

Liberties Creative Campus Consultation Report

March 2021



Tionscadal Éireann
Project Ireland
2040



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Executive Summary

Dublin City Council Arts Office is consulting on the feasibility to bring forward a “Creative Campus” in the heart of the Liberties area of Dublin 8. The proposals are part of an Urban Regeneration and Development Fund (URDF) regeneration project that aims to deliver new workspace for artists within the city. In total three initial council owned sites have been identified at Bridgefoot Street and at 8 and 9 Merchants Quay.

The feasibility study commenced in June 2020 when a baseline survey into artist workspaces was conducted. The survey invited primary users of artist workspace to participate and received 500+ responses. This baseline survey revealed an overall dissatisfaction with the existing provision of artist workspaces in Dublin both in terms of supply and quality **(See Artist Workspace Findings Report, November 2020)**

From the survey, and supplementary artist workshops, seven design principles were established **(See Artist Workspace Analysis Report, November 2020)**. The validity of these seven broad design principles was tested in a further co-design engagement process with the local community to ensure their sensitivity to the neighbourhood and local context. During this community consultation, the feasibility sites were identified to assess the application of the design principles to the Bridgefoot Street and Merchants Quay sites. This engagement entailed an online survey, three workshops and eight one-to-one meetings with local stakeholders and representatives from the arts. The survey received more than 250+ responses from people with a mix of connections to The Liberties including residents, artists creating in the area, workers, and people who socialise in the district.

The community research revealed strong agreement with the proposed design principles that emerged from the baseline artist workspaces report, suggesting congruence in the core characteristics of the future campus. However three new design principles emerged during this engagement. This provided ten design principles in total to guide the design of the proposed creative campus **(See Liberties Creative Campus Consultation Report, February 2021)**.

Following the community co-design consultation, the project architects OBFA applied these design principles to create a proposed concept design. Subsequently a fourth phase of engagement with the arts industry and Dublin 8 community was undertaken to validate support for the co-designed proposals.

This report summarises the final phase of this stakeholder and community consultation on the concept proposals which have been developed as part of the feasibility study. As part of this study, an online survey was carried out to ascertain the needs and aspirations the local community.

The survey was hosted online here and was live for a fortnight from 17 February – 03 March 2021. The survey sought to gather participant feedback concerning the concept design informed by the ten design principles which have been generated during earlier phases of consultation.

The following report presents the quantitative and qualitative data from the survey. The survey received 236 responses. The survey demonstrated that the majority of respondents (97%) support the proposals to develop a new creative campus in the Liberties in Dublin 8. A total of 7 questions (qualitative and quantitative) informed the survey.

One of the most popular suggestions received was for the inclusion of a dedicated music hub which would act as a central feature of the campus, a total of 34 of the 146 qualitative responses, and a further 21 referred to the inclusion of sound recording studios.

During the consultation period, the online survey experienced 4,291 page views overall and hosted 1,737 new users.

The top traffic source of the project was Direct Traffic (35%) and this can be attributed to the e-newsletters which were issued from by the Dublin City Council Arts Office to its database as well as the list of individuals who provided permissions to be contacted about the project following previous engagement.

This second most popular traffic source was social media (30%) with Facebook the top traffic generator due to the Facebook advertising campaign.

A series of Facebook and Instagram advertisements ran to further promote the public consultation and these ads reached 42,932 people.

Where required, Turley also arranged the postage of information packs on the project to interested parties.

In addition to the above activity, Turley Strategic Communications also participated in a meeting with the Community Organisations and Residents Network (CORN) and provided a presentation on the project followed by a short Q&A session with the group’s members. A meeting about the proposals also took place with street art collective Subset at their request.

Further submissions received included:

- Media Urbanism Ltd - Proposed amendment to the current plans
- Liberties Cultural Association – Proposal Feedback
- Native Uses - A Multi Use Venue Proposal
- These submissions have been included in the Appendix 1-3 of this report.



Turley

1 Quantitative data analysis

The following section provides an analysis of quantitative data generated by the online survey.

A total of 236 responses were received in response to the survey.

Responses to the quantitative questions were gathered on a Likert scale – see Figure 1.1. Respondents specify their level of agreement or disagreement on a symmetric agree-disagree scale for a series of statements.



Figure 1.1: Likert Scale

Design Proposals

Respondents were invited to specify their level of support for: the proposals to develop a new creative campus in the Liberties; the design proposals for 8 and 9 Merchants Quay and the design proposals for Bridgefoot Street within the survey.

The majority of respondents were supportive of the proposals to develop a new creative campus in the Liberties. A total of 97% of respondents Strongly Agreed (94%) or Agreed (3%) with the statement, 'I support the proposals to develop a new creative campus in the Liberties in Dublin 8.' This compares to 1% of respondents who disagreed with the proposals. 2% of respondents indicated that they were Undecided.

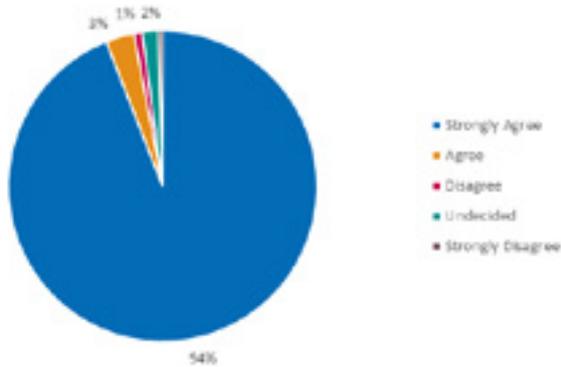


Figure 1.2: 'I support the proposals to develop a new creative campus in the Liberties in Dublin 8'

There were high levels of support in favour of the design proposals for 8 and 9 Merchants Quay with more than two thirds of respondents Strongly Agree (69%) with the statement 'I support the design proposals for 8 and 9 Merchants Quay'. A further 20% of respondents Agree with the statement. This compares to 2% of respondents who Disagree with the statement and 1% who Strongly Disagree. 8% of respondents indicated that they were Undecided.

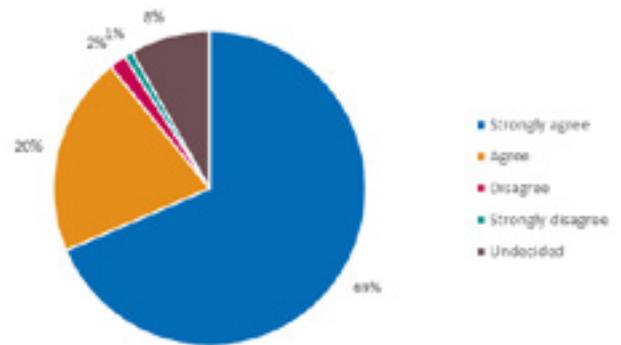


Figure 1.3: 'I support the design proposals for 8 and 9 Merchants Quay'

The majority of respondents supported the design proposals for Bridgefoot Street with 68% Strongly Agree and 18% Agree with the design proposals in this location. 12% of respondents were undecided and 2% of respondents Strongly Disagree or Disagree with the statement.

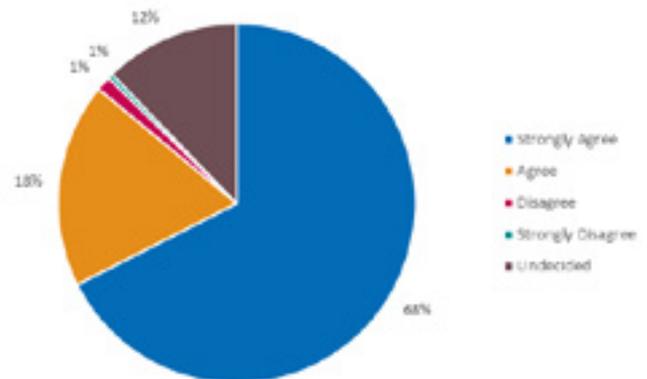


Figure 1.4: 'I support the design proposals for Bridgefoot Street'

Community Design Principles

The survey asked respondents to indicate their level of support for three of the key community design principles including: A Makers Heritage; Sustainable Use; and Be a Campus for the Liberties.

In response to the statement 'I support the community design principle: A Makers Heritage', 72% of respondents Strongly Agree and 19% Agree with the design principle. This compares to 1% of respondents who Strongly Disagree and 8% who were undecided.

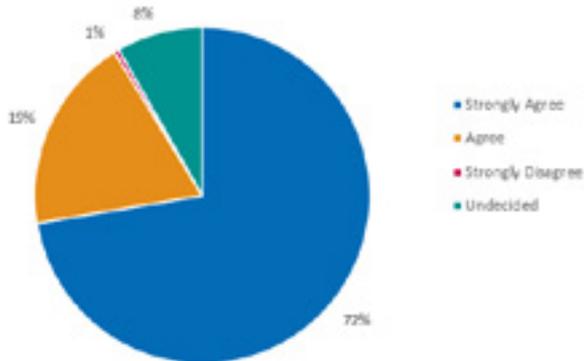


Figure 1.5: 'I support the community design principle: A Makers Heritage'

Over three quarters of respondents were supportive of the community principle of Sustainable Use. A total of 83% of respondents Strongly Agree and 13% Agree with this principle. This compares to 1% of respondents who Strongly Disagree. 3% of respondents were Undecided.

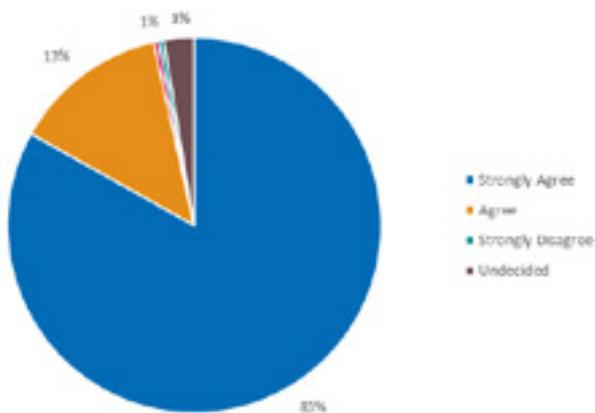


Figure 1.6: 'I support the community design principle: Sustainable Use'

Respondents were asked to indicate their level of support for the community design principle: Be a campus for the Liberties. 79% of respondents Strongly Agree and 16% Agree with the principle. This compares to 1% of respondents who Strongly Disagree. 4% of respondents were undecided.

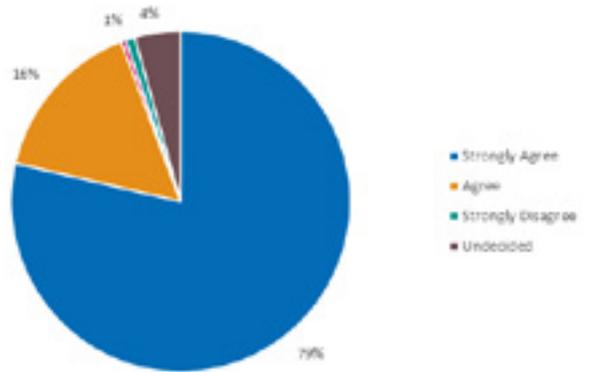


Figure 1.7: 'I support the community design principle: Be a campus for the Liberties'

2 Qualitative data analysis

The following section provides an analysis of qualitative data generated by the survey.

The survey asked respondents to provide any further commentary on the proposed concept design. A total of 146 responses were recorded.

The feedback included a number of suggestions which respondents would like to see included within the concept design proposals.

For ease of reporting, the feedback is included in below in the form of themes and indicative comments.

In addition to the qualitative feedback received via the survey, some individuals provided extended submissions via email. These have been included in Appendix 1-3.

A number of the responses received directly referred to the individual locations. These specific comments have been analysed thematically below.

The comments outlined in Table 2.1 relate exclusively to the proposed site at Bridgefoot Street and the comments outlined in Table 2.2 specifically relate to proposed sites at 8 and 9 Merchants Quay.

Theme	Number of References	Summary of Comment	Indicative Responses
Support for the proposals	43	A number of respondents highlighted their support for the proposals and believed that the campus would be a welcome addition to the city.	<p>"We think it is a wonderful idea to build a creative campus in the Liberties and this certainly looks like a very exciting project and one that is very much needed by the creative communities of Dublin."</p> <p>"I'm very excited to see these plans and it will be a real game changer in fostering collaboration across the Arts."</p> <p>"The whole project is a really positive move by DCC and I look forward to visiting and engaging with the new spaces in the future."</p>
Music Hub	34	<p>One of the most popular suggestions received was for the inclusion of a dedicated music hub which would act as a central feature of the campus.</p> <p>Respondents highlighted that there is a lack of dedicated music spaces within Dublin.</p>	<p>"The creation of a venue and a dedicated music hub would be a great boost to Dublin's cultural landscape."</p> <p>"So many important Dublin venues have closed down in recent years and we are in desperate need of more."</p> <p>"Despite Ireland's world-renowned music scene, our lack of dedicated spaces for the creation, development and presentation of creative and original music is breath taking."</p>
Rehearsal Space	26	Several comments highlighted the need for rehearsal space to be included within the proposals, especially for youth groups and local schools.	<p>"There should be a dedicated space for music in the plans, both for rehearsal and performance."</p> <p>"I believe that the lack of adequate rehearsal spaces for children and youth choirs in the city centre is a real problem."</p>
Recording Studios	21	It was suggested that the proposals should include recording facilities for broadcasting and post-production.	"It should include space for: performance, rehearsals, studios, recording, post-production, offices."
Performance Space	18	The provision of performance space was highly valued among respondents.	<p>"It should include space for: performance, rehearsals, studios, recording, post-production, offices, etc."</p> <p>"We need large and small rehearsal spaces, performance spaces, spaces where we can teach and work and record, consult and collaborate."</p>

Community Engagement	16	<p>A number of respondents emphasised the importance of continuing to engage with the local community and include them throughout the whole process.</p> <p>One respondent suggested that the proposals should connect with the nearby Dublin 8 site of Kilmainham and physically extend the connection with the community in doing so.</p>	<p>"I think it is essential that space and investment be provided to involve the local community to make sure there is ongoing engagement, acceptance and utility."</p> <p>"I think thus an interconnected creative and cultural network can be generated...with benefits to both local community in terms of e.g. employment opportunities and benefits to visitors to the area enhancing their experience."</p> <p>"The involvement of the local community in every phase, and ensuring that the buildings and their spaces are genuinely open and shared with local residents for community use, needs to be central to the operation of the buildings."</p>
Cross Discipline Collaboration	16	<p>Several of the comments received highlighted the importance of creating spaces which encouraged cross collaboration and inclusivity across different art forms.</p>	<p>"It would be great to have such a facility in the city to encourage collaboration and bring a sense of community to this isolating profession."</p> <p>"A space to meet, network, plan, release campaigns and work on music would see great returns in our city."</p>
Collaboration with National and Local Organisations	15	<p>It was suggested by a number of respondents that it would be beneficial to engage with independent organisations in the local community.</p> <p>A number of representatives from the Music Alliance of Ireland (MAI) responded to the survey to highlight their support for the proposals and desire to engage and manage the proposed spaces.</p> <p>Additional responses emphasised the potential for SME's to be involved in the plans as well as local groups and schools to promote stronger links with the community.</p>	<p>"Creating and developing stronger links within the community under one creative campus."</p> <p>"The organisation of workspaces should engage with independent arts organisations and artist-led initiatives that have grassroots knowledge of the neighbourhood rather than major institutions."</p>
Soundproofing	14	<p>The need for sound proofing was a prominent suggestion raised by respondents.</p>	<p>"A space with a piano, adequate sound proofing, a good acoustic and good ventilation."</p>
Private Workspace Provision	12	<p>The provision of individual workspaces and studios for private work was suggested by respondents.</p> <p>One respondent suggested that a hot desking system could be included within the proposals.</p>	<p>"If DCC is designating these sites as artist workspaces, dedicated private artist workspaces need to be maintained as an integral component."</p> <p>"I would also love to see a shared hotdesking workspace for digital composers, with each 'hotdesk' having its own midi keyboard and computer space for composers to come and write, with a separate recording room nearby."</p>

Affordability	11	The need for affordable work spaces was emphasised in the feedback. A number of respondents referred to the lack of affordable spaces that are currently available within Dublin.	<p>“There is a shortage of affordable, appropriate rehearsal space throughout the city (the LAB being a notable exception).”</p> <p>“As an artist, having access to work spaces affordable and sustainable is a major priority.”</p> <p>“The closure of creative spaces, coupled with drastically rising rents, have meant that many artists who once had home studios, as well as rented studios, can no longer afford either.”</p>
Accessibility	9	Several respondents highlighted that the spaces should be accessible to everybody including artists, audience members and workers.	“Every space 100% needs to be fully accessible to everyone, whether that person is an audience member or an artist or another worker.”
Community Hub	9	The need for a community hub was emphasised within the feedback in order to provide a dedicated space for engagement among artists and the community.	<p>“Space dedicated to civic/local/community engagement work.</p> <p>“A community hub for the music sector.”</p>
Office Space	9	Respondents suggested that office space should be included within the proposals.	“It should include space for: performance, rehearsals, studios, recording, post-production, offices, etc.”
24 Hour Access	8	A number of respondents indicated that there should be 24 hour access to the proposed sites.	“Dublin needs a space which considers 24 hr access / usage.”
Bar/Cafe	8	Respondents stated that there should be a commercial offering within the proposed buildings which could include a Bar/Café.	“Also, there should be a commerce side to the building, so the idea of a permanent cafe/bar should be seriously considered (to also help to create a certain communal atmosphere).”
Security of Tenancy	8	Security of tenancy through the provision of long term leases was suggested in the feedback.	“Dublin needs a space which considers long lease length.”
Shared Resource Space	8	Respondents requested that shared resource spaces should be included within the design proposals.	“Dublin needs a space which functions as a shared resource space.”
Transport Links	8	The need for good transport links to access the sites was highlighted.	Central / with good transport links
Circus/Street Arts Facilities	7	<p>A number of the comments related to the suitability of the proposals for Circus and Street Arts.</p> <p>Several respondents stated that the proposals should promote the cross collaboration of art forms and consider the space required for creative and street arts, such as ceiling heights.</p>	<p>“An important consideration would be that every artform be supported within the creative campus. There are artforms that are lacking appropriate and dedicated spaces such as the Street arts, Circus and Spectacle sector, for both training and creation possibilities.”</p> <p>“I believe aerial & street arts should be incorporated into the plans as they are often over looked & sidelined.”</p>

Management	7	<p>The management of the buildings was raised in order to ensure that the spaces are fully utilised.</p> <p>Several respondents from established organisations, including the Music Alliance of Ireland, offered their assistance to help form of an effective management structure.</p>	<p>"This issue is partly to do with the design, but also about how the building is managed, presented and shared."</p> <p>"I would also mention that Music Alliance of Ireland would have the capability to put together an effective management structure for the Merchants Quay space."</p>
Storage	7	<p>The requirement for adequate storage space was identified by a number of respondents.</p>	<p>"I believe that Dublin, as our capital city, needs a dedicated Hub for the development and performance of music, that encompasses space for rehearsal, workshops, hot-desking, meeting room for music organisations, recording and post-production studios, storage."</p>
Storage	7	<p>The requirement for adequate storage space was identified by a number of respondents.</p>	<p>"I believe that Dublin, as our capital city, needs a dedicated Hub for the development and performance of music, that encompasses space for rehearsal, workshops, hot-desking, meeting room for music organisations, recording and post-production studios, storage."</p>
Visibility	7	<p>Respondents suggested that the campus should be highly visible as a cultural asset for the city.</p>	<p>"We need a space which considers high visibility - a cultural asset for the city."</p>
Limited provision of workspaces	6	<p>The limited provision of large rehearsal and work spaces within Dublin was raised by a number of respondents who were keen to see such spaces included within the proposals.</p>	<p>"I would say that having good access to the large rooms is really important."</p>
Multipurpose Space	6	<p>It was suggested that multipurpose spaces should be incorporated to accommodate a variety of art forms.</p>	<p>"An important consideration would be that every artform be supported within the creative campus. There are artforms that are lacking appropriate and dedicated spaces."</p>
Deliverability	5	<p>A number of respondents questioned the deliverability of the scheme on time and within budget.</p> <p>One respondent referenced previous schemes which have not fulfilled their potential.</p>	<p>"The city arts centre spent years and tens of thousands, if not hundreds, to now own (?) a building on the quays that has never been used in any meaningful way."</p>
Disabled Access and Inclusion	4	<p>Respondents emphasised that there is a need to proactively engage with disabled artists and also provide accessible facilities.</p>	<p>"Disabled artists should be consulted on design, a protocol for work produced by disabled artists and disabled people in key positions working in and on these buildings."</p> <p>"In addition to that having staff with awareness training also goes a long way, better yet have a disabled artist on staff, perhaps someone from the local community."</p>
Green Space	4	<p>A number of comments requested that green spaces were included within the proposals.</p>	<p>"Please include a Green Area."</p>

Sustainability	4	The principle of sustainability was prioritised by a group of respondents who wanted to see the principle drive the design process.	"I hope that the idea of sustainability will genuinely be the main driver of the designs and construction as well as the long-term use of the buildings."
Variety of Spaces	4	The inclusion of a variety of different sized spaces to cater for multiple art forms and uses was suggested for inclusion.	"We need large and small rehearsal spaces, performance spaces, spaces where we can teach and work and record, consult and collaborate." "There are currently very few (if any) dedicated spaces for musicians and ensembles to rehearse, experiment, produce new work and perform it in a high quality, fully functioning space."
Utilities & Facilities	4	Respondents stated that the proposals would benefit from the inclusion of a communal kitchen, changing facilities and sink spaces.	"A cafe space opening out to the public terrace would make more sense for public use of the building and use of space, or a communal kitchen opening out onto the terrace." "We are not sure if there are shower facilities included in the plans which would be a consideration for physical artists."
Car Park	3	It was suggested that the premises should include car parking provision to allow for the transportation of materials and to improve accessibility to the site.	"While transport is in its current state, sufficient planning needs to be made for parking, and this is also a huge accessibility issue as even with good public transport supports in place, it won't typically work well for disabled artists carrying instruments or other equipment."
Equipment Space	3	Respondents sort assurances that reasonable provisions would be made to cater for large equipment such as kilns and power tools.	"I am concerned about the suitability of the workspaces on Bridgefoot st for people who use powertools." "I hope that the proposal takes into account this performance use, along with the equipment requirements."
Negative impact on the Local Community	3	A few comments suggested that the proposals would be detrimental to the local community and would follow in the footsteps of other 'costly regeneration projects'. One respondent was particularly concerned that the Merchant's Quay site would put pressure on the local resources which support the homeless community.	"Is this another gentrification Project only to cause locals to be pushed out of their area in the years to come by overpriced housing and create a new urban zone that developers will be the only ones who gain?" "My only concern would be that the development of the Merchant's Quay site would put pressure on MQI (a much needed resource for homeless people in Dublin 8) to move, in order to make artists from leafier parts of the city feel ""safe""."
Retail Space	3	It was suggested that retail space should be delivered to generate commercial revenue and support local SME's and traders.	"There should be a commerce side to the building, so the idea of a permanent cafe/bar should be seriously considered (to also help to create a certain communal atmosphere), as well as the ability to include pop-up traders, particularly on 'off-peak' times of the year."
Bicycle Lanes/ Parking	2	Two respondents wanted to see secure bicycle parking and more bicycle lanes included as part of the proposals.	"Can you please consider secure bicycle parking for residents and visitors at the venue and in the venues spaces?"

Creative Hub	2	The principle of a creative hub was supported within the feedback.	"Dublin needs a creative hub."
Exterior Design	2	We received comments requesting that outside space is incorporated within the proposals. One respondent suggested that artists' work should be displayed on the outside of the buildings.	"It would be nice to have a place where you can take advantage of the beautiful long summer days." "Can you bring in a planning strategy whereby all the material the buildings are wrapped in during construction must display in huge print form the paintings/designs of local artists or students ...pensioners ...known and unknown artists..."
Childcare Facilities	1	The lack of childcare facilities was raised as a downfall of the proposals.	"An allocation for a childcare space would be absolutely life changing for many artists and I am of the opinion that it is an essential inclusion in such a hub."
Prioritise existing venues	1	One respondent did not agree with the proposals and believed there should be an emphasis on using existing facilities and directing resources towards established venues outside of Dublin that require development	"Arts venues outside Dublin need urgent infrastructural development, so that they can offer their local populations access to the arts, and a chance at a meaningful life."
Not-for-profit	1	One respondent suggested that facilities should be rented out on a not-for-profit basis.	"I believe the venue and studios should be leased out on a long-term basis to the music sector, on a not-for-profit basis."
Open Building Approach	1	One respondent suggested that an 'Open Building' approach should be included within outline designs to demonstrate openness.	"Also, in general I feel I need to insist more on the centrality of 'open building' approaches (at multiple scales) that should be adopted as central to this initiative, as a prototype for all building in the Liberties."
Public Housing	1	It was suggested that the sites should be used to deliver public housing.	"Build 100% public housing on these sites"
Film Facilities	1	One respondent submitted a proposal for 'An Amendment to the current plans: Microcinema and filmmaking hub at the Liberties Creative Campus', to include provision for filmmakers.	A copy of the proposal can be viewed in Appendix 1.

Table 2.1 – Comments relating to Bridgefoot Street

Theme	Number of References	Summary of Comment	Indicative Responses
Gallery and Exhibition space	10	A number of respondents believed that the proposed gallery space was poorly designed and did not provide enough space.	<p>“The gallery space would be better suited in the cafe space on the ground floor for a better flow of people and a connection to the theatre; or in the 1st floor multipurpose space.”</p> <p>“The exhibition space in the Bridgefoot street site is very poorly designed and very limited. The placement of a lift in the middle of the space will be very disruptive and eliminate the possibility of that space being used for many types.”</p>
Private workspaces	4	Several comments related to the allocation of workspaces. It was suggested that the proposals included too many private workspaces and whilst they were integral to the design, that there should be a larger quantity of multi-purpose, flexible spaces.	<p>“It would be great if the Bridgefoot street proposal would include less working spaces (there are a couple of coworking spaces just around the corner) and more cultural/socializing spaces.”</p> <p>“It looks as though the Bridgefoot Street proposal is dominated by the workspaces.”</p>
Visual arts	3	Several respondents stated that Bridgefoot Street should focus exclusively on visual arts and the Merchants Quay site should be used for performing arts.	<p>“Would it be better to focus Bridgefoot on visual arts and Merchants Quay on performing arts?”</p>

Table 2.2 – Comments relating to Merchants Quay

Theme	Number of References	Summary of Comment	Indicative Responses
Performing Arts	7	Several respondents agreed that the Merchants Quay site should be used exclusively as a performing arts venue, with a number of individuals preferring the site as a dedicated music hub.	<p>"I am in support of the creation of a dedicated music hub for city at the proposed site on Merchant's Quay."</p> <p>"Would it be better to focus Bridgefoot on visual arts and Merchants Quay on performing arts?"</p>
Storage space	5	It was noted that the proposals for Merchants Quay contained a large amount of storage space which could be used for other uses such as music suites.	<p>"All of the basement is used as storage - could this be reviewed as suitable for media suites for music and AV as well as storage."</p> <p>"The Merchants Quay space contains a very very large amount of storage space. Some of this space might be better used."</p>
Catering provision	4	A number of respondents believed that the Merchants Quay site should include a café/bar space which would complement the roof garden and theatre.	<p>"This venue doesn't have a cafe/bar for the event space or roof garden which will ensure its usefulness as a venue."</p> <p>"The theatre/venue on Merchants Quay should definitely have a cafe/bar."</p>
Music facilities	2	Respondents highlighted the need for music facilities that include a variety of flexible performance and rehearsal spaces, in addition to storage facilities and provisions for sound and lighting.	<p>"There is no built space for a sound/lighting operation point, meaning it will be a makeshift set up within the theatre space itself."</p> <p>"Facilities for music are sorely needed in Dublin City. These included small and medium size performance spaces, sound proof and fully equipped rehearsal facilities, solo practice rooms and instrument storage facilities."</p>
Theatre	2	<p>The layout of the designated theatre space within Merchants Quay was questioned with one respondent calling it poorly designed.</p> <p>It was emphasised that the theatre should be allocated exclusively as a theatre/venue.</p>	<p>"The theatre should be allocated as a theatre/venue. It's important for this space to be inclusive to smaller organisations and groups for events, gigs, concerts, nightlife to balance the loss of spaces such as the Tivoli Theatre in the area."</p>
Rooftop Garden	1	One respondent suggested that the rooftop garden could be enhanced through the provision of canopies and a raised platform.	<p>The rooftop garden would be enhanced for use with the insertion of a raised platform area and partial cover through canopies for performance/music for events</p>

Appendix 1: Media Urbanism Ltd - Proposed amendment to the current plans

MICROCINEMA AND FILMMAKING HUB AT THE LIBERTIES CREATIVE CAMPUS

Media Urbanism is a forward-looking, solutions-oriented company, focused on growing and improving the interaction of media, the arts, and cities.

One of the greatest challenges of the 21st century is to make cities and towns that are creative, sustainable, inclusive, and diverse. In approaching this challenge, we focus on increasing the benefits of media and the arts to cities and towns, working with citizens, organizations, government, and businesses to increase the contribution of media and the arts to the urban economy, society, and everyday life.

Contents of this proposal

- I. Media and public space after Covid: Rebuilding community, society, and the city
 - II. Brief survey of Dublin's moving image landscape
 - III. The Exhibition Space: Microcinema
 - IV. The Workshop Space: A Filmmaking Hub
- V. Specific suggestions for amendments to the existing plans for the Liberties Creative Campus

Goals of this proposal

1. Improve quality of life for Dubliners, especially in the Liberties
2. Increase social cohesion through art and communication
3. Support artists' and community-based filmmaking
4. Ensure the city's arts provision keeps pace with technological change
 5. Increase educational opportunities
 6. Increase cultural tourism

I. MEDIA AND PUBLIC SPACE AFTER COVID: REBUILDING COMMUNITY, SOCIETY, AND THE CITY

In every major social crisis of the past one hundred years, people have predicted the end of cities and worried that life would never be the same again. After 1918, 1945, 1968, 2001, 2008, cities always came back, often stronger than before. Post-Covid will be the same.

There will be a release of pent-up demand, a re-engagement with the city, its public spaces, communities, and everyday life. The key will be to harness their natural energy.

Every successful city for three thousand years has invested in the arts and made them prominent, for quality of life, productivity, and social cohesion. In modern times, moving images have been the key. The death of cinema has been greatly exaggerated. Big tech and start-ups propose the future is mobile and streaming, but after Covid making and enjoying visual media in public space will be an important way of rebuilding community, society, and the city.

Commercial cinema will look after itself. To address an urgent public need, cities should invest in artists' and community-based film and video.

This investment will produce multiple direct and indirect social, cultural, and economic benefits for artists, filmmakers, and their audiences, for community groups and local institutions, for city government, and for the city's image and self-image.

MICROCINEMA EXAMPLES



Clockwise from top left: Kinosaurus (Jakarta); Luminar Theater (Brooklyn);
Cinema Detroit (Detroit); Filmhuis Cavia (Amsterdam)

IV. THE WORKSHOP SPACE: A FILMMAKING HUB

We envision the Liberties Creative Campus as an important hub for multiple kinds of film and video practice. Filmmaking supported by the Liberties Creative Campus would be of two broad types:

- 1) Artists' film and video, and experimental film
 - There are several groups in Dublin producing interesting work, with scope for growth and greater coordination. The hub would act as a resource and advice center, gathering point, and production facility.
 - With the microcinema as an exhibition venue, this would constitute significant new support for this field while enriching Dublin's art scene as a whole.
- 2) Participatory video
 - The filmmakers would be local residents, supervised by experienced personnel, and creating short documentary films on social issues out and about in the city. The hub would provide them with basic training on cameras, sound equipment, and video editing. Screenings of the resulting films would become community events at the microcinema.
 - Participatory video has a fifty-year track record of adding value and providing insight in urban and rural development around the world. It aids communities by increasing their visibility and focusing public attention on the issues that concern them. It aids city government by providing a more accurate community-driven reflection of people's lives, social problems, and diversity. See sources below for examples.

Locating both types of filmmaking in one facility will lower the risk of alienation between artists and local residents, the creative campus, and the surrounding neighborhood, increasing transparency and inclusivity. At a minimum, space would be required for video editing workstations, a sound recording booth, and equipment storage. Ideally the hub would also include small studio space. Hardware costs would require further research, but a variety of 4K DV cameras would be required, suitable for use both by novices and experienced videographers. PV can also be done on an ultra-low budget using local residents' own mobile technology (smartphones and cameras), with results of a lower technical quality but also informative and empowering (eg. the Bilbao-based Ubiqa).

V. SPECIFIC SUGGESTIONS FOR AMENDMENTS TO THE EXISTING PLANS FOR THE LIBERTIES CREATIVE CAMPUS

OBFA's plans for the Liberties Creative Campus are an excellent first draft. We respectfully suggest some improvements.

The proposed sites are appealing, though differently – Merchant's Quay is more central and visible but adaptive reuse of an older building, some of whose spaces may not be ideal; Bridgefoot Street allows for a new build and more of a statement but is less central and relatively secluded, set back from the river.

- Bridgefoot Street seems slightly more favorable for a microcinema and filmmaking hub – the plan for a mini theatre on the ground floor is a start, but ought to be bigger (30-50 seats for a microcinema) with mini-studio/teaching room, editing suites, and filmmaking storage; these would probably require one of the sets of four workspaces currently planned for the upper floors.
- Merchant's Quay has no mini-theatre and its larger theatre is currently configured for theatrical performance with a large apron stage and seating on three sides; moving image exhibition would require redesign of the seating, or flexible seating, reduction of the wings, and installation of a permanent or retractable screen; alternatively, one of the multi-purpose rooms or workspaces might be redesigned for microcinema use; on this site, 2-3 workspaces together would suffice for the filmmaking hub, or the cluster of small rooms in the basement which have the advantage for filmmaking of being secluded and (presumably) quiet.

Adding moving image provision of this kind would not be removing workspaces from the campus; spaces for moving image would still be workspaces; so there would be an increase in the range of types of workspace provided.

- By our count, there are 41 artists' studios in central Dublin that are publicly-supported and competitively allocated – 4 at IMMA, 11 in the Fire Station, 26 in Temple Bar Studios; OBFA's plans propose 13 more for Merchant's Quay and 12 for Bridgefoot Street.
- Notwithstanding the impressive consultation process underpinning the plans, and the demand for studio space that clearly exists among artists, we believe that either site would benefit from the dedication of a small number of workspaces for moving image use.
- There would be further implications in the need for purchase/leasing of filmmaking equipment, and for staffing (e.g. AV technicians, moving image curators), but the new facility would see Dublin catch up with other cities in moving image provision and the rewards would be significant.

Sources on Participatory video

[Kelley, M. Collaborative Digital Techniques and Urban Neighborhood Revitalization, Social Work, April 2011](#)

[Hearne, B. and M. Murphy. Participatory Action Research: a Human Rights and Capability Approach: A PAHRCA HANDBOOK for NGOs and Vulnerable Groups. ReInvest Project and Maynooth University Social Sciences Institute, 2019](#)

[David Montero Sánchez. Rethinking participatory video in the times of YouTube. Media, Culture & Society, 43:1, 2021](#)

[Chávez, V. et al. A Bridge Between Communities: Video-Making Using Principles of Community-Based Participatory Research. Health Promotion Practice, 5:4, 2004](#)

[Lynch, N. and C. Lynch. Insights into Participatory Video a Handbook for the Field. InsightShare, 2006](#)

Dublin-based artists' film and video, and experimental filmmaking groups

[Artists' and Experimental Moving Image \(Dublin\)](#)

[Experimental Film Club \(Dublin\)](#)

[Experimental Film Society \(Dublin\)](#)

[Kunsthaus ACUD \(Berlin\)](#)

[Calgary Society of Independent Filmmakers](#)

Sample microcinemas (pictured in this document)

[Luminal Theater, Brooklyn](#)

[Filmhuis Cavia, Amsterdam](#)

[Kinosaurus, Jakarta](#)

[Cinema Detroit, Detroit](#)

The authors of this briefing document have no affiliation with any of the organizations or businesses named within it.

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Appendix 2: Liberties Cultural Association - Feedback

Hi

It was lovely to be involved in the consultation process and thanks for including our contribution in the published report. To see the Old St. Anthony's Hall on Merchants Quay open again would be great, especially now that the local community has lost access to the Tivoli, Carman's Hall and the Rupert Guinness Theatre in recent times. Here are our observations about the Concept Plans.

We don't mean to sound critical, and we are hugely supportive of the Artists Workspaces and the Liberties Creative Campus.

The main concern about 8 and 9 Merchants Quay is simply the location. Its on the Quays, at best the periphery of the Liberties and is not on any of the main tourist thoroughfares, nor is there much local footfall there.

The Bridgefoot Street plans also look great but are nearer Bridgefoot Street than we thought and seems not to include any of the Marshalsea. Is it the vacant Car Park site behind Morellis chipper?

With regard to NCAD, sadly NCAD have not prioritised community engagement. For the last years 2 of the 3 gates of NCAD are permanently locked and I am unsure if locals have ever been officially allowed on the grounds.

Would NCAD be amenable to opening up some of their spaces for community use in the short term as an act of goodwill?

The Fire Station Theatre that fronts onto Thomas Street is an amazing space. Red Square has huge potential, especially in Covid times. The Kiln, that fronts onto Oliver Bond Street, is another incredible space.

The Marshalsea site and the large tract of land owned by NCAD, from Thomas Street to Oliver Bond Street and from The Clock to LIDL may be areas for future discussions. Could the Rupert Guinness Theatre and the Bank of Ireland site on Watling Street be available as well?

Please keep us updated and informed,

It is much appreciated by us all that you are taking community engagement so seriously,

James Madigan and Kim Olin

Liberties Cultural Association

Appendix 3: Native Uses - A Multi Use Venue proposal

Hi

Thank you for your reply.

Yes I would like to share something I have been working on for a number of years which may be of interest to DCC and Mr Yeates in the Arts Office.

I have been working on a model that would suit a development like this for a number of years so now that DCC have agreed to explore using one of their spaces I would like to be on their radar as a potential concept for this space.

I have created a PDF of my concept which can be viewed here

As I said in previous mail, I seem to have developed a useful mix of education, experience and skills for developing spaces like this.

Thank you

Michael

A Multi Use Venue



Native Spaces- A Multi Use Venue

The Native Spaces Multi Use Venue (NSMUV) creates a workspace and marketplace for entrepreneurs, innovators and creatives in an urban environment..

This model encourages independent business owners, artisans, craft workers and creative communities to share a space, build a community & collaborate.

A NSMUV could be located in an CBD retail centre, a suburban industrial zoned area or in an area currently under developed such as Dublin Port .This model can be scaled up or down to fit any space or community. A NSMUV model would work in a rural market town or in a recently built building that wishes to change its use from (hotel, office, industrial) to a financially viable and vibrant cultural space.

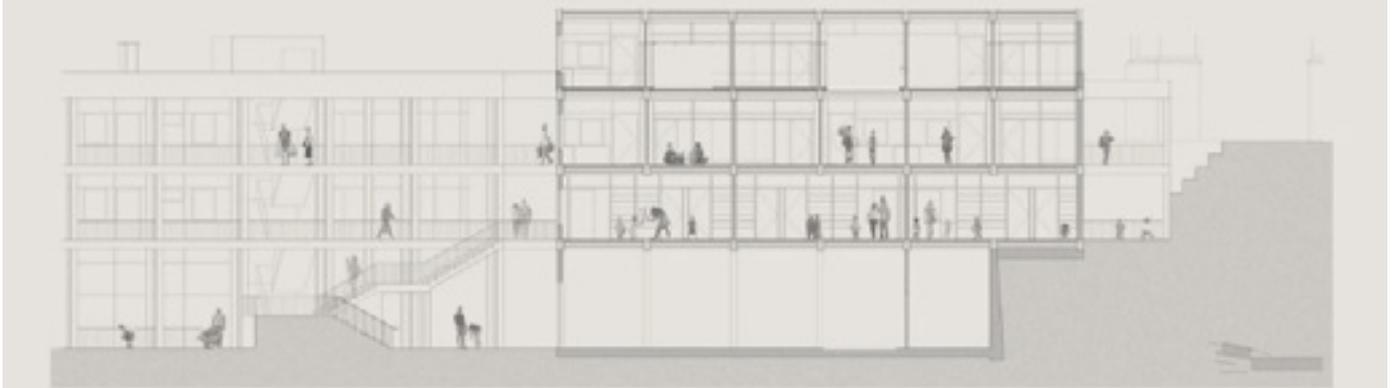
The multi use venue model is used in the Tech Insutry and is becoming more common in Europe with a great example found in Dè Skool in Amsterdam. This space operates as a dance club, a restaurant, a cafe, studios and also hot desks for the gig economy workers.



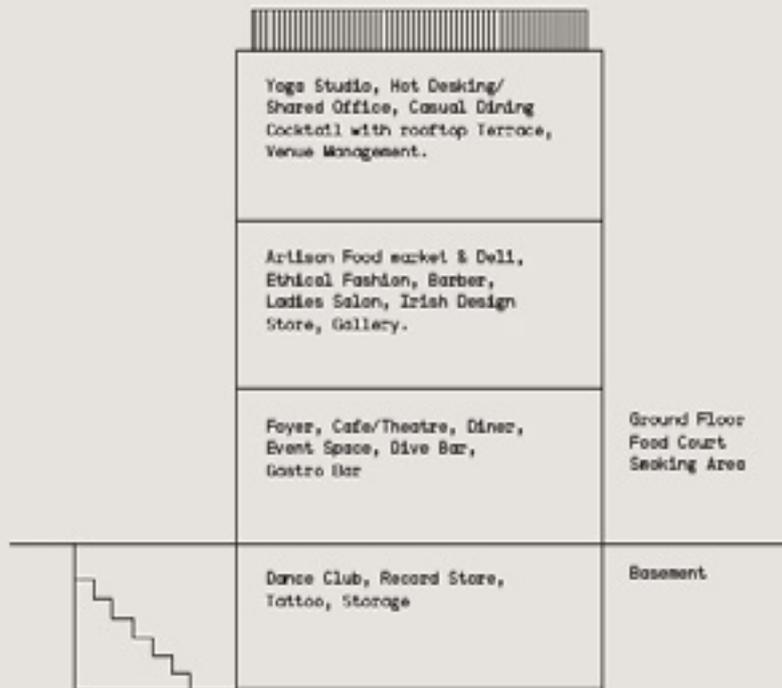


Internal Layout of A Native Spaces Multi Use Venue:

- Foyeur (reception desk)
- Cafe (Daytime) & Theatre (Night Time) (live music, performance, comedy) (80 people)
- Independent Retail Unit x 6
- Diner (evening till breakfast)
- Dive Bar (no TV, drug x 3, craft beer & cocktails)
- Event space (Can be subdivided into 3 separate spaces, 900 standing in total, 80 seating in each section) community, debate, performance, pop up dinner, live sport, bingo, market, gallery, exhibition, brand launches, corporate events)
- Dance Club (600 people) adjoining Smoking area (space 300 people)
- Sustainable food court (food trucks) 3 Pop Up Spaces on rotation
- Wellness studio (yoga, movement, Ju Jitsu) (30 people)
- Gallery & Exhibition space (80 people)
- Community meeting room with kitchen, (30 people)
- Shared office Space/Hot Desking (Design Sprint Studio, meeting room, AV space for presentation and pitches) 80 people
- Venue Management offices (directors, financial, production, event planning, bar manager, food manager, promoter, PR & Marketing)
- Storage
- Grow Dome (cocktails, herbs, seasoning)



Internal Layout of A Native Spaces Multi Use Venue:



Development Considerations

- A MUV model is dynamic so can be used to repurpose empty buildings or to change the use of an existing building into a cultural hub.
- A specific planning classification of a 'Multi Use Venue' in Irish planning Law will also help with establishing fire and safety standards.
- Building materials used can be upcycled, sustainable and sourced as local as possible.
- A mix of energy sources such as biogas, solar, wood fire, natural gas and mains will ensure an efficient energy mix.
- Alcohol Licensing should be modernised in Ireland for this model to work to its maximum potential.
- A cohesive sustainable management plan for the venue can be created. This will cover waste management, water collection and energy use.
- As part of the rollout of fibre internet in Ireland there has been a number of hubs selected for the first tranche of fibre. A NCMUV could be a Fibre Internet Hub that houses a number of startup businesses which in turn provides a return on investment to the state.
- Smart Building (Tech/Integrated)
- Transport access to the venue is important. 24 hour public transport, safe cycle, secure walking and a regulated taxi pick up rank.



Why a Native Spaces Multi Use Venue?



- A flexible and adaptable business model is required in arts, hospitality and craft sectors that can provide a platform for new entrants into the market or others wishing to grow their artisan/craft business as part of a like minded community.
- A MUV establishes a piece for the creative community, craftspeople and artisans within contemporary society, current planning policy and property market.
- Native Spaces MUV can bridge the gap between international finance and the native creative community. This vehicle can streamline international capital into the source of innovation and creativity in each city.
- By building a community of independent businesses that agree to work to a shared vision an innovative business model for bootstrap start ups emerges.
- The MUV can allow the community to work together in sharing running costs of a space, ensuring space is used to its maximum and that skill & resource sharing can become commonplace.
- Space for creatives to fail and learn (Bernard Shaw Ripples) and to grow.
- Freedom of Expression for positive mental health of creatives and innovators.
- Social space for the tech community to connect and collaborate with Dublin's creative community.
- Space for tourists to engage with creative community and to purchase hand crafted and artisan produce
- Framework and access for community members to creative studio for creative direction & business consultancy to help grow each community member.
- Access for community members to an accounts and legal team so they can focus on their craft.
- Dedicated marketing team for space and all the community members will help ensure integrity of the product/service is maintained as community members grow.
- Bespoke software for internal communication, POS, reserving space and booking events and financial transfers within the venue.
- This model presents an opportunity for an internal financial arrangement between community members to assist facilitate growth and collaboration can be encouraged.
- By monetising Sweet Equity/Favour Bank in the creative community will help track growth of the community and help evaluate true cost if a start up.
- Sustainability (Renewable power, block chain opportunity go resource management, youth employment, local multiplier effect from employment, term to fridge, production value added in rural communities to base product).

Thank You For Reading

Any questions don't hesitate to contact:
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For more information or to set up a meeting please contact one of the team.

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