



June 6, 2025 – Chicago, IL

Turf Opens Expanded Design Experience Center At THE MART

Acoustics Leader Makes Its Mark in Chicago Hometown with 18,000 square-foot Space that will House Office, Prototyping Space and Showroom

June 6, 2025, CHICAGO, IL – [Turf](#), an acoustic innovator operating at the intersection of art, technology, and design, is proud to announce the opening of its new Turf Design Experience Center, located in suite 1048 of the historic Merchandise Mart in Chicago. The center offers a unique experience where visitors can draw inspiration from the showroom, work with Turf designers in the office space, and bring their dreams to reality in the prototyping space – all under one roof at THE MART. The showroom offers the brand’s design partners an in-depth look at its wide range of products and how they can be applied to create spaces of varying aesthetics. In addition to providing visitors with a unique journey through acoustical design and stimulating soundscapes, the space, designed by Elizabeth Von Lehe, ASID, NCIDQ, Principal, Senior Interior Design Leader, CannonDesign, also houses Turf’s corporate offices and prototyping space. The showroom provides an experiential demonstration of Turf’s acoustic solutions while the office and prototyping space offer a look at how Turf – both teams and products – works.

“The opening of the Turf Design Experience Center represents a major milestone for our team and stays true to Turf’s Chicago roots as a local manufacturer,” said Rob Perri, President, Turf and Vice President, Brand Companies, Armstrong World Industries. “It is not only a testament to our dedication to innovation, quality, sustainability, and exceptional design but also an invitation to designers, specifiers, architects and more to experience the limitless abilities of Turf. The expanded showroom, new offices and prototyping space are more than just physical space—they’re an experience of the future of Turf.”

The official opening of the Turf Design Experience Center will kick off at the start of the world’s leading commercial design event, NeoCon 2025. As an exhibitor at the show for the last three years, the grand opening of the Turf Design Experience Center reinforces the brand’s continued investment in both THE MART and the design community overall.

Located in THE MART’s third largest commercial showroom, Suite #1048, and spanning nearly 20,000 square feet, including 4,000 square feet of dedicated showroom space, the space features multiple zones that demonstrate the different roles and capabilities of Turf: design, architectural project management, product development, sales, and account management. The new space will be a showcase of Turf’s products and capabilities: the showroom giving designers inspiration for their projects, the office providing them with a practical example of Turf in action and the prototyping space offering an opportunity to experience and experiment with Turf’s development process.



"The vision for the new Turf space was to capture the full spectrum of moods their materials inspire," said Von Lehe. "The showroom invites visitors to 'choose their own adventure,' exploring everything from cozy, focused corners to lively, buzzing zones—reflecting the vibes people want to create throughout their day. Meanwhile, the Turf offices serve as a living lab for that same idea: embracing choice by offering a variety of environments that let individuals tailor their workspace to fit their mood and style."

THE OFFICE

The design of Turf's new office prioritizes a variety of workstyles and employee accommodations. This is achieved through a spectrum of spaces, from lighter and energetic areas to darker and moodier zones. Three distinct lounges serve as retreats for work, breaks, or conversations: the dark and moody "Merlot lounge," the bright and high-energy "Green Lounge" and the more private yet energetic "Groovy Lounge" The space also features a number of rooms and environments for employee well-being, including a wellness room, an in-office gender-neutral bathroom and an expansive amenity space to further team connectedness.

Private offices were also strategically designed with on-camera presence in mind. Wall placements showcase Turf's acoustic solutions, which also function as visually appealing video conferencing backgrounds. A notable design element involves a custom Turf installation that ingeniously transforms ducts into architectural, wayfinding features.

The office layout also strategically positions desks away from windows to mitigate glare and heat, with most desks inset for thermal comfort and optimal light levels. Dedicated spaces cater to different work functions, including a dynamic design meeting room with flexible furniture and writable walls for active team collaboration.

In line with Turf's playful and collaborative nature, the office's amenity space was designed as a flexible hub for both everyday employee collaboration and special events connecting with designers, architects, and other Turf partners. The space plays with lighting – both natural and artificial – with considerations to health and wellness through circadian lighting, which can be configured for showroom/office events as needed. The space acts as a transition area that will seamlessly connect with the showroom during events such as NeoCon, providing a dynamic environment for showroom visitors to engage with Turf representatives.

THE SHOWROOM

The showroom offers visitors an immersive journey through the diverse possibilities of its innovative materials, with two distinct "pathways" to guide guests and demonstrate the versatility of Turf



June 6, 2025 – Chicago, IL

products. The journey, however, begins before visitors enter the showroom. Turf outfitted the entry hallway leading to the space with its acoustic solutions, noticeably shifting the hallway mood visually and aurally and giving visitors a taste of the Turf experience before they walk through the doors. Visitors can observe the Turf team operating the CNC machine through the storefront glass, or they can head into the showroom to continue the experience.

Upon entering the showroom, visitors are presented with a pivotal decision, stepping through a "portal" that initiates their personalized experience. To one side lies a vibrant and energetic pathway, embodying a playful and poppy aesthetic. Conversely, the other path offers a quieter, more intimate ambiance, characterized by darker, moodier tones. These initial pathways serve as an introduction to the expansive range of atmospheres achievable through thoughtful material selection and application.

Continuing their exploration, guests will discover a series of carefully curated vignettes along each pathway. These dedicated spaces highlight how Turf materials can function as a "supportive actor" in realizing diverse design intentions, from high-energy and stimulating environments to tranquil and focused settings. The "decision point" encourages active engagement and exploration, revealing new design possibilities around every corner. The deliberate use of "kiss points" allows for peaks into the other side and its contrasting atmosphere, ensuring a dynamic and captivating experience that underscores the breadth and adaptability of Turf's product line.

THE PROTOTYPING SPACE

A miniature reflection of Turf's Gilberts, IL factory, the prototyping space gives clients and partners direct access to Turf's extensive product lines and development process, with real-time collaboration from the Turf design team. With Turf's onsite, full-size CNC machine – a cutting and marking system that Turf uses to turn felt into acoustic solutions – clients and visitors will get an in-depth look at Turf's design process from start to finish. The CNC machine demonstrates Turf's research and development processes that drive the experimentation and evolution of product offerings – both custom and standard – including new product development, prototyping, and more. The space's ceiling infrastructure is set up with T-grid and unistrut, allowing visiting designers, clients and Turf's product development team to experiment with Turf's various grid connections, including their patented Gridlock and Feltlock. With the space equipped with all the machinery needed to create and develop Turf product, designers can be a part of the entire prototyping process: workshopping with Turf to design a product, cutting the felt at the CNC machine, and finishing off with the product build and set-up.

With a 10-year lease, the showroom opening signifies Turf's commitment to THE MART and the Chicago community.



June 6, 2025 – Chicago, IL

Project Team:

- Lead Designer: Elizabeth Von Lehe, ASID, NCIDQ, Principal, Senior Interior Design Leader, CannonDesign
- Interior Design and Consultants: HDR, Cannon Design, Ames Design Collective
- Architect of Record: geniant Eastlake Studio
- General Contracting: Pepper Construction and Redmond Construction
- Lighting Design: HDR

Key Designers:

- Hannah Straus, NCIDQ | HDR
- Shamus McVicar, NCIDQ, IIDA | HDR
- Wanda Cano Mejia | HDR
- Gabriella Morris | HDR
- Christina Brown, NCIDQ | geniant Eastlake Studio
- Peter Randolph, AIA | geniant Eastlake Studio
- Tim Nguyen, NCIDQ, IIDA | HED
- Carolyn Ames Noble, ASID, WELL AP, WELL Faculty | Ames Design Collective

About Turf Design

Since 2016, Turf has collaborated with designers and architects to create acoustic solutions that produce welcoming spaces. Turf's artful acoustic solutions – ranging from ceiling baffles, wall tiles, screens, and more – are effortless to adopt, adapt, and install. From an in-house developed color palette to research-centered product development, each Turf design results in smarter products, processes, and tools so that designers and architects can focus on creating and leave the noise behind.

Turf seeks to design a cleaner, greener built environment with solutions that meet the most intensive sustainability standards, and processes that minimize waste and energy at every step.

The use of 60% pre-consumer recycled PET felt in Turf products and the company's on-demand manufacturing keeps Turf's practices eco-friendly and inventory-associated waste low. At Turf, yesterday's scraps are tomorrow's solutions; it's either recycled into a high-energy-value fuel or experimented with to create new innovative solutions. Headquartered in Chicago, the Turf team is constantly pushing the boundaries of the felt material to produce tools for architects and designers to effortlessly turn their visions into reality.