

Making your case for public sector investment in shared workspaces /studios

Deborah Best & Pete Courtie



There is no one simple answer!



Some assumptions

Workspaces for artists

- They are often shared spaces.
- Many are run along informal self-administration lines.
- There is no one model of governance & few have external board members.
- Many studio spaces are located in converted buildings.
- Many exist in run down former industrial/ mill buildings in town or city centres or in rurally isolated locations.
- The majority of buildings are leased from private landlords or public bodies, which means as tenants artists, they cannot significantly change the space and will not own it.

more assumptions

- **Low rental costs are important to the majority of artists who use them.**
- **Many artists recognise the social and professional benefits that exist in sharing workspaces through the informal pooling of resources, ideas and information.**
- **Few studios are linked up to, or know about local authority support for artists through creative industry programmes, and very few use or know about business support services.**
- **A common motive of many artists who chose to work in studio spaces is the opportunity to make work away from home, further their professional careers, express and communicate ideas and achieve personal satisfaction.**
- **They are not primarily motivated by a desire to be involved in participatory work with local communities; they are often not commercially driven and often have portfolio careers.**

Public Investment programmes and or key regeneration programmes. Big things to come.

The Department of Communities and Local Government's vision is of prosperous and cohesive communities, offering a safe, healthy and sustainable environment for all.

The DCLG has responsibility across government for

- equal opportunities and social justice
- better homes and neighborhoods
- strong and accountable local government and leadership
- better local services and environment
- regeneration and investment in towns, cities and regions
- safe, tolerant and inclusive communities.
- Places Matter

Do your research ..

Find out as much as you can about the National Regional and local strategic frameworks that you are operating in;

- Local Area Agreements
 - Local development frameworks (physical plans)
 - Economic development strategies
 - Local authority priorities
 - Tourism strategies
 - Cultural strategies
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- Visit other workspace developments
 - Research your potential investors (ERDF, 106, Big Lottery C.A.T)

Some of the reasons for public sector investment in workspace are

- To stimulate enterprise development as part of area-based regeneration programme.
- To promote access to employment and skills development as part of the workless-ness agenda.
- To support clustering as part of a regional sector development plan.
- To support incubation programmes or knowledge transfer programme between higher education institutions and local enterprises.

More reasons for public sector investment in workspace are

- To develop an area's 'cultural offer' as part of the cultural tourism agenda and help create a 'sense of place'.
- To ensure the continued presence of artists/third sector organisations in areas where property or land values are changing and valuable groups within the local community may be squeezed out.
- As a means of bringing redundant or under-used buildings back into use, turning a liability into an asset.
- To bring added value to the local community promoting greater access to and engagement in arts cultural activities.

The priorities of funders and partners. Can you live with them? Do you share them?

- What time and financial resources would you need to commit and where will you get them?
- What time-scale and eligibility criteria apply to the funding you might be applying for?
- Do you understand what is being asked for?
- Do you understand/ do you need to use regeneration acronyms used by investors?
- Who are your target groups/ beneficiaries?
- What are their needs, (how will you demonstrate that you know what they are – evidence)?
- How will you identify appropriate outcomes?
- What evidence gathering do you need to undertake and how will you present evidence?

Questions you need to ask yourselves and how will you manage it?

- Which, if any, of your potential investment partners priorities sit comfortably within your vision, mission and or purpose?
- What skills and experiences do your members have that can be used to contribute to outcomes?
- What don't you know?
- Only consider public investment if you have a mission or desire to provide a studio space which has or could have some degree of public access or public engagement potential.
- If you want a private studio space for members only, the social benefit arguments are not for you.

It's not a grant, it's an investment

- Find your **Allies**, this is about partnership.
- Pick out the policies and the strategies you can help your potential investment partners to deliver.
- Pick out the policies which support what you are doing or want to do.
- Find common ground and shared agendas, align your vision with those of the public sector.
- Make sure your members know why you are working with others and agree what you want out of the relationship before going in to partnership.
- Be clear about what you say you can deliver and make sure you have the capacity to deliver.

Key lessons

- You will need to be resilient.
- You may need to learn new skills and new ways of expressing what you want.
- You may need to develop new relationships and alliances with organisations.
- You may need to align public agency priorities with yours in ways which mean you need to make compromises while still working towards shared objectives.
- You may need to build capacity within your organisation. (Project management)

Useful websites :

- www.artscouncil.org.uk
- www.makingspace.uk.net
- www.openingdoors.uk.net
- www.creativeworkspace.info
wiki site:
- www.fcw.wikispaces.com
- www.communities.gov.uk (Department of Communities & Local Government)
- www.culture.gov.uk/ (Department of Culture Media & Sport)
- www.gov.uk (Department of Business, Enterprise & Regulatory Reform (BERR))
- www.dcsf.gov.uk (Department for Children, Schools and Families)
- www.dius.gov.uk (Department for Innovation, Universities & Skills (DIUS))