

Creative Campus

Evaluation of Project

2011 – 2015

Evaluation conducted by Katy Fitzpatrick for South Dublin County Council Arts Office

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Creative Campus, 2011 – 2015

Summary of Annual Project Reports

About

Creative Campus is a South Dublin County Council Arts Office (SDCC) and Tallaght Community Arts (TCA) community based visual arts initiative that has been running annually in Tallaght (bar 2012) since 2011.

The genesis for the project came from recommendations made by Tallaght Youth Arts Forum (2009 – 2010) to create more ‘... opportunities [for young people] outside the formal education system to build skills to not only create work, but also in planning events and exhibitions.’ This need for quality arts experiences and dedicated youth arts spaces as outlined by TYAF has also been highlighted in the FYI Arts Council report (2010).¹

The project identified a need to support early career artists by giving them an opportunity to work collaboratively with professional artists and their peers. From the start the project also highlighted the need for a public engagement, and in particular a schools, programme (this aspect of the programme is covered separately below). In its first year the project engaged emerging artists through an open call, and with the support of a Creative Director and two support artists, the group developed a site specific exhibition for the Big Picture space in Tallaght.²

After this initial year, the project partners took time to reflect on and reconsider the parameters of the programme and its purpose. It was felt that by engaging with a third level institution, in this instance the National College of Art and Design (NCAD), it would: demonstrate that Tallaght is an area with much creative potential for artists; support emerging artists to develop their skills in a real life context; and provide opportunities for third level students to act as role models to second level pupils³, thus generating an awareness of third level study and career opportunities in the arts in the local area. The partnership with NCAD has allowed TCA and SDCC to broaden the scope of the project due to the expertise and other resources provided by NCAD’s students and staff. Equally it has allowed NCAD to connect with new schools in the South County Dublin area and has provided a platform for students to gain real life experiences.

Initially the project was an elective module for 3rd year NCAD students and due to the changes in the NCAD from a 4 year to a 3 year Bachelor’s Degree in Fine Arts, in 2015 the participants were 2nd year students. The project also changed in 2015 from an elective to a core module. These changes have thrown up questions for the programme in terms of student’s maturity and motivations to take part in a project such as this.

The timing of the project has been addressed and adapted over the 4 years. Initially taking place over the summer and into the autumn, this then moved to January - May, linking in with term time for the NCAD students. It has been highlighted in the annual reports how the project needs to be cognisant of students’ end of year exhibition and other deadlines, as well as linking in with the secondary school timetable. One might question, given the site specific and relational nature of the

¹ This topic will be re-addressed in the findings / recommendation section.

² Further details on each project can be found in the annual reports, which are available by request

³ For the purpose of this report we will use the terms students when referring to the 3rd level art student participants and pupils when referring to the 2nd level participants.

work whether a 4 month duration is perhaps too short a time to engage with a community and context, **and** create work as a response.

An important aspect of the programme is the role of the Curator and Project Manager, as defined subsequent to year one of the project. In short their role is to create a theme or brief for students to respond to, support the development, creation and installation of site-specific work, support students to connect with communities as relevant to the context, and support them in delivering a variety of educational events, such as tours and workshops. A key element of the curatorial role is devising the annual theme for the project in response to the partner venue/site, which to date have been technology and the Big Picture Space (2011), South Dublin County's industrial heritage (2013), storytelling and the County Library (2014), and community engagement in relation to the specificity of Dominic's Community Centre (2015). The site has been selected by the two partner organisations (SDCC and TCA) and since 2013 (i.e. for 2014 and 2015 exhibitions), without a Youth Arts Officer in post, by TCA.

Space / Site

In 2011 the project took place in The Big Picture in Tallaght, proposed initially as a potential ongoing space for the project. However, it was realised that due to a variety of practical reasons, it was not an ideal ongoing creative hub for a visual art project such as this. Since then the project has changed space annually with a view that it provides a new platform for 3rd level pupils and curators to respond to, and a new site specific experience for the 2nd level pupils. By using non-gallery venues, it gives the students the experience of working in new contexts, and equally it show pupils that art is not only confined to being exhibited in a gallery. The change of location also allows the partners to engage with new audiences, building the profile locally of the project and partners, and bringing contemporary art practice to a range of diverse communities. Highlighted in all projects is the need to consider audience and site in the development of the work. Locations in the last 3 years have been The Square Shopping Centre, Tallaght (2013), County Library, Tallaght (2014), and Dominic's Community Centre (2015).

Art Students - motivation

To date students participating in the project have expressed an interest in: working collaboratively with peers; gaining new experience of creating site specific work; having a residency in a non-traditional art space; engaging with context in the formation of new work; learning new artistic techniques; exhibiting work publicly to a high standard; developing practical skills around marketing and curating an exhibition and programme; and developing skills in working with diverse audiences and facilitating workshops, in particular with school children. Also noted was peer learning and mentoring from experienced curators/project managers.

In terms of their professional development students in 2014 felt they had gained experience in making site-specific and public art work, in working collaboratively and independently, in creating work to a brief, and in facilitating and working with the public.

Responses from participating students from 2014 to 2015 in terms of their motivations to take the elective/module were noticeably different. In 2014 some students had been recommended the project by peers who had previously participated. They saw the project as a unique opportunity and were interested in the theme, working in a site-specific and public context, and working with community and school groups. In 2015 more than half stated the module was selected for them, however they equally expressed an interest in working collaboratively, saw the project as beneficial for their future practice, and an opportunity to work in a different context. These responses perhaps

reflect the different ages of the students, as well as the shift from an elective to a core module, offered as one of several options.

Aims & Objectives

The initial aim of the project was to provide emerging artists with the opportunity to develop their creative skills and experiences outside of formal learning structures and to collaborate with other artists. In partnership with NCAD the aim was adapted, to: support emerging artists who are students at NCAD to create a high quality site-specific work that engages in a dialogue with the context of South Dublin County and second level students.

In addition the project aims to: support and develop students who are interested in interdisciplinary, relational, site specific contemporary practices; introduce second level pupils to the world of contemporary visual art practice and the range of media and approaches that an artist working today might take; and build awareness in pupils about third level study and possible careers in the arts. Collaborative work, as well as creating site specific work in a non-traditional gallery space were also key objectives in the initial and all subsequent years. A final objective is the mediation and creation of the work for and with a wider audience, with secondary schools being identified as a key group, as well as the wider community as relevant to the context.

Partner & Partner Venue Perspectives

This aspect of the evaluation will be further probed in this report. However, it should be noted that the project is dependent on the contribution from all partners and stakeholders. Each brings their own perspective, experiences, and community connections, as well as their institutional priorities.

In relation to the partner venues previous project reports highlight the following responses: The Square Shopping Centre, Tallaght viewed the project in a positive light and the staff were clearly supportive. Equally Tallaght Library saw the benefits of the project in terms of: viewing the library as a hub for culture and creativity in the community; an opportunity to connect with outside agencies and new initiatives; and to further develop and complement their ongoing work with secondary schools. The Senior Librarian also highlighted the ripple effect the project had, in terms of public engagement and primary school class responses when visiting the library. The library requested to keep a number of the artworks for the venue and expressed an interest in working again with the project. Dominic's Community Centre viewed the intergenerational aspect of the project and the positive impact that it had for all involved (from their board members to the diverse audiences who visit the centre) highlights of the project. They also flagged their ongoing relationship with Tallaght Community Arts as key to the project's success.

Public Engagement

Given the scale and scope of creating a site specific exhibition, it is ambitious to concurrently develop a public engagement programme. This programme varied annually and has included: tours and workshops for second level pupils and other young people (before and during the exhibition); a portfolio information day for pupils; a visit to NCAD and on site workshops for pupils; various engagements with communities as relevant to context and theme (for example in the development of the work); as well as tours and other public events during the run of the exhibition.

Students need for support and training by the Creative Campus team to engage with the public and in particular schools has been addressed and has developed along with the programme. One

ongoing issue for students is how to juggle making the work with the public engagement aspects of the programme.

Creative Campus provides a unique opportunity for second level pupils to engage with 3rd level art students, who are not much older, as role models. This engagement gives them a clear and real life picture of what it is like to go to art school. It also demonstrates the range of career opportunities (perhaps unknown or unconsidered before) for second level pupils and shows the different ways that they can engage with the arts.

As demonstrated by the growth in school visits in year one and two, and positive feedback from teachers, there is an interest, a need and a capacity for this kind of project in South Dublin. This is despite limitations posed by transport costs, cost of teacher supervision etc. Second level pupils also came outside of school hours to attend workshops and exhibition openings. It should also be noted that the expertise of TCA and SDCC, and their existing relationships with schools in the local area plays a major part in these developments, as does the introduction of NCAD as a partner organisation. The introduction by the Project Manager of the project in schools and their designation as a key contact person for the schools is also key to this success.

In the first two years the tours and workshops were open to all secondary school pupils, and the notion of targeting a specific age group, or cohort of students (i.e. those that seem most interested) was proposed at the end of year two. One concern was that this could exclude students who may not yet know that they have an interest in pursuing a career in the arts, which may become apparent from participating in the project. Despite this there was a shift in the 2014 & 2015 projects to inviting two specific schools, and after an introductory talk in schools from the Creative Campus Project Manager, schools each selected thirteen (2014) and eight (2015) 5th year pupils to take part in workshops. Also included in 2014 was a tour and workshop for 6 pupils from each school of NCAD, a unique opportunity for pupils.

For schools who participated over the 4 years, the programme provided pupils with an (often) first time visit to an exhibition and an introduction to contemporary art practice and artists. It expanded their notion of what art is, moving away from traditional media and concepts. It also introduced them to site specific and socially engaged art practices. From pupil feedback we know the project gave them: a greater confidence to take risks in their art making and an understanding that making mistakes is part of the art process; a hands on experience of different art making processes; and the experience of working collaboratively with their peers. Also highlighted by pupils was the freedom they were given and how they could bring their own ideas to the task. Overall pupils expressed how they felt relaxed, creatively engaged and they enjoyed meeting new people in a social context. However, some did express frustration at not being able to experience all of the workshops that were on offer. One key response, in relation to the aims of the project, is that pupils reported an increased motivation to attend third level art college.

Although not a prescribed objective, pupils work (or a selection of the work) from the years 2 to 4 of the project was exhibited alongside the NCAD students work. This had a positive impact for those participants and the wider school community. In particular it supports teachers in making a case to principals etc on the value of taking part in the project.

The opportunity provided by the two scholarships for the portfolio summer course at NCAD is extremely important, and the positive impact this has for the schools and students, should also be noted.

To note

Over the four years since its inception the project has created high quality exhibitions and rich public engagement programmes (outlined above). Ongoing evaluation and assessment are key to the project, which has grown and developed each year as a response to the findings from the same. In particular I would like to highlight how resilient and ambitious the project is, considering the financial climate over the past 5 years and the potential impact from staff and institutional changes during that period.

It is clear from the evaluations that the main partners SDCC and TCA can often go unrecognised, and this needs to be considered in terms of future recommendations.

Evaluation Methodology

In addition to the project summary an evaluation of the project was conducted as follows:

- Interviews with key personnel from partner organisations Tony Fegan, Director TCA, Orla Scannell, Arts Officer SDCC, Philip Napier, Head of Fine Art, NCAD, Finola McTernan, Access Officer, NCAD and Tori Durrer, previous Youth Arts Officer SDCC who initiated the project with TCA
- Interviews with one secondary school teacher and one previous curator
- Surveys: completed by one curator, two project managers, one previous 3rd level student, and two previous partner venues (Tallaght Library and Dominic's Community Centre)

All interview and survey questions are included in the appendices.

It has been noted in the recommendations that a meeting between all project partners needs to take place to review this document and consider project aims and organisational priorities together before next steps are decided.

Evaluation Findings

It should be noted that overall, by all of those who responded, the project was viewed a success and for the most part met its aims and objectives. Below are the findings in relation to the different participants and stakeholders.

Impact for 2nd level pupils

Peer Exchange

... the project allowed us to underpin the work we were already doing with schools in Tallaght ... [it] gave another layer of engagement and experience, and of allowing 2nd level students to be mentored by 3rd level students, so from my perspective that was an integral part of the programme.

Finola McTernan

A major strength of the project was that pupils that have an interest in 3rd level studies, and in particular going to art college, get an opportunity to meet and engage with 3rd level students as role models. It was felt that engaging with more established practicing artists would create a different relationship and understanding. Their relative proximity in age, and 3rd level students being at the next stage of the pupils' progression/path, was also a strength. It allows for a much more meaningful and relevant peer exchange.

Pathways of Progression

Young people from broader Tallaght area when they have gone to 3rd level, NCAD or other colleges, they have been completely at a loss because the environment is so unfamiliar to them, and making that link and bridge in advance is an important bridge in the student progression.

Orla Scannell

Pupils learn about a different pathway of study and a different place to study, beyond IT Tallaght. Three pupils who have participated in the project have gone on to study the arts in 3rd level education. One pupil went on to Ballyfermot College, this pupil had taken part in a visit to NCAD for one day and in the workshops. This pupil along with one other pupil (who also went to NCAD for a day and won the portfolio scholarship) came forward for another project with TCA, and convinced their families to open their doors to artist Mary Burke to photograph and paint the interior of their homes as a part of House Portraits, thus demonstrating the way in which their engagement in Creative Campus created a wider ripple effect in their community. Creating positive experiences with the arts, such as the Creative Campus, means that pupils are more open to the next project that comes their way.

Creative Campus is a long term investment for secondary schools and their pupils, as you are dealing with complex generational changes that don't happen overnight, the pupils' experiences now may not have direct implications, but will potentially impact them a number of years later or even their own children later in life.

Encountering Contemporary Visual Arts Practice

Equally important in the feedback was the pupils' introduction to a wider range of visual arts practice, i.e. contemporary and site-specific art practice, and processes within a safe and familiar environment (local community centre, library etc). They see first-hand how an artist engages in a

process, and through attending the final exhibition, they get to see the outcomes of that process. It provides an opportunity to meet artists and engage in processes and learn skills that are generally not available to them in schools

For many pupils, up until participating in the project, they may only have had experiences in visiting traditional art galleries and taking part in school artist projects, so the Creative Campus provided them with the opportunity to see site specific work. In addition to this, pupils are visiting spaces that are already potentially familiar to them, so the perceived barriers that exist between them and art galleries or museums are not there, which means that pupils are less inhibited and it felt less intimidating. Overall it is positive for pupils to visit spaces and have experiences in the real world, outside of the school context, this supports them to have confidence to go to other places (such as NCAD) and arts venues in the city.

Benefits of Exhibition and Inclusion of Students work

The project facilitates pupils to look at their locality differently and some have had the chance to exhibit work, which has a positive impact. It was suggested that going forward a portfolio of the pupils work could be displayed, even if it is not exhibited in the same way as the other work, it shows the process and validates their work. It would also encourage families and friends to visit the exhibition, and have a potential knock on effect.

Benefit of Certificates to Summer Portfolio Course

Certificates for summer portfolio provides an incredible opportunity. It was suggested that having more than two places would be beneficial, as it means those students who attend have more of a peer network in an unfamiliar space.

Who & Why?

One query that arose is whether the aim of the project is to support those that are already on a path, or for those who do not yet know what that path is? The teacher interviewed felt it was important to support those that are already engaged or those that aren't engaged, but would benefit in terms of future ambitions/prospects.

Impact for teachers

Creative Campus provides an opportunity to connect with local arts organisations, create a local network and make links with a third level institution. The relationship with NCAD is an important aspect for teachers. The teacher who was interviewed has an ongoing relationship with TCA and calls it their 3rd classroom, relationship building over time within the wider TCA programme is integral to the success of the Creative Campus. Additionally their school took part in another project with NCAD's Education Students.

The project often positively reinforces what teachers are already saying/teaching in their classrooms.

The teacher interviewed would only take part in the project if their 5th year group was strong enough and committed enough to their work, so that it is as beneficial as possible for all involved.

The same teacher has also recommended the project to other colleagues in other schools.

Impact for 3rd level students

Visual Arts Practice

... get the opportunity to practice in a contextual setting, a geographical and community setting ... I think there is no doubt about the quality of the work that I have seen presented and the quality of the process.

Orla Scannell

It taught them how to engage with the public, public space, look at community art, public art, very significant things that most artists, not all of us are going to have those encounters

Curator

... the world is changing and expanding and the models of practice that are the known models that have often been studio to gallery trajectories ... in terms of responsibility for an art school education, we might be not wanting to replace those forms but to offer alternatives to them.

Philip Napier

The project allows students to make developments in and clarify their own practice, which is seen as significant. The project requires a lot from the students in a short space of time and accelerates their learning. In order to create an exhibition of high quality, the supports (from curator, project manager and stakeholders) around this have to be strong and well considered. Having an exhibition at the end was also viewed as important, however what is unique and does not happen within a normal studio to gallery practice is working in context and creating work for, with and in response to that site and its publics.

Seeing and experiencing the relationship between the curator and project manager, as well as with the wider partner and venue staff, also provides a real life learning experience and model for students. By engaging in the project the students become more sophisticated in navigating working with public resources and working in community contexts. Overall taking part in a project like this requires confidence from the students, and how this is built or developed needs to be considered in any future iteration.

Also noted by two respondents is the issue for some students of the cost of travel, and how this might be funded in future iterations to remove this additional barrier to participation.

Pedagogical Model

Creative Campus provides unique experiential learning for students. The project sits within the art college's priorities to develop innovative pedagogical models and to consider diverse forms of knowledge production.

Public Engagement

I was interested in, not necessarily those students who were thinking about moving into socially engaged practice, but those students who were fine artists and were thinking about how can I connect with audiences in different ways.

Tony Fegan

... the project was a fantastic opportunity for our students. In terms of working with a professional artist, their first experience of facilitating groups (community groups and secondary school groups), devising briefs, building those

communication skills, talking about their work, understanding their work and the process involved.

Finola McTernan

Given the public nature of the work and process, it means that students have to learn to speak about their work and what they are doing with diverse audience, which is extremely beneficial.

Most students when surveyed at the start of the project expressed an interest in gaining experience of working with audiences and with secondary school pupils, this was substantiated by one previous curator who was interviewed, who stated that putting an exhibition together is an experience they already get in art college, however the experience of working with different groups they wouldn't get another way. These comments were echoed by the Head of Fine Art who views this kind of project as a partnership that provides for expanded learning and interactions for students. They encounter a world beyond the art school, which is important for them.

All students seem to have enjoyed the experience of working with secondary school pupils.

Anecdotally from previous curators and project managers it was noted that three students who took part continue to work in educational and community contexts. It would be difficult to claim that this was because they engaged in the Creative Campus project, however this real life experience at a crucial stage in an artist's development may have had some role to play. In addition one student who did respond to the survey stated they were already working in a socially engaged way, so the project supported that development.

Wider Impact

It was felt that there is some awareness of the project at a wider level, because of the different locations, and that broadly speaking people feel it is a worthwhile project. Some family / friends of pupils have engaged because they have gone with them to the exhibition, or in one instance happened to be passing the shop in the Square and were invited in to see the work in action as the pupils were taking part in a workshop. This ripple effect and its potential has not been monitored or evaluated to date.

Tallaght as a Creative Environment

Sometimes for those of us that work in a place like Tallaght that is so close to Dublin city centre, you think that is where you should be headed, and being in a suburban place you forget there is creativity in suburbia.

Tori Durrer

Through the project it was felt they become more aware of the resources and organisations in Tallaght and get a sense of the breadth of activity in the area. The themes that were introduced annually in relation to each site supported students to see Tallaght as a creative resource. The majority of students were not from Tallaght, so the project could potentially counter perceived preconceptions of that place. Equally, by locating the project in the context of Tallaght the students themselves add an additional or new layer of creativity to the context they are working in.

There seems to be a lack of awareness of the partner organisations, i.e. TCA and SDCC, while there seems to be more awareness of NCAd and of the buildings associated with the project eg. Rua Red and the venue/site. This lack of profile would need to be addressed going forward. Overall the

project needs to be promoted within the wider contexts of visual arts and arts in education, which would have an impact on Tallaght being viewed as a creative hub. It should be noted that Tallaght is competing with Dublin city in terms of creative spaces.

Venues

It might be something that could be explored [being in a space repeatedly], or it could continue to rove from place to place, different settings, different focuses, different themes – and maybe this keeps it fresh every year ... and the dynamic is different each time

Orla Scannell

Each venue provides a different site, audience and contextual priorities. Equally each student brings their individual approach, paths of inquiry and ideas, which keeps the project fresh. Input, commitment and support from each of the venues, and in particular key personnel, has been key for the project's success to date. One venue cited the intergenerational aspect of the project as having a positive impact for all involved, including staff and board members. While another viewed the project as complementary to the work they were already doing with secondary schools, and an opportunity to engage with new agencies outside of Tallaght.

Linking with the library, Rua Red Arts Centre, and with the Community Centre, there is an openness and a willingness to engage creatively, and that is testament to the relationship that Tony has built up within the community.

Finola McTernan

The venues existing relationships with TCA and SDCC are key to their involvement in the project, and this trust means that the project runs smoothly and works well. The project also helped to cement these relationships. It also helped to develop an understanding of visual arts practice for staff and visitors to each context, given that the work was developed and the process was visible in each space. Allocating more time would benefit the building of relationships between students, venues and their communities. All venues had a positive experience and would be open to future projects.

Partnership model

It was noted that this type of partnership is unique, i.e. combining a local authority, community arts organisation, third level institution, schools and local communities and sites, and should be developed and promoted more. The partners are key to the project. For a local authority and an organisation like TCA they can tap into a wider more formal network via NCAD and seek to build cultural aspirations for an area like Tallaght. It was viewed by all that connecting with a 3rd level institution is integral to the project, and for the 3rd level institution connecting to a site such as Tallaght is key for students and for the Access programme. The Access Officer flagged this model, i.e. connecting the college and their students to local schools and real life experiences through gatekeepers such as TCA, as key to their working methods. The project has allowed them to deepen existing relationships and to build up new relationships with schools in the area of South Dublin. As a result of the trust and history the Access programme now has with TCA, other projects have been developed, including the Digital Pathways Project and another project with Education students working in social care contexts.

Going forward the partnership with 3rd level is dependent on key staff relationships and interests in the project, and reviewing what are the relevant course/module connections. It was noted by the partners that the project could take place at under or postgraduate level.

It's important to do this kind of work, partly because it makes sure we as it means we [TCA] stay sharp within this field [participatory practices] ... it's interesting to have forged this relationship with NCAD and to have the support of the Arts Office ... it was important to be etching this territory out and say this is the kind of work that we can do, which has a strong pedagogic strand to it and also it links up with the way in which we can put something back within our second level schools in this area, without working in the schools.

Tony Fegan

The contribution of TCA and in particular of Tony Fegan is integral to the success of the project. Their community arts ethos and connections in the locale are also critical. Their input and work on the project is underestimated and the need for more support (in time and financial resources) was also reflected in comments by the Arts Officer.

For the Access programme in NCAD the project has supported them in achieving their aims and objectives; of giving students real experiences, working with local schools in order to engage young people with contemporary practices, and opening up 2nd level pupils perceptions of art college. The project has allowed them to build up their links within Tallaght and South Dublin County Council, through local gatekeepers.

NCAD

I think that I have certainly seen, it has had an impact on the work of the Access programme, undoubtedly. We have extended our reach into Tallaght in terms of increased number of schools that we are working with, the Creative Campus project has allowed us to make connections with new schools that we haven't traditionally worked with in the past that meet the designated disadvantaged status, that has been really great and those partnerships have been extremely successful. So, in terms of impacting on Access, linking with schools in South County Dublin, that has had significant impact.

Finola McTernan

As noted in the above quote, this project has had a positive impact on, and is perfectly in line with the aims and objectives of the Access programme. Access are keen to continue the ongoing work with the Creative Campus project, and as noted above in the Partnership Model section, the project and in particular their relationship with TCA have meant that new projects and partnerships have developed in South Dublin for NCAD students through the Access Programme.

I think there's a pedagogical argument here of whether you offer this kind of participatory process as part of someone's systemic education or whether you wait and allow them to have developed some sort of more art language and then introduce this.

Philip Napier

For NCAD it is one of a few projects that engage with expanded learning and contemporary art practices. The 2015 structure, moving from an elective to a core module to be selected by students and encouraged by staff, meant that the project relied on students being willing or open to stepping out of the comfort zone of the art college. It was viewed by most interviewed that this model was not as successful as previous years. The project was offered alongside 2 other context specific projects (Create and St James's Hospital, both near to the NCAD), and 5 on-site modules (such as life drawing). Is it appropriate for students to choose at this point in their art career, as students may

only choose what they are familiar with? Therefore, is it a better option to introduce them to diverse forms of practice, and then offer choice, so that they may decide from a place of knowledge? Or is it better for them to be introduced to this type of project before they have made these decisions in order to open up before they close down.

It was viewed that the project is relevant for contemporary visual arts practice, and does have a place within the art college. Going forward the language that sits around the project and how that is being offered to the students needs to be considered. The theme also needs to be imaginative and captivating, with a strong rationale.

I think what this needs is a deeper conversation with the project partners in terms of considering how that [Creative Campus] moves forward

Philip Napier

Going forward the partners need to carefully consider how and when this type of project is offered. It could be at postgraduate level and offer a more bespoke, longer term, placement. Or it could be a summer school (although this would not work with the secondary school timetable). It should also be noted that the project has required more time from the students than other modules, and students felt this should somehow be reflected in their assessment. One further consideration, is to make sure that the project is timetabled well, and does not clash with other key dates or subjects.

There is an awareness of and support for the project at senior management level, and the Director spoke with the group who visited NCAD for a day during the 2014 project.

Role of Curator

The selection of the curator is integral and their approach defines the impact for students and pupils. It was felt that they need to have some educational, community or public art experience. The curators who responded felt that they were well supported by the TCA team and the project manager. One curator flagged that they encountered difficulty both in terms of timetabling and awareness of the project by key personnel within NCAD.

Role of Project Manager

The role of project manager is necessary in addition to the Curator, it brings in another voice, which supports the curator in their decision making, so they are not working in isolation. They also provide the infrastructure and scaffold of the project, including the logistical and schools aspects. It takes a lot of time for them to liaise with schools, develop the supports around this and bring the pupils in, alongside the overall management of the exhibition and other community engagement. By employing the same project manager on an annual basis (if possible) it means that there is continuity and development for the project, in particular in relation to the public engagement programme. Key to the role is an understanding of and experience in arts production and arts education, in particular within the formal context.

Strategic Objectives for SDCC Arts Office

The project arose from the identified need to provide an awareness of opportunities and pathways of progression for secondary school pupils, including third level studies, and an understanding of the range of career opportunities in the arts. Another area that was identified is the gap in provision of visual arts encounters for young people locally. SDCC Arts Office is about to undergo a strategic

review, and the priority of pathways of progression and the need for more visual arts programmes for young people will continue to remain priorities.

Another priority is to link the project back to other arts venues in the area and this could be explored further.

Peer exchange may also emerge as a priority in the new strategy and this has been highlighted by all those surveyed as a key element and aim of this project.

Creative Campus is a strategic project in that regard, if it wasn't going forward or wasn't viable or becomes something else, or disappeared completely, an invitation would go out there to invite new projects to be led by other partners who have an interest or speciality [in visual arts and provide pathways of progression for young people in South Dublin]
Orla Scannell

Creative Campus is seen as a good format in relation to the above strategic priorities for SDCC.

Staffing

Since the local authority no longer has a Youth Arts Officer, the knock on effect has been that SDCC has become more of a silent, funding partner. How this proceeds needs to be discussed with TCA and SDCC, as there is a huge amount of hidden time costs for Tony and his team.

Key staff need to be identified within the 3rd level institution, which would need to include the Access Officer, along with staff members in the different faculties in NCAD. For example in the 2015 project an issue arose with one pupil and they were in danger of failing, key contacts for this type of support should be identified from the outset. It is clear from all that the Access Officer and their role has been critical in relation to the project's success to date.

There needs to be clarity of roles between all involved and this is a key priority for the project going forward.

Logistics

It was noted that going forward the following needs to be reviewed/considered. The project:

- Needs a longer lead in time than currently given and more time for the Project Manager and Curator;
- Needs to continue to suit both 3rd and 2nd level timetables;
- Could it take place for longer periods of time, like an artist in residence, or indeed a shorter more intense period;
- Is not economically sustainable in its current format, in particular in relation to the resources of TCA.

Recommendations for project going forward

2nd level pupils and youth arts

- The evaluator would recommend to keep secondary school numbers select and that 5th year is the right stage for students. They will take it more seriously and have chosen art as a subject for Leaving Certificate. It doesn't have to be for every 5th year art pupil, but the deeper the engagement for a smaller number of pupils who have expressed an interest or demonstrate a capacity, would be best. The project *'Needs to be a safe space for the children who are trying to engage and explore without feeling they are going to be exposed in some way'* (Art teacher).
- If the project takes place outside of school hours, it means that some pupils, due to family commitments may not be able to attend. Would recommend that core of the project for secondary pupils takes place within school hours, with some additional and perhaps cross school after school off-site elements.
- Peer exchange is key to the project and the overlap between 2nd and 3rd level students is a unique aspect, this should be kept at the centre of the project in whatever format it takes going forward. One further suggestion was to include young graduates, alongside 2nd and 3rd level pupils and students, to further demonstrate pathways of progression and support the younger undergraduates, however this would raise issues around fees and payment for these new graduates.
- There is an opportunity to engage with the new Junior Cycle Art curriculum and short courses – taking note of the performing arts short course which has been developed and how students work collaboratively towards a performance (such as the Tenderfoot model). The project links in with the Student Voice feedback for the new art specification, in which they are seeking to work collaboratively with their peers, to meet artists and have real art experiences. ([Junior Cycle Background paper](#))
- Would recommend deepening the engagement for 2nd level pupils, such as informational talks on career and study opportunities in the arts. To give them more of a flavour of what a progression path might look like. The 2013 project, when students took part in further workshops in NCAD, and a more multi-layered approach was applied, was very successful - this should be looked at again in terms of the objective of pathways of progression. Having some sessions in NCAD, means that pupils are familiar with the space and it seems less intimidating.
- An ongoing aim should be to support, broaden and develop the artistic and visual literacy of second level pupils, outside of the white cube context.
- Project should continue to be free for 2nd level pupils to participate.
- The initial impetus for this project came from a youth-led request for a dedicated space and youth-led activity for young people in Tallaght. It may be timely to return to this in respect of the project moving forward. However, it should be noted that without a Youth Arts Officer in SDCC this objective may not be feasible.

Teachers

- The project provides a third classroom space for teachers and engages in processes that are not always feasible within the classroom setting. This engagement with contemporary and diverse practices should be maintained.
- Is there a way to further develop teacher's professionally within the project – could have longer impact. The development of Creative Campus resources for schools could support this kind of work. This approach would require a specialist to work with teachers and could link in with the new Junior Cycle syllabi (see above).
- Project has potential to develop and build a network of teachers in the area (this may already exist).

3rd level students

- The project should continue to engage 3rd level students. Collaboration with post-graduate programmes may be more appropriate, for example the MA in Socially Engaged Practices.
- The project should continue to focus on process and working in site specific community based contexts providing rich and real life experiences for the 3rd level students.
- The following two aspects need to be considered in relation to how to engage more students: the framing of the project within the relevant curriculum, faculties and at graduate or post-graduate levels; and the language, curatorial framework and promotion of the project. It was noted that it is vital for the curator or project manager to present the project to the students going forward, as opposed to a handout. If the project is one of several offered, perhaps all could be presented together in one session.
- Project partners should consider the possibility of having a more focused small group for a longer period, which could be more beneficial for both 3rd level and for the public engagement programme. Could look at an artist in residence model.
- The 2013 specially held talks in response to 3rd level students' requests: on curatorial practice, preparing proposals for exhibition and preparing funding applications appeared to be of benefit to students. An expanded development programme for students, including information on how to develop learning programmes and engage diverse audiences, along with deeper insight into collaborative art practice, would be of benefit. (is this the role of the project or of NCAD)
- Could the project be part of the end of year exhibition for 3rd level students (BA or MA) as an off-site studio and exhibition venue, which could help with space issues in NCAD.
- The notion of targeting students from Tallaght or who have come through the access programme as participants was mooted by the Access Officer. This would be an interesting selection approach, if feasible in terms of student uptake.

Venues & Wider Impact

- The project in whatever format it takes should continue as site specific. The changing of venues should be maintained, as it keeps the programme fresh and engages constantly with

new audiences. One possibility could be to develop relationships with a number of venues, and for these to change annually, but all venues would be part of a cluster group, and would be kept informed of the project annually and engage where appropriate (such as exhibition openings).

- Might a project aim going forward be to support further collaboration and dialogue with the communities, to allow for more depth of engagement? One concern is that this may become too broad a brief for the 3rd level students. If this is developed, how might this be captured in the ongoing evaluation.
- If a SDCC priority is to link the project back to other arts venues in the area, how might this be built into the project? Could be that site visits to these spaces are included as part of the overall programme for both 3rd level students and 2nd level pupils. This would require more time and budget towards a project manager/facilitator role.

Tallaght as a Creative Environment

- This project aim has in part been met, however with limited success. If the project is to go forward the project needs to be more visible beyond those who are directly involved and those who happen upon the project because of the venue/site location. This would include the wider community in NCAD, in the visual art world, and arts in education practices. In order to do this, the project needs more financial resources attached to communications
- There is an opportunity to highlight the project on the Arts in Education Charter website. Creative Campus is a unique model: i.e. that of a local authority, local arts venue and third level institution working together to promote contemporary visual arts practice at second and third level. Would recommend submitting a summary of the project to the website, even if project does not continue in its current format.

Partnerships going forward

- It seems that the schools and participating students are more aware of NCAD as a partner and perhaps less with the local partners – going forward it needs to be considered how to make this aspect of the partnership more visible. Perhaps some sort of visual identity can be developed for the project if it is to continue.
- It is recommended that SDCC and TCA review in detail what the aims and objectives have been, in particular in relation to the 2nd level pupils, with a view to deciding from a local perspective if these are still a priority. It should also be considered at this meeting whether the reach with schools should be broadened and/or deepened. At this meeting it should be considered whether it is viable for TCA to continue to lead on the project at a local level and what supports need to be in place to facilitate this if they do go ahead.
- It is recommended that key stakeholders (SDCC, TCA and NCAD's Fine Art and Access staff) meet to review this report and decide next steps based on the various recommendations and queries outlined in the same. Going forward there needs to be a strong commitment from all partners (in particular between TCA and NCAD). SDCC are about to develop a five year plan, TCA are also developing a 3 year plan and NCAD has changed from a 4 to 3 year course, in light of all of these changes and developments, a meeting like this is timely.

- The evaluator would recommend that meetings should take place at least bi-annually between partners going forward, ideally before the initial call out for curator/project manager and then at the end of the project. This is an opportunity to review what happened and adapt the project aims moving forward in light of findings, changing institutional priorities and models for best practice. It is important to keep risk taking and experimentation at the core of the project.
- One question that arose is whether NCAD is the best higher level institution for this project and partnership? Could DIT for example in their new Grangegorman location be a new partner? In response it should be noted that the role of the Access Officer of NCAD and their ongoing engagement programme with schools is key to the project partnership. It should be noted that the aims and objectives of the project meet with those of the Access Office at NCAD. Also, NCAD is accessible from Tallaght and is a unique space for secondary school pupils to engage with in the city. NCAD need to demonstrate more clearly their input into the project, at present a financial contribution would not be possible, however in-kind resources, and more key-personnel within different faculties would be of benefit, as well as other supports such as equipment and technical expertise. The project is in its early stages and the evaluator would recommend that the possibilities for the existing partnership be explored and tested further.

Staffing structures

- The team of curator and project manager should be continued for the project going forward. The selection of the curator and project manager are key in terms of the experience for students and engagement via the public programme. Both roles are essential for a project of this scale and depth.
- Importance of curatorial input and how this informs not only the work, but also uptake in terms of participants. The theme, location and curators appear to have an impact on interest, in particular at 3rd level. As noted in the above, the curator should ideally have some prior knowledge in the areas of education, community, collaborative or public art practices.
- Recommend to have an ongoing project manager, who works across the school year. This allows for continuity, in particular developing an ongoing relationship with NCAD, schools, venues, and local communities. This person needs to have arts education, in particular schools, experience. This may be a TCA based project manager if no SDCC Youth Arts or Arts Education expertise is available as a dedicated postholder.
- If SDCC continue to act in a more silent/funding role, then this lack of support needs to be filled and it was suggested that more budget be allocated to this. This could be allocated towards TCA's time and an ongoing project manager role.

Logistics

- It was suggested that the project could take place as a residency model, over a longer period (6 months suggested by Philip Napier and 1 year suggested by Tony Fegan) and with less students/participants, to support the development of practice, deeper curatorial support and more time working with 2nd level pupils. Whether this is for 3rd level students or for young emerging artists just out of the 3rd level context, should be discussed by the partner organisations. An option could be to work out of the Making Space in Old Bawn Rd and TCA

Office at RUA RED. (this model was suggested by Tony Fegan, Philip Napier, Finola McTernan and local teacher). If the project was expanded in such a way, Finola McTernan, Access Officer, proposed including some sort of engagement with one or two local primary schools, to expand the project's reach/scope. Perhaps there may be an opportunity for second level pupils to contribute to this aspect, thus further building on the notion of peer exchange/development.

- It was suggested the project needs more budget (whether from NCAD, SDCC or from external funding) and clarity around partnership structures and aims and objectives.

General

- The evaluator recommends a longitudinal study in relation to the work with schools, in particular focusing on how the relationships have built and developed (will develop) and to chart the progress of certain students who engage with the programme and those who won the scholarship
- The title of project may need to change going forward, as it is the same as another project in South Dublin Libraries that has been running since 2009 and recently won a local authority award.

It is clear that the key partner organisations (SDCC, TCA and NCAD) are keen to proceed with the project, however the shape and form that this takes may shift considerably. What should remain as core aims are creating site specific installations that incorporate participatory practices in the context of Tallaght, along with engagement with second level pupils (broadening their visual and cultural literacy and widening their pathways of progression).

Appendices

Interview questions for partner organisations:

i.e. Tony Fegan, Tallaght Community Arts, Orla Scannell, Arts Officer, South Dublin County Council and Tori Durrer, former Youth Arts Officer, South Dublin County Council

1. What, in your opinion, has the impact been over the 4 years of the project at a local or wider level?
2. Do you think the aims of the project have been met? Why?
3. How does it fit with your own institutional priorities?
4. How has or did the project demonstrate Tallaght as a creative environment for participants (2nd and 3rd level students)? Why?
5. Should a continuing aim be to connect with a third level institution to highlight a possible career path for young people? Why?
6. In your opinion how have young people locally benefitted?
7. If the aim is to benefit young people in the area, is this the best spending of resources?
8. Who else has benefitted locally from the project in your opinion?
9. What was the most successful aspect of the project, in your opinion?
10. What would you do differently or perhaps not continue to do?
11. What unexpected opportunities or benefits or connections have come out of the project to date?
12. Going forward what do you think the project aims/objectives should be?
13. What would you like to see for the project if it goes ahead in 2016 – 2017 academic year?
14. (SDCC) How does this project fit strategically for SDCC going forward?

NCAD – interview questions – Creative Campus

1. What is your understanding of the Creative Campus project and its aims?
2. Do you think they have been met? Why?
3. For NCAD (staff and students) what has the impact of the project been over the 3 years?
4. How does it fit with your own institutional/department priorities? Or does it?
5. How has or did the project demonstrate Tallaght as a creative environment for participants (3rd level students)?
6. Have any other connections come out from the project within NCAD, with South Dublin or TCA or within the wider context of Tallaght?
7. What was the most successful aspect of the project, in your opinion?
8. What would you do differently or perhaps not continue to do?
9. How is/was the project framed within the core curriculum?
10. Given the change in NCAD to a 3 year programme, how does the project fit within the curriculum?
11. Do you think 2nd year the correct point of entry for a project like this?
12. From a logistical perspective were there any issues? (eg. clashing with end of year exhibition)
13. Going forward what do you think the project aims/objectives should be?
14. What would you like to see for the project if it goes ahead in 2016 – 2017 academic year?

Creative Campus – survey for teachers

Creative Campus took place in various venues in Tallaght between 2011 and 2015. This evaluation has been commissioned by South Dublin County Council and the purpose of the evaluation is to take stock of the project to date and to recommend how best to move forward.

I would be grateful if you could take the time to respond to the questions below in relation to your experience as a secondary school teacher involved with the project. If you could please return the completed form to katyfitzpatrick@hotmail.com before the end of **Tuesday 15 December 2015**.

Please note that I may quote you in the report. If you would prefer not to be quoted or to remain anonymous if quoted, please let me know.

1. What is your understanding of the Creative Campus project and its aims?
2. Did the project meet its aim of introducing students to contemporary processes and the contexts that artists work in? How?
3. How was the experience of seeing work in a non-traditional setting?
4. How did the young people engage with the work and workshops?
5. How important is it that students' work is exhibited?
6. How important is the NCAD portfolio summer course scholarship?
7. Have any students gone on to study at 3rd level art college? Did any of these students win the portfolio scholarship?
8. Have you had any other contact with NCAD, Tallaght Community Arts or South Dublin County Council as a result of engaging in the project? If yes, please describe.
9. How has or did the project demonstrate Tallaght as a creative environment for pupils?
10. What is the expectation within Tallaght and in particular your school for young people to go on to 3rd level art college?
11. What was the most successful aspect of the project, in your opinion?

12. What would you do differently or perhaps not continue to do?
13. Going forward what do you think the project aims/objectives should be?
14. What would you like to see for the project and for schools if the project goes ahead in 2016 – 2017 academic year and thereafter?
15. Would you be interested in being involved in future projects?

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey.

Creative Campus – survey for past curators

Creative Campus took place in various venues in Tallaght between 2011 and 2015. This evaluation has been commissioned by South Dublin County Council and the purpose of the evaluation is to take stock of the project to date and to recommend how best to move forward.

I would be grateful if you could take ten minutes to respond to the questions below in relation to your experience as a curator of the project. If you could please return the completed form to katyfitzpatrick@hotmail.com before the end of Thursday 10 December 2015.

Please note that I may quote you in the report. If you would prefer not to be quoted or to remain anonymous if quoted, please let me know.

1. What did you see your role as, as a curator?
2. How did you devise your curatorial theme? What informed your decisions?
3. What do you think the curatorial supports provided for students?
4. What did it not do, that was needed?
5. How was the experience of curating work and educational programmes in a non-traditional setting?
6. How has or did the project demonstrate Tallaght as a creative environment for participants?
7. What was the most successful aspect of the project, in your opinion?
8. What would you do differently or perhaps not do?
9. Is there anything that the partner institutions should do in order to further support the project team?
10. Going forward what do you think the project aims/objectives should be?
11. What do you think the curatorial role should be going forward?

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey.

Creative Campus – survey for project managers

Creative Campus took place in various venues in Tallaght between 2011 and 2015. This evaluation has been commissioned by South Dublin County Council and the purpose of the evaluation is to take stock of the project to date and to recommend how best to move forward.

I would be grateful if you could take ten minutes to respond to the questions below in relation to your experience as project manager. If you could please return the completed form to katyfitzpatrick@hotmail.com before the end of Thursday 10 December 2015.

Please note that I may quote you in the report. If you would prefer not to be quoted or to remain anonymous if quoted, please let me know.

1. What did you see your role as, as a project manager?
2. What do you think the project manager provided for 3rd level students?
3. What did it not do, that was needed?
4. How has or did the project demonstrate Tallaght as a creative environment for participants?
5. What was the most successful aspect of the project, in your opinion?
6. What would you do differently or perhaps not continue to do?
7. Is there anything that the partner institutions should do in order to further support the project team?
8. Going forward what do you think the project aims/objectives should be?
9. What do you think the project manager role should be going forward?

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey.

Creative Campus – survey for past 3rd level students

Creative Campus took place in various venues in Tallaght between 2011 and 2015. This evaluation has been commissioned by South Dublin County Council and the purpose of the evaluation is to take stock of the project to date and to recommend how best to move forward.

I would be grateful if you could take ten minutes to respond to the questions below in relation to your experience as an artist who participated in the project. If you could please return the completed form to katyfitzpatrick@hotmail.com before the end of Thursday 10 December 2015.

Please note that I may quote you in the report. If you would prefer not to be quoted or to remain anonymous if quoted, please let me know.

1. What is your understanding of the Creative Campus project and its aims?
2. How was the experience of creating work and programmes in a non-traditional setting?
3. How did you work collaboratively (in what way)? How did you find this?
4. How did context and/or audience inform your approach or the finished work?
5. How has or did the project demonstrate Tallaght as a creative environment for future work/projects?
6. Did your relationship with or perception of Tallaght or South Dublin County Council change as a result of the project? Why?
7. What did you think the curatorial supports provided?
8. Do you continue to work within socially engaged practices?
9. Have you developed your work with schools or young people as a result of the project? If yes, how?
10. What was the most successful aspect of the project, in your opinion?
11. What would you do differently or perhaps not continue to do?
12. What would you like to see for the project if it goes ahead in 2016 – 2017 academic year?

Creative Campus Survey for Partner Venues

Creative Campus took place in various venues in Tallaght between 2011 and 2015. This evaluation has been commissioned by South Dublin County Council and the purpose of the evaluation is to take stock of the project to date and to recommend how best to move forward.

I would be grateful if you could take ten minutes to respond to the questions below, and to return the completed form to katyfitzpatrick@hotmail.com. Please note that I may quote you in the report. If you would prefer not to be quoted or to remain anonymous if quoted, please let me know.

1. What is your understanding of the Creative Campus project and its aims?
2. Do you think they were met?
3. What was the impact of the project for the library/shopping centre/community centre?
4. How does it fit with your own institutional/context priorities?
5. How has or did the project demonstrate Tallaght as a creative environment for participants/visitors?
6. What was the most successful aspect of the project, in your opinion?
7. What would you do differently or perhaps not continue to do?
8. Going forward what do you think the project aims/objectives should be?
9. What would you like to see for the project if it goes ahead in 2016 – 2017 academic year and thereafter?
10. Would you/your organisation be interested in being involved in future projects?