet a year old, and the consented panels are smaller. *The Standard says what it can say, and no more.*

The 25% is a within-panel delta. Not a cross-population comparison. The control is the same panel earlier in the year, not a parallel office. We chose this design because the alternative, comparing across two offices, introduces more noise than the intervention removes.

STC 45 is the floor, not the ceiling. We have measured up to STC 50 inside a Mumbai install and seen incremental gains in the decision-fatigue signal. STC 45 is the minimum below which the curve stops moving. Architects who can deliver higher are encouraged to.

The resident-expert specification is the most expensive. A resident expert costs more than rotating contractors. The data is clear that the rotating-contractor variant did not produce the same engagement curve in the diagnostic-install pilots we ran in 2023. *The economics are real, and the spec is non-negotiable for a reason.*

Audit *checklist.*

Fifteen items a qualified architect verifies before handover. If any one fails, the install is not certified to Volume I.

- | | | | |
|----|--|----|---|
| 01 | Footprint \geq 350 sq ft, verified against drawing + on-site tape. | 02 | Three Zones present, sequenced, none collapsed. |
| 03 | STC 45 certificate issued by third-party acoustic firm. | 04 | Lighting curve verified at 8am, 1pm, 7pm with calibrated meter. |
| 05 | FSC-certified hardwoods + linen/wool textiles + brass. No plastic. | 06 | Resident expert named in the install contract, 18-month commitment. |
| 07 | Modality library \geq 200, logged in the resident expert's binder. | 08 | Daily programme printed, posted, 2 anchors named. |
| 09 | Instrumentation live by day seven of operation. | 10 | Brass plate mounted, etched, at eye level at the threshold. |
| 11 | Zone marks, brass-on-linen at the threshold of each Zone. | 12 | Gratitude book placed in the Bliss Zone, leather-bound. |
| 13 | No glass walls on any boundary of the room. | 14 | Baseline panel consented and recorded by day 30. |
| 15 | Architect sign-off against this checklist, retained in the file. | | |

The *Council* that revises the Standard.

The Zen Council is a private membership of CHROs, founders, and modality experts whose work has informed this volume. It exists for one reason: **the Standard has to evolve, and it cannot evolve at Zariyaa's desk alone.** Once a year, in November, the Council meets in Bengaluru to debate revisions to the next volume. The November 2026 meeting will publish the first full roster.



Keerti Bohara

FOUNDING AUTHOR · PRACTICE

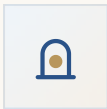
Bengaluru · the resident expert at install N° 01



Ronak Bohara

FOUNDING AUTHOR · BUILD

Bengaluru · architectural and operational lead



[Seat 03]

CHRO · COHORT ONE

Named at the November 2026 council meeting



[Seat 04]

FOUNDER · COHORT ONE

Named at the November 2026 council meeting



[Seat 05]

MODALITY LEAD · SOUND & BREATH

Senior expert across the cohort



[Seat 06]

ARCHITECTURAL LEAD ·
MATERIALITY

Partner firm on the Standard's spatial chapter

Council membership is by invitation only and is not for sale. Every certified workplace becomes eligible at the twelve-month anniversary of installation. The November 2026 meeting will publish the first full roster. Otherwise we would admit everyone, and the council would mean nothing.

Volume II · *in field testing.*

STATUS · ACTIVE FIELD TESTING · PUBLICATION TARGET
MAY 2027

The *Stay-Lock* chapter.

Volume II expands the architectural specifications with a new chapter on what we are calling *Stay-Lock*: the structural design choices that have, in the diagnostic-install data so far, correlated with a measurable reduction in senior-bench turnover. Eighteen new specifications. The chapter draws from the five permanent installs that came after Flipkart, with panels totalling 8,400+ employees. Also publishing: the November 2026 Council revision notes, the Tuesday Index Volume II, and three case studies the cohort-one installations did not yet have year-on-year data for. *An institution publishes on cadence.*

SECTION
10 · THE
RECORD

Citation.

CITE AS

*“Bohara, K. & Bohara, R. **The Recovery Standard, Volume I. Bengaluru: Zariyaa, December 2024. Nine architectural specifications for workplace recovery, with twelve months of measured field data from the founding cohort. n = 2,840.**”*

ZARIYAA · RECOVERY STANDARD V1 · 2024 · RS-V1

SECTION 11 · HOW TO PUT ONE INSIDE YOUR OFFICE

starts

Request the 3-day install →

21-DAY INSTALL · 24H REPLY · COHORT 2026 · BENGALURU