

# 01. COMPENSATION

25/04/2025 12:05

## Compensation:

detail the issues of speculative work and how it works against business values. Why is this important?

Research topics: issues of speculative work, fair compensation for competitions, competitions in work and how they've accounted for this. - 200

Justify - what actions going forward have I taken because of my findings. - 100

A moral dilemma which arose during the development of the business's programme is how to compensate people who participate in contests. Is these contests there is often only 1 to a handful of successful entrants who receive a reward however the remaining entries which are often eclipse the amount of winners do not receive any compensation. This description closely aligns with speculative work, which is seeing an increasing trend of creatives declining such speculative work.

## Unpack the major negatives

proposes a form of certification or voluntary code of best practice that arts institutions can sign up to, indicating their commitment to pay cultural producers properly. What this misses is first, that an unregulated market like the sphere of art production and mediation does not voluntarily self-police and second, that art institutions operate within a capitalist social space whose iron law is that the rewards of the powerful few come at the expense of the weak many; a structural fact not amenable to moral pressure. The professionals at the lowest rung of the ladder are unpaid so that institutions can function on inadequate budgets; artists don't receive fees so that there's more money to pay salaries to administrators to fund-raise from wealthy donors.

- \*find a source that will explain what speculative work is and how it is used in the arts
- \*cite sources that argue the opposite
- \*cite a source that can suggest a solution.

Marina Vishmidt

Attempts to provide a form of certification/ commitment to guarantee fair pay often miss that the art production sphere doesn't self regulate and in structured corporations and institutes, money makes it way down the heirarchical ladder, with the administrators and higher ups generally being paid more.

'plug gaps' or substitute for paid staff due to fiscal pressures (Baines et al., 2017; Humphris, 2019; Milligan & Conradson, 2006; van Bochove et al., 2018; van Dyk, 2018, p. 540; Verhoeven & van Bochove, 2018). The mobilisation of volunteers has also been criticised (e.g. by Muehlebach, 2012) as part of a neoliberal 'reprivatisation of social reproduction'

Charlotte Overgaard

Criticism of volunteer work as a substitute of paid staff due to financial pressure, and under the guise of bringing in the value of society

While many attempts have been made to regulate spec work, Marina Vishmidt writes that these omit the fact that the industry does not self-regulate and it is at the expense of the bottom of the administrative hierarchy that art institutions would rather benefit than support those at the bottom. (Vishmidt) Charlotte Overgaard also argues that companies will introduce volunteer work as a way to 'plug gaps' as substitutes for actual paid staff, when under financial pressure. (Overgaard) What both Vishmidt and Overgaard highlight in their texts is that the people doing the speculative work are susceptible to being taken advantage of or undervalued, especially when working for institutions where capital is paramount. This is the main set back of including speculative work as it can suggest to working creatives that you take on these values of more labour for less pay. Even if the business operates under good intensions, there will be less participation due to the implied consequences of speculative work. Thus, Plein Air may benefit by introducing fairly paid and compensated work.

## Suggest some positives

Indeed, in the case of volunteering's effect on health it might be unwise because the benefits are contingent on the volunteer being intrinsically motivated. Intrinsic rewards, those that are embedded in the act itself, are difficult to describe in the language of cause and effect. Self-discovery is not the effect of volunteering; it is volunteering itself.

The value of volunteering comes from one's self desire to volunteer and should not be viewed as doing volunteering = positive, (aka the call must be coming from inside the house)

JOHN WILSON AND MARC MUSICK

In contrast, Benkler argues that although the quality of amateur production may be debatable, the act of producing culture makes people better 'readers, listeners, and viewers of professionally produced culture', because culture is more transparent and malleable, and because such practices lead to the emergence of a

Helen Kennedy

Evidence supporting the fact that employing amateurs won't have a negative inpact on the quality, and shows more concern towards the concequences and malpractice of this

This can be a benefit

Although many negative opinions of speculative work have formed over the years due to malpractice from institutions, volunteering is inherently a positive thing. As John Wilson and Marc Musick puts in 'the effects of volunteering on the volunteer,' that cause and effect is hard to define as the act of doing so is "intrinsically motivated." (Musick & Wilson) In other words the willingness of volunteering comes from the person themselves as rarely is anyone forced to do so. Thus it can be interpreted that people who are naturally charitable will be drawn to volunteering. Furthermore, it can be argued that many of these people would be unqualified or lacks the necessary skills for a particular job, which is why they are doing it for free. However, Helen Kennedy argues against amateur economies that any reduction in quality is not due to the skill of workers, but by the malpractice of the company. (Kennedy) This is backed up by Yochai Benkler as they suggest that "producing cultures makes people better," professional producers. (Kennedy) (Benkler, 2006) Through this lens, it can thus be said that having open work opportunities will attract people in that relevant skill or trade, or people who want to get into a particular practice. What this informs about Plein Sight is that having a variety of opportunities will attract likeminded individuals into participating.

The Wealth of Networks How Social Production Transforms Markets and Freedom  
Yochai Benkler  
2006

Helen Kennedy

Alternative and more ethical incorporations of spec work

a much more troubling example of free labour than, say, Facebook users 'liking' products and therefore producing data that has value for commercial companies. Ross Perlin's Intern Nation provides a comprehensive account of the problem of internships.

Example of using facebook likes as data collection. As this uses the behaviour of social media, rather than an instruction for people to interact with posts, as this is what people do anyways. Would this then make it appropriate and ethical? The Larp source argues yes.

Laura Mitchell

As part of the LARP community, my activities included volunteering as well as playing from the very beginning. Attending events costs not only the price of a ticket, but also equipment, food and travel so I joined, as many friends did, through sharing transportation and equipment.

Example of volunteering when put towards a hobby

To close out the analysis into speculative work, and the theoretical research that has been explored, there is another perspective to free labour that is often overlooked in the present digital age. Kennedy mentions in her critique into amateur economies that a more "troubling example of free labour." takes the form of 'likes' on Facebook product posts. (Kennedy) While Kennedy views this as a bad thing there is evidence that this is just another way to incorporate passive behaviours that people do in their own free time. Laura Mitchell writes about her time as part of the LARP community, (Live-Action Role Playing) which she recalls sharing facilities such as transport, equipment and tickets in order to volunteer for the LARPer. (Mitchell) What this reveals is that people are willing to sacrifice things in order to benefit a community that they align with. Whether it is on online spaces, such as liking posts on Facebook, a hobby community or, in this instance, a plain air art network, if enough people seem to benefit from everyone's sacrifice, then it would be worth the pursuit.

There are many paradoxes thrown up by re-defining artistic production as wage-labor (however the wage is calculated). One of these might be that the division of social labour that produces the artist as a separate kind of "non-professional" professional cannot be reconciled with a simple agreement that art be valued through the same metrics as all other kinds of work, particularly when capitalist work across the board is being rendered precarious, contingent and self-realizing for everyone on the classically reactionary model of the autonomous (starving) artist. Yet this fragile homology between artistic labour and labour in general does furnish the political core of initiatives by artists and cultural workers to organize on the traditional lines of labour politics. These initiatives seem to multiply at a time when artistic production increasingly does not result in object commodities, but in 'services'. As Hito Steyerl writes, what that means is that such services are instantly commodified themselves. [Steyerl 2011] But are they? While remaining art? Here we can recall Marx's comment about labour which does not produce use-values: "If the thing is useless, so is the labour contained in it; the labour does not count as labour, and therefore creates no value." [Marx 1990: 131] If it was use-value producing labor, it wouldn't be art; and, come to think of it, a great variety of waged labor these days hardly produces use-values either. It is in this light we would have to re-interpret the late conceptual artist Hanne Darboven's statement:

I have a good conscience; I've written thousands of slips of paper. In the sense of this responsibility – work, conscience, fulfilment of duty – I'm no worse a worker than anyone who has built a road." [Darboven, quoted in Adler 2009: 106]

In other words, it is no longer self-evident that the type of artwork Darboven was doing – obsessive and repetitive, logically motivated hand-writing – can or should be deemed tantamount to manual labour in its usefulness, just because so much wage-labour looks and acts like Darboven's (though perhaps not as much as *Bartleby's* the scrivener's would) and has no pretence to either diligence, duty or social utility. Thus labour solely quantified by wages, without a narrative of social utility apart from 'servicing' the financialized infrastructure, cannot be 'qualified' by such traditional virtues, and nor can art ennoble itself by drawing an analogy between its dedication and the commitment of workers.

Aware of the thorny conceptual and practical issues besieging the task of quantifying artistic labor, a group like W.A.G.E. focuses their campaign on the distribution of resources in public institutions. Dealing with technologies such as contracts, budgets, and certificates of good practice (and wielding the threat of sanctions from funders) WAGE is programmatically challenging the mystification of artistic labour as an 'investment' which may recompense its maker in the future. They set out to break the cultural tie between artists and (financial) speculators by re-positioning artists as workers: a gesture of another kind of speculation, that is, speculating about a state of the world different from what it is.

This bears directly on the relationship of art-making to speculation as a form of production. Besides artistic work – whether it is recognized as 'labor' or not – unpaid labor in the cultural sector (typically internships, as well as the more humdrum self-exploitation characteristic of this work) is paradigmatic of speculation as a mode of production since this kind of labour is presented as a speculative investment in one's human capital, with its hallmarks of affective excess, self-management, and submissive auto-valorization. However, it should not be disregarded that the prominence of unpaid labor in the cultural sector is more than anything else pointing to the larger de-valorization of labour in the economy: that is, it is very much an index of a structural problem of dwindling resources and aggravated social inequality.

The strategy of organizing around the means of compensation for artists and cultural producers reveals a number of paradoxes when seen through the filter of labor politics. The artistic mode of production is so mystified and individualized that labor regulation could indeed only be performed by a much more omnipotent state than we are ever likely to have, and even that would hardly touch on the opaque and unregulated primary and secondary art markets. W.A.G.E. proposes a form of certification or voluntary code of best practice that arts institutions can sign up to, indicating their commitment to pay cultural producers properly. What this misses is first, that an unregulated market like the sphere of art production and mediation does not voluntarily self-police and second, that art institutions operate within a capitalist social space whose iron law is that the rewards of the powerful few come at the expense of the weak many; a structural fact not amenable to moral pressure. The professionals at the lowest rung of the ladder are unpaid so that institutions can function on inadequate budgets; artists don't receive fees so that there's more money to pay salaries to administrators to fund-raise from wealthy donors. If one of the distinguishing features of art production is that – by and large – it is not organized through the same structures as nor accessible to the same forms of measure as other kinds of labour, then it is difficult to see how the political forms of labour organization can play more than a metaphorical role in pointing out certain social injustices of this kind within the institution of art. [Passero and van den Berg 2011: 174-5] Further, this kind of pointing will swiftly need to point to itself, as the expansion of the art world, however unequal the distribution of its rewards, is a symptom of extreme wealth inequality, a symptom of vast amounts of money being accumulated and invested in e.g. the art market and not e.g. in social reproduction. [Fraser 2011: 114-127] Additionally, as John Roberts and Gregory Sholette have written, art increasingly functions as a sink for disguised un- and underemployment, as statistically larger numbers of people try, with varying degrees of success, to monetize their free creative activity in a hostile economic landscape. [Sholette 2010; Roberts 2011]

Attempts to provide a form of certification/ commitment to guarantee fair pay often miss that the art production sphere doesn't self regulate and in structured corporations and institutes, money makes it way down the heirarchical ladder, with the administrators and higher ups generally being paid more.

Art as a 'sink' or scapegoat for un and underemployment

Besides the paradoxes from the side of labour and the commodity, there are also paradoxes to be found on the side of art. If what is most characteristic of progressive art since Modernism is to desire the end of art, to dissolve into life, then re-defining art as wage-labor fits into that tradition, while continuing to insist on the cultural exception that determines a price for it as far

as the state and market are concerned – and to accept the power of capital, which ensures the existence of divisions of labor and classes which defines the whole social existence of art in its current form. As already noted, this move can mean that the real class divisions that underpin the maintenance of regimes of paid and unpaid labor, mental and manual labor, art work and ‘shit work’, are obscured. Also, the move of construing art as labor reduces art to one of its dimensions, namely what it shares with all capitalist work: the commodity form. A labor politics of art boils down artistic production to the ‘absolute commodity’ Theodor Adorno speaks about [Adorno 2007: 28; Martin 2007: 15-25] or to abstract social labor in its generality, vitiating the critical inflection art still possesses as “the antithesis of that which is the case.” [Adorno 2007: 159]

the feminist conceptual artist Mierle Laderman Ukeles’ “Maintenance Art Manifesto” and artwork. Laderman Ukeles dramatized the nominalist protocols of Conceptual Art when she performed domestic labour as an artwork, what she called “Maintenance Art.” [Lippard 1979: 20-21] Ukeles would bustle around exhibits with a duster and cleaning fluid, wash the steps of the museum, and hound the administrative staff out of their offices on her cleaning rounds. The point was that the work of maintenance made all other kinds of work possible – waged labour, artwork, even “the revolution.” In proposing a world in which “maintenance” activities were just as legitimately a part of the art as the objects or even the more ephemeral propositions or documentations that announced conceptual art, she was suspending the division of symbolic and physical labour that ensured work and art remained matter and anti-matter, autonomy without a taint of heteronomy. If the daily uncompensated labor performed mainly by women in the household could migrate to the museum and seek legitimacy as art, then it was no longer self-evident that this labour was any less “creative” than the kinds of activity hitherto enshrined as art, and no less public than socially necessary wage-labor. - paradox of defining art in the context of labour

The paradox of defining art as labour. Art itself being a loose term open to interpretation, if an exhibition displaying the equipment and objects of manual labour in the context of art, then is this work any more or less creative than other examples of art?

From <<https://transformativeartproduction.net/the-politics-of-speculative-labour/>>

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# Against Amateur Economies: Spec Work Competitions and the Anti-spec Movement

24 April 2025 16:02

<https://search.informit.org/doi/abs/10.3316/INFORMIT.273236446545121>  
<https://search.informit.org/doi/epdf/10.3316/informit.273236446545121>

Helen Kennedy

Spec work, short for **speculative work, involves people producing goods, usually cultural goods, without a guarantee of getting paid.** For some designers, the most troublesome manifestation of spec work is the spec work competition, which brings amateur and professional designers together in competition with each other for payment for a design job which they all undertake. **In this sense, the spec work competition is one manifestation of the amateur economy.** Spec work competitions mobilise a process that is becoming increasingly central to amateur economies: crowdsourcing, or the outsourcing of tasks historically carried out by paid employees to the collective labour of a group of volunteers.

Crowdsourced speculative work competitions are criticised by anti-spec design professionals for a number of reasons. **These include that such competitions devalue design; they offer unfair compensation; they can result in problematic lawsuits; they employ minors; and they lead to a host of unethical practices, by clients, competition hosts and designers.** Instead of participating in speculative work competitions, therefore, critics propose pro bono work as a more ethical alternative. Here, I argue that such responses to spec work are not simply the panicked reactions of a profession under threat of invasion by amateur troops, as is implied in some academic commentary. Rather, critical responses to spec work need to be understood in relation to the professional ethics of designers, which many feel are thrown into question by this particular amateur economy.

Finally, the article contributes to debates about amateur economies valuable empirical research with professional media producers about the impact of amateur production activities on their work, which to date has been somewhat lacking.

Using the web, writes Bruns, implies 'active expression and communication of views, values, beliefs, ideas, knowledge and creativity' 9—produsage rather than usage. Because of this, the production value chain is transformed. **There are no longer producers and consumers, or professionals and amateurs, but rather participants, sometimes using, sometimes producing—producers, among whom all is equal: 'producers and users of media Helen Kennedy—Against Amateur Economies 231content are both simply nodes in a neutral network and communicate with each other on an equal level'.** 10 The rise of the producer robs the media industries of their

Examples include Amazon's Mechanical Turk, a service that allows companies to post tasks (such as writing product descriptions), known as human intelligence tasks, or HITs, and individuals offer to complete these tasks for a financial reward determined by the task-setting company. 13 Twitter's bird logo was famously crowdsourced for only \$6 through iStockphoto, as were translations of aspects of Facebook and LinkedIn. 14

Keen's book, *The Cult of the Amateur: How Blogs, My Space, YouTube and the Rest of Today's User Generated Media are Killing our Culture and Economy*, is a polemic against the quality of amateur cultural content, in which Youtube clips are found wanting when compared to classical cinema. 19 As the subtitle suggests, the banality of amateur content across a range of social media is read as a threat to cultural standards: this is the 'threat' of amateur activity read rather differently. **In contrast, Benkler argues that although the quality of amateur production may be debatable, the act of producing culture makes people better 'readers, listeners, and viewers of professionally produced culture', because culture is more transparent and malleable, and because such practices lead to the emergence of a critical, participatory folk culture.** 20 In the case of spec work, professional designers' concerns are not so much about a reduction in the quality of creative outputs that results from amateur involvement, but rather about the dubious nature of the processes by which this involvement is mobilised and their damaging consequences.

Another significant criticism of amateur cultural production focuses on the exploitative conditions in which such production takes place. Tiziana Terranova was among the first to recognise this in her widely-read article 'Free Labour'. 26 Terranova acknowledged that free labour is will fully given and enjoyed in digital, amateur economies. But she also hinted at the arduous conditions experienced by the armies of volunteers working, for example, as chat hosts for AOL, through her evocative terminology of 'NetSlaves' working in '24-7 electronic sweatshops' and VOLUME19 NUMBER1 MAR2013234 feeling the 'pain of being burned by digital media'. 27 More recently, acknowledging the important contribution made by Terranova's seminal article, Hesmondhalgh 28 asked if free labour is always necessarily exploitative, pointing to a range of types of 'free' labour which are will fully given and enjoyed (to use Terranova's terms), such as football coaching or playing music, but which, he argues, cannot be deemed to be 'exploitative' in the same way that other forms of free labour can be. For Hesmondhalgh, the internship system, rapidly growing across the globe, is **a much more troubling example of free labour than, say, Facebook users 'liking' products and therefore producing data that has value for commercial companies.** Ross Perlin's *Intern Nation* provides a comprehensive account of the problem of internships.

Here, I bring together van Dijck's argument that we need to acknowledge the ways in which types and conditions of amateur activity vary with Hesmondhalgh's suggestion that some forms of free or amateur labour are of greater concern than others. Designers themselves attend to such differences. Elsewhere, I have argued that (web) designers respond positively to forms of amateur production that do not undermine professional values, such as user-generated content produced for the websites that they design, which is seen as something to be curated. 30 Designers' responses to this kind of amateur activity differ from their responses to spec work for the reasons hinted at by Hesmondhalgh and van Dijck: the former is of less concern because it is not seen to undermine professional ethics and because the terms of participation are considered acceptable. The ethics and values of designers therefore play a significant role in designers' negotiation of amateur activity. Studies in journalism, cited above, have also found that professional journalistic values play a role in how journalists engage with amateur activity. The ethical formation of cultural workers influences their responses to distinct forms of amateur production, which therefore need to be differentiated. This proposal underlines the discussion in the rest of this article.

Although the homepage of the Anti Spec website states that the design profession is one of few embroiled in spec work, the problems associated with spec work competitions are mirrored in the wider cultural and creative industries. Precarious working conditions, increased individualisation, low pay and the growing requirement that budding creatives perform what Ross describes as 'sacrificial labour' are

Introduction to the definition of spec work competitions, why they exist and what issues are associated with them

They define Spec work as a manifestation of the amateur economy (with professional economy driven by money, amateur economy is driven by love and exclusively love)

Describing the affect the web has on creative production; the free access of resources has provided a level field to reduce professionals and amateurs down to participants.

Example of large corporations employing creative work for less

Evidence supporting the fact that employing amateurs won't have a negative impact on the quality, and shows more concern towards the consequences and malpractice of this

This can be a benefit

Explains how exploitative conditions can be formed online. Link to another valuable source that may be worth reading through

Example of using facebook likes as data collection. As this uses the behaviour of social media, rather than an instruction for people to interact with posts, as this is what people do anyways. Would this then make it appropriate and ethical? The Larp source argues yes.

Though while amateur work may not be lower in quality, just the non professional context that a work is produced in can harm its chances of success.

characteristics of many contemporary creative professions, not just design.<sup>62</sup> Spec work competitions, like Amazon's Mechanical Turk, and other companies' crowdsourcing of creative labour such as oDesk and Freelancer, all play a role in normalising such troubling working conditions. The discourses which legitimise these practices speak the language of individualisation, through their appeal to individual effort, talent and ambition. As Perlin suggests, such discourses fit neatly with 'the go-go rhetoric of the dotcom bubble'.<sup>63</sup> Perlin also points to the complicity of universities in the production of discount labour, through their credit-carrying internship programs. As academics, researchers and/or cultural critics, we need to reflect on our role in this 'race to the bottom', and recognise there is good reason to line up alongside the anti-spec movement, against such forms of amateur economy.

Conclusion - use this to reverse search aspects of the essay, eg, Ross mentioning 'sacrificial labour'

Sociological scholarship has been concerned with how volunteers are instrumentalised within the welfare state to 'plug gaps' or substitute for paid staff due to fiscal pressures (Baines et al., 2017; Humphris, 2019; Milligan & Conradson, 2006; van Bochove et al., 2018; van Dyk, 2018, p. 540; Verhoeven & van Bochove, 2018). The mobilisation of volunteers has also been criticised (e.g. by Muehlebach, 2012) as part of a neoliberal 'reprivatisation of social reproduction' (Bakker, 2007, p. 542), because it increases the amount of unwaged reproductive and caring labour performed to sustain life, maintain social cohesion and reproduce labour power as the precondition for producing surplus value in capitalist economies (Federici, 2012).

Criticism of volunteer work as a substitute of paid staff due to financial pressure, and under the guise of bringing in the value of society

## Volunteers as monstrous workers: 'monsters' in UK live-action roleplay game organizations

25 April 2025 11:07

Live-action roleplaying in the UK is first and foremost a leisure pursuit, but being far from a main stream hobby it also represents a relatively small and tight-knit community of players and organizers with a distinctive sub-culture. As part of the LARP community, my activities included volunteering as well as playing from the very beginning. Attending events costs not only the price of a ticket, but also equipment, food and travel so I joined, as many friends did, through sharing transportation and equipment. We booked tickets and registered together, sharing information and learning as we went. At large events, our group would begin the days camped among a field of other players frying bacon on portable barbecues or open fires, sharing face-paint and swapping tips; about how to create characters that made good use of the rules, to develop our own histories inspired by popular genre fiction and convey them through improvisation, how to improve in combat and how to make or customize cheap materials to produce costumes. We would plan our activities and time as players as well as those times when we would 'go foraging for supplies', a euphemism I used to explain our character's absence while we 'monstered': changed costume and makeup, donned 'bad guy' roles or referee tabards and became a part of producing the game for others' enjoyment. At large events we are often expected to monster for an hour or for a specific battle, a fun activity as a group since we then have access to scheduled battles or specific competitive adventure scenarios. Often doing this as a group was encouraged as we could already work together well and portray coherent groups of 'bad guys'.

Laura Mitchell

<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/14759551.2016.1241254?scroll=top&needAccess=true>

Example of volunteering when put towards a hobby

# THE EFFECTS OF VOLUNTEERING ON THE VOLUNTEER

25 April 2025 11:15

<https://scholarship.law.duke.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1150&context=lcp>

JOHN WILSON AND MARC MUSICK

Indeed, in the case of volunteering's effect on health it might be unwise because the benefits are contingent on the volunteer being intrinsically motivated.

Intrinsic rewards, those that are embedded in the act itself, are difficult to describe in the language of cause and effect. Self-discovery is not the effect of volunteering; it is volunteering itself.

However, too much focus on these benefits distracts attention from other possible consequences of volunteering, some of which might not be seen as quite so beneficial. Therefore, volunteering—to the extent it focuses on face-to-face amelioration of the personal problems of individuals—might encourage political attitudes that are, in many ways, anti-democratic because these attitudes may attribute social problems such as homelessness to the actions of individuals and not to the larger structural forces which might be causing them, forces which can be tackled only by concerted political action. In short, the language of "benefits" is more value-laden than is the language of consequences.

The value of volunteering comes from one's self desire to volunteer and should not be viewed as doing volunteering = positive, (aka the call must be coming from inside the house)

One downside of volunteering is that because a lot of the 'marketing' of volunteering is so benefit focussed, the consequences are ignored and continues to perpetuate the problem. For example the issue homelessness cannot be solved purely by volunteer work, but by larger reconstruction of our society, usually requiring political action.

## 02. COMMUNICATION

07 March 2025 16:11

### Communication:

the restructuring of my business model so that it is better understood my chosen target audience: the general public. This will be done by responding to feedback  
Research topics: existing programmes that develop young artists, Art curriculum taught in schools.  
The importance of art accessibility. - 200  
Justify - what actions going forward have I taken because of my findings. - 100

While pitching the business to several parties, both internal and external, a frequent issue that would occur is people not understanding the programme well enough due to the many strands that make up the business. [reference survey results]...  
... As a result of the reduction in speculative work and the restructuring of the programme, the business will look to other methods to achieve feasibility.

\*refer back to the feedback at the end of Unit 1

\*cite a source that will explain how a simple business is better

Responding to feedback in terms of how they carry out the tours

### What is your favourite way of interacting with the built environment?

i like knowing the history behind them
Walking through and talking pictures
walking
Walking, visiting new places, admiring the architecture, if it is of particular relevance.
built as in buildings? i like observing their architecture and small details , particularly in old buildings.

### what do you expect on a guided tour?

snack!! equipment, nice scenery, examples
A small description of each place. But not too long as I want to explore the space
information about the local area. some pointers or prompts on how you could draw the landscape.
Lots of information, a passionate guide who could answer almost any question.
someone walking me around and telling me stuff about where they're taking me

building users' behaviour is influenced not just by the space they occupy but by their feelings, intentions, attitudes and expectations as well as by the social context in which they are participating. In this paper, a theoretical framework is outlined in which the building user's experience is central. While user oriented (or user-sympathetic) theories tend to identify the user as one part or player in the built environment system, this framework argues that the user's experience of the built environment is central. It shows how the user's perspective provides insight into both process (how it is created) and product (its impact, once built) theories of the environment.

Paper explores how the user's behaviour and experience of a built environment can be used to inform a how a space is made and how it would impact people

Jacqueline C.Vischer

Responding to receptiveness to changing mentality.

### Why do you think it is difficult to shift public perception?

people are too busy and stuck in their own ways, and are reluctant to get out of their comfort zone or trusting others
??
because the capitalist society we live in makes us value things more than art which is often pushed to the bottom.
People are very set in their ways, it takes effort and time to change one's own views, and they don't want to do that.
ppl r stubborn as hell dude they'd rather be stuck in their wrong ways than be proven wrong about something

One survey question that should be explored asks the person, what is your favourite way of interacting with the built environment? In summary, the majority of the answers include references the history and heritage of the location, in addition to the physical act of walking. To make sense of this answer, Vischer also puts that a person's behaviour and experience of a built environment can be used to inform a how a space can be designed to have an intended impact on people. (Vischer) This could frame the responses of the survey as the desires of how a person interacts with the space. In terms of Plein Sight, this is useful in deciding how a participant's drawing of a location can influence the design process of the community lead aspect of the programme. Thus, the feedback given could suggest that people would want to design something that can be experienced by walking and responds to a history or heritage.

Unorthodox and absurd business ideas can work

Ben Carlson

Freakonomics did a deep dive into the grocery store that has a diehard following by many of its customers. They discovered how this unorthodox business plan has allowed Trader Joe's to outsell every other grocery store chain on a per square foot basis.1

[Stephen J. Dubner](#)

From <<https://freakonomics.com/podcast/should-america-be-run-by-trader-joes-ep-359-rebroadcast/>>

focus on one type of built environment, thereby anchoring down who the users are, how time is defined, and what is meant by the users' experience.

An effective user-centred theory needs to be clear about what is being measured when users are asked about their experience of the built environment.

The implicit evaluation of built space – of quality – that is inherent in users' judgements links the user-centred approach to the process, that is, the macro approach that encompasses the supply side. Feedback from users can and sometimes does inform the design, construction, management and disposition of buildings.

Shifting towards business values, the survey participants were asked: Why do you think it is difficult to shift public perception? The popular answer suggests that people are stubborn and resistant to change. In an article written by Ben Carlson, he puts forward the example of Red Bull being unmarketable to consumers as everything from its taste and quantity is not preferred by the public. Despite this, Red Bull went on to be a largely popular product, which Carlson has narrowed down to several reasons. The placebo effect explains how something that just tastes different can hold enough merit to warrant more value, and under a smaller, restricted packaging would lead people to purchase more. (Carlson) What he also explains comes from radio podcast Freakonomics which alludes to the absurdity of a business or product being its selling point. (Carlson, 2019)(Dubner,2019) The main take away for Plein Sight is to have confidence in its aim to challenge perception for positive change. Contradictory to the feedback, often times the opinions of the audience can be uncorrelated to the actual behaviour and needs that they exhibit.

Focused studies on one type of built environment on measuring their experiences can lead to insightful evaluation of a space that would not be directly raised by the user. This includes ideas of feeling and emotion, which can be responded to through design.

To lead the direction of addressing the feedback, some research was done into how people respond to a

space or location. Jacqueline C. Vischer writes about conducting theory based research on the built environment and suggests several principles on interpreting a response: By focusing on a singular type of environment, we begin "anchoring down who the users are, how time is defined," and their experiences existing within the built environment. (Vischer) By making clear what precisely is being measured, we get more focused answers that the user themselves respond to, rather than what they generally think the space represents. With this method of purposing feedback as research, Plein Sight can begin to reformulate it's feasible programme to respond to user experience.

# Business Pitch feedback crunch

25 April 2025 14:47

## What compensation would you like to receive if a submission for a competition wasn't successful, if any?

maybe a free online workshop to give more advice

Feedback to any improvements. Maybe workshops to show how

enter into a competition to win tickets to something.

Depends on the artist's level of expertise, and what/where the exhibition is. Anything above £50, or perhaps a publication or award of some kind? If finances don't allow for monetary compensation?

none because my failure is not your responsibility

## What is your favourite way of interacting with the built environment?

i like knowing the history behind them

Walking through and talking pictures

walking

Walking, visiting new places, admiring the architecture, if it is of particular relevance.

built as in buildings? i like observing their architecture and small details , particularly in old buildings.

## Why do you think it is difficult to shift public perception?

people are too busy and stuck in their own ways, and are reluctant to get out of their comfort zone or trusting others

??

because the capitalist society we live in makes us value things more than art which is often pushed to the bottom.

People are very set in their ways, it takes effort and time to change one's own views, and they don't want to do that.

ppl r stubborn as hell dude they'd rather be stuck in their wrong ways than be proven wrong about something

## what do you expect on a guided tour?

snack!! equipment, nice scenery, examples

A small description of each place. But not too long as I want to explore the space

information about the local area. some pointers or prompts on how you could draw the landscape.

Lots of information, a passionate guide who could answer almost any question.

someone walking me around and telling me stuff about where they're taking me

# Terrible Business Plans, Wonderful Businesses

25 April 2025 12:00

Posted October 13, 2019 by [Ben Carlson](#)

*"Solving problems using rationality is like playing golf with only one club." – Rory Sutherland*

Imagine you're an investor and I make you the following pitch of a business plan:

We're going to open a new chain of grocery stores. The stores will sell zero branded items. No Coke. No Budweiser. No Lucky Charms. Everything will be private label.

There will be no advertisements on TV or social media. Nothing in the store will ever go on sale. There will be no coupons accepted, no loyalty rewards cards and no Sunday newspaper circulars. There will be no self-checkout kiosks. The aisles in the stores will be narrow and the stores and parking lots will be relatively small.

Who wants to invest in this company?

Michael Roberto, a professor at Bryant University, likes to give his students this pitch to gauge their response. Of course, most people would assume this is a terrible idea. Then Roberto tells them this store already exists. It's Trader Joe's, only one of the most successful grocery chains in the world.

**Freakonomics** did a deep dive into the grocery store that has a diehard following by many of its customers. They discovered how this unorthodox business plan has allowed Trader Joe's to outsell every other grocery store chain on a per square foot basis.<sup>1</sup>

There's a lot more that goes into the store's success besides being different than most grocery stores (the culture, the people, the quirky products they sell, their private label strategy, store location, etc.) but it's always fascinating to discover business models that sound insane in theory but work in practice.

Here's another one:

Let's say you would like to compete with the likes of Coke and Pepsi in the non-alcoholic, cold beverage space.

Here's the pitch: Put the drink in a tiny can, sell it at a high-end price, ensure it's an odd color and make it taste kind of disgusting. When you perform taste tests before launching this drink, ignore the fact that the agency running the test claims it's the worst reaction to a newly proposed carbonated beverage they've ever come across. Don't worry about the subject who claimed, "I wouldn't drink this piss if you paid me to."

I just had one of these drinks recently and it made me feel like my heart was going to jump out of my chest all night. What is this drink?

It's Red Bull, which defied the terrible early reviews to become one of the most popular cold beverages on the planet. Rory Sutherland profiled Red Bull in his book [Alchemy](#) to show how it became so popular despite everything it had going against it from the outset:

*Red Bull is among the most successful commercial placebos ever produced – its powers at hacking the unconscious are so great that it is repeatedly studied by psychologists and behavioural economists all over the world, including the great Pierre Chandon at INSEAD, one of the top business schools in Europe. So potent are the drink's associations that the very presence of the logo seems to change behaviour. However, no command economy could ever have produced Red Bull, and nor could a bureaucratic large multinational – it took an entrepreneur. The most plausible explanation for the incredible success of Red Bull lies in a kind of placebo effect. After all, it shares many of the features of a great placebo: it's expensive, it tastes weird and it comes in a 'restricted dose'.*

*My contention is that placebos need to be slightly absurd to work. All three elements that seem to make Red Bull such a potent mental hack make no sense from a logical point of view. People want cheap, abundant and nice-tasting drinks, surely? And yet the success of Red Bull proves that they don't.*

There are a host of new tech businesses that follow a similar path of sounding ridiculous in theory when they were launched but now work in practice.

Remember how scared we all were of interacting with people when the Internet first hit mass appeal? How nervous we were to share our credit card information?

I'm not the first to point this out, but Uber is literally hailing a stranger to come pick you up in their car. Airbnb involves paying a stranger to sleep in their house or apartment. I've heard a number of venture capital investors talk about how these worries kept them from investing in these companies in their infancy.

And can you blame them?

Sutherland reminds us, "The fatal issue is that logic always gets you to exactly the same place as your competitors."

The business world would be much easier if logic ruled the day but sometimes consumer decisions make no sense.

Sutherland makes the astute point that adding hyperloops or high-speed trains may make travel 20% faster and cost millions of dollars but making travel 20% more enjoyable might cost nothing at all. Movies about the future tend to show newly designed buildings, cities, and roads but he thinks the future of design could have more to do with psychological design:

It seems likely that the biggest progress in the next 50 years may come not from improvements in technology but in psychology and design thinking. Put simply, it's easy to achieve massive improvements in perception at a fraction of the cost of equivalent improvements in reality.

It's interesting to think about the types of businesses, many of which may make no sense on paper, that could come out of a potential psychological revolution.

Further Reading:

[Simple Business Models](#)

1One study pegged Trader Joe's at sales of \$2,000 per square foot, more than Whole Foods (\$1,200) or Walmart (\$600).

From <https://awealthofcommonsense.com/2019/10/terrible-business-plans-wonderful-businesses/>

Unorthodox and absurd business ideas can work

Red bull placebo of turning negative traits of a drink a profitable product. The product needs to be absurd enough to warrant intrigue. The drink was different enough that it provided another option that people thought they wanted.

This is how out of the box and unorthodox thinking can get around the issues competitors face.

In other words, it is more lucrative to be able to change people's perception in order to sell a product than to sell a product that has been engineered to fit consumer needs. It is easy to sell red balls once everyone suddenly decides to like red balls despite owning entirely blue objects.

In summary, to take a risk and go against the expectations of consumers can be rewarding. In all the examples shown, the products involved subverting the preconceived notions and expectations of the consumer, to produce a different, or 'other' product.

# Towards a user-centred theory of the built environment

25 April 2025 12:01

Jacqueline C.Vischer

[https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Jacqueline-Vischer/publication/242573762\\_Towards\\_a\\_user-centred\\_theory\\_of\\_built\\_environment/links/55ae8aba08aee0799220e265/Towards-a-user-centred-theory-of-built-environment.pdf](https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Jacqueline-Vischer/publication/242573762_Towards_a_user-centred_theory_of_built_environment/links/55ae8aba08aee0799220e265/Towards-a-user-centred-theory-of-built-environment.pdf)

Human behaviour is influenced by the built environment in which it occurs – how could it be otherwise? – but it is not determined by it; and it is clear that in a given situation, building users' behaviour is influenced not just by the space they occupy but by their feelings, intentions, attitudes and expectations as well as by the social context in which they are participating. In this paper, a theoretical framework is outlined in which the building user's experience is central. While user oriented (or user-sympathetic) theories tend to identify the user as one part or player in the built environment system, this framework argues that the user's experience of the built environment is central. It shows how the user's perspective provides insight into both process (how it is created) and product (its impact, once built) theories of the environment.

Paper explores how the user's behaviour and experience of a built environment can be used to inform a how a space is made and how it would impact people

One way to do this is to focus on one type of built environment, thereby anchoring down who the users are, how time is defined, and what is meant by the users' experience. However, an issue that arises in reviewing research on users in environmental categories such as housing, offices, libraries, parks and the like is the evaluative connotation of results. Studies that measure outcomes such as user satisfaction ipso facto pronounce on building quality: users feel positive about good-quality built space, whereas if they are 'dis-satisfied' the place under study is not performing or has somehow failed. An effective user-centred theory needs to be clear about what is being measured when users are asked about their experience of the built environment. Measuring the occupants' experience provides information both about product – how spaces affect behaviour in different situations, the effects of building systems on comfort – and about psychological processes – how people feel about and respond to the spaces they occupy, as well as about process. The implicit evaluation of built space – of quality – that is inherent in users' judgements links the user-centred approach to the process, that is, the macro approach that encompasses the supply side. Feedback from users can and sometimes does inform the design, construction, management and disposition of buildings.

Focused studies on one type of built environment on measuring their experiences can lead to insightful evaluation of a space that would not be directly raised by the user. This includes ideas of feeling and emotion, which can be responded to through design.

### 03. COLLABORATION

07 March 2025 16:11

#### Collaboration:

due to my restructuring, this has opened up opportunities to look towards collaborative work, via an installation for an exhibition.

Research topics: programmes that engaged professional artists with non-artists, how a successful art network is formed, procreate? - 200

Justify - what actions going forward have I taken because of my findings. - 100

A way to ensure that people, more specifically the community, are compensated and work towards an understandable goal is to introduce collaboration throughout the engagement of the programme. In summary, this would include socially engaged practices that promotes participatory design, including the community in all aspects of the programme.

While the case study focuses on the given precedent set by [???], this segment of the essay will seek to question socially engaged practices as a suitable method of operation for a business

\*find sources that delve into the positives and negatives of Socially engaged practices

\*find another source to back up one of the positives

\*refer back to the feedback at the end of Unit 1

\*cite a source that will explain how a simple business is better

\*find a source that can explain one of the outcomes from my drawing explorations

# SOCIAL INCLUSION. FROM MOMENTS OF JOY TO SUSTAINABLE INCLUSIVE PRACTICES

25 April 2025 12:04

Socially Engaged Practices in Museums and Archives 2019

[https://pure.au.dk/ws/portalfiles/portal/180201893/Full\\_Cover\\_Fornv\\_rdaren\\_38\\_Socially\\_Engaged\\_Practices\\_in\\_Museums\\_and\\_Archives\\_2019.pdf](https://pure.au.dk/ws/portalfiles/portal/180201893/Full_Cover_Fornv_rdaren_38_Socially_Engaged_Practices_in_Museums_and_Archives_2019.pdf)

HANNA MELLESETH & ANN SIRI HEGSETH GARBERG

In some cases, workshops and programmes directly aimed at these groups have had an immediate effect in the participation in the programmes, but what we see is that once the project is over, they do not come back. In this article, we present some of the inclusive projects in our museums, both short-term outreach projects and collecting/documentation projects. Based on examples of our work, we discuss what effects (if any) our inclusive social projects have regarding the museum, about the society and on behalf of the target groups. We identify factors for success and failure in relation to the work on social inclusion. We also unfold what we regard as indicators of success. Towards the end, we discuss our experiences in light of recent critique of the so-called "Happiness-making in Museums"2 - Page 87

Insight into several projects and evaluate their success and failures. This paragraph makes not that participants of workshops usually don't come back

In 2002-04, Sverresborg cooperated with Huseby secondary school in a photo-project, with young refugees and asylum-seekers as part of their language classes. Each pupil got a disposable camera and was asked to take pictures of their everyday life in Norway. They chose some of the pictures and wrote a text in Norwegian about them. These pictures and texts were exhibited in the museum and later published in a booklet6. The children invited their families and friends to a grand opening event with speeches and music, and of course food and soft drinks. The pupils were very proud to show family and friends what they had made. The whole project was meant as a way for the refugees to become visible in the museum, – to themselves and others. Even if many from the target group came to the exhibition, they did not engage with the rest of the museum, and they did not return as regular users of the museum. The museum, in turn, did not spend time and effort to include those photos in the museum catalogue as an inclusive collecting and documentation project. - p88

Photo Project. Evidence that participants did not return as regulars to the museum. This in turn caused the museum not to include the activity as part of their documentation programme

In 2012- 2013 we participated in a documentation project, initiated by the Regional State Archives of Trondheim (SAT). SAT collected archives from grocery stores run by immigrants, while the museum documented the history of these shops. Twenty-five shops were mapped, and fourteen of them were documented through interviews with the owners. At the end of the project, we made an exhibition, and the informants were invited to the opening. This was a way of including the cultural heritage represented by the typical 'immigrant shop' into our collections. In making an exhibition as part of the project, we hoped to make the shop-owners and their family interested in archives and museums. Although some said they would be coming to the opening of the exhibition, nobody turned up.7 We took pictures as part of the project, and these were sent to the shops and appreciated, but what the project meant to the immigrants is hard to say - 89

While the 'Documenting Immigrant shop' project aimed to celebrate them, they were unsure if it even mattered to them.

What are these programmes aiming at? The prisoners will not sing in a choir later, the family of asylum seekers are not going to do art together in the future, and the people with dementia might not remember anything, just moments after the meeting is over. Moreover, none of them will, perhaps, visit a museum. The aim is not audience development, and what we consider as traditional learning activities. It is about museums' potential impact on social and community themes, such as creating stronger and safer communities, strengthening public life and health and wellbeing. - 96

Aims was not audience outreach, but to have an impact on society which they feel they have not met.

In the words of the museum educator, they are: "Moments of joy and inspiration, and it is about having a nice time together"14. The artistic goals and learning outcomes are set aside. According to the prisoners, they get new things to talk about, to be interested in and to look forward to. To be able to establish a safe and comfortable situation, giving some moments of happiness "here and now" is important. The social setting, a coffee break after the concert, a small talk, singing together, is as important as the concert or the workshop itself. In these informal meeting points, interpersonal relationships develop. Tone is an experienced educator, who has been working with different inclusive programs, says: "To create something together with others is an important thing for all human beings" and "Music has a positive effect on everybody!"15. Moments of joy, pleasure and inspiration are essential for the health and wellbeing of both children in the hospital, people with dementia, the refugees and the prisoners. It is these moments of joy the museum brings about in the different outreach projects, moments that are notoriously hard to document and that do not count towards the visitor statistics and tickets sold. What then does the museum gain from outreach projects with an inclusive social profile? - 96

The real aims of these seem to be providing moments where a community can interact outside of their pre-established context.

In her book *The Art of Relevance*, Nina Simon (2016) identifies two types of people in the discourse about relevance: The insiders and the outsiders. The insider is already at the museum. They know it, love it, and protects it. The outsiders do not know that the door to the museum exists. They are uninterested, feeling insecure and unwelcome. If you want people to come to your museum, or participate in the museum's outreach activities, you must build new doors that are visible and open to the people you want to welcome, according to Nina Simon (2016). Although her door-metaphor is used in the discussion on what a relevant museum is, we find it highly applicable in the context of social inclusion. - 97

Nina Simon - Insiders and outsiders, and the source considers this applicable to the context of social inclusion

Our work on accessible museums and social inclusiveness follow from national legislation and international treaties and conventions that states that everybody has a right to enjoy culture and to contribute to the development of culture.17 Art and cultural heritage is a common good, and we must make sure that everybody is represented in our collections and our programs - 98

PRISON Rockheim has since 2014 cooperated with the prison in Trondheim, first offering concerts and some talks. The museum brought some artefacts to stimulate a dialogue between the prisoners and the museum staff: an instrument, a radio, a tape recorder or something else. The cooperation was extended through a dialogue with the prisoners and the prison's staff. They agreed on establishing a choir. The musicians from Rockheim and the prisoners meet in prison three or four times to practice, and then it is time for the performance – a concert, where the audience consists of the other inmates. Currently, Rockheim is working on the fifth project in prison. They have so far developed cultural programmes for three different groups of prisoners, depending on the seriousness of crimes committed and how much freedom the prisoners are given inside the prison. One of the groups, allowed to be outside the prison for a short time, accompanied by a guard, has been visiting Rockheim as well. There have been many challenges because of the members of the choir change from week to week. It is quite unpredictable because some change their mind, some are moved to another prison, and others have meetings with their lawyer or their family. There are very few possibilities to exercise, especially for those who are going to sing alone, as solo artists. In prison, there are quite rigid systems and many security rules, so building trust and confidence takes time. When positive results are obtained, "new doors open" and we

can overcome obstacles. The programmes were initiated by the museum, but the success became a reality due to close collaboration with the users themselves and with the prison staff. On a personal level, the museum staff involved in the projects can tell about strong personal experiences. It is the most demanding, but also the most giving projects they have. Although they are very aware that their role is not that of a therapist, they have to have a personal engagement and confidence in themselves. It is hard work, emotionally – and the educators often need time for debriefing afterwards.<sup>12</sup> The projects have been run by one or two persons, and the rest of the museum has not been involved or even consulted. Deeply committed and enthusiastic, they share their experiences with their colleagues in staff meetings, but often they feel very alone. Those projects are vulnerable to change in staff, and it will be hard to develop lasting knowledge about social inclusiveness in the museum organisation. - 95

<https://books.google.co.uk/books?hl=en&lr=&id=j31aDwAAQBAJ&oi=fnd&pg=PA1983&dq=architectural+socially+engaged+practices&ots=oh00Hv3Zf&sig=xAl9zC1N57I9euoVIHPm4TDkks#v=onepage&q=architectural%20socially%20engaged%20practices&f=false>

[SO-IL temporary architecture documentary | MAAT x Virtual Design Festival | Dezeen](#)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LwUOaeXLbrQ>



From this video, I've started to realise my approach to design was completely backwards or opposite to what I understand now. Now I know that a space emerges from people doing people things and then the form flows out of this like a stream along the gorge of least resistance. And this starts not by thinking of concepts, but through the observation and research of studying people living and behaving in the environment.

# Case Study 1

10 April 2025 14:18

## Case study 1: Creating a network of artists and creatives - South Square

### Intro:

State the case study,  
why I'm studying them  
and what I aim to get out of it.

As the business is grounded in supporting creatives in industry, it was important to gain insight into how other businesses are doing this. Mainly, Plein Sight should support a network comprising of both established artists and the general public as to incorporate creativity back into society. For this, South Square is the perfect precedent to study for this, having grassroot beginnings as a series of cottages renovate by art students in the 1970s. Through an empirical study, the aim is to define ways South Square Centre has developed a network as a creative business.

### Investigation:

Provide evidence and research actions taken for this case study.

Time line - 75

Empirical research -

Differences - 50

Similarities - 50

What they do today - 75

SWOT analysis - 100

Link back to the intro

### Evaluation:

Summarise findings - 50

State how it will influence my next business actions

## Experience (Strength)

As of writing this case study, a month has passed since working at South Square 1 day a week. Within this time much was revealed within their operational hours about how they've built a network within their cottage walls. As a grassroots arts centre, several artists have taken up residency in the studios. These artists have formed a community amongst themselves, hosting several art **check what these groups are called**. In the summer, a social event will be happening to which takes place in the garden. The Thornton knitting group 'Knit and Natter' assemble every Wednesday in the gallery space to make knitted crafts while socialising. The designated community room facilitates many other social activities. Wednesdays alone sees a weekly collective of art students constructively critiquing each other's work and the evening welcomes a yoga group into the space. A common theme throughout South Square's ability to create a network is in the physical bounds of the centre, being used to serve the community on top of showcasing their work. Thus the locations that help form our connections with each other are integral to creating human networks within a business.

### Public facing (Weaknesses)

With all the strengths that lie within South Square as a venue, this has several limitations with how they operate. South Square consists of a small group of 4-5 people running the gallery. The studios residents run autonomously to the centre, along with the connecting bar and café. Due to the wide spread of facilities, the actual face of South Square is blurred: people may have a drink the bar without ever stepping foot inside the gallery. South Square maintains its identity as an arts organisation by working closely or adjacent with the two public spaces. For example café displays the work of collaborating artists on rotation and designs food and drinks around their work. Additionally, from the outside in, the Garden is open to all and welcomes people to enjoy the valleys of the viaduct in the back yard. Through this, South Square becomes a 'sanctuary' that proudly encourages connection and community.

### Connections (Opportunities)

As is standard for the arts industry, South square makes many connections with the local community, organisations and even internationally. The upcoming even in the summer, Thornton art trail, will turn the local area and viaduct into a pathway incorporating arts and crafts. This is in collaboration with local secondary school, Beckfoot Thornton, to produce art and creative works on the trail. One way that South Square develops collaborations such as these is through their board members consisting of others in the local arts sector. Through connectivity, South Square develops working relationships within its local community, to then offer creative opportunities to the local area.

### Queries (Threats)

Within the arts sector, the success of a organisation is reliant on people. Both on people interacting with the programme and on the people who make the event. Deciding on ticketing for child centred events is an example where both parties of people were pivotal on a decision. Prior to finalising, events and workshops for children were free entry, however, this yielded low turn outs. South Square's action was to implement a different ticketing pricing options. I also took to asking the Bradford 2025 team and after conferring with each other, we decided on **[INSERT PLAN]**. Through communication between each other and organisations, creative businesses can maintain a feasible ticketing model.

### Conclusion

South Square has maintained a strong network of creatives since its opening as an arts centre in 1982. From its use of location and traditional cottage architecture, collaboration with the local community, and communication with other organisations, South Square was and is built on the connections between creatives. This multifaceted look into the working day at South Square has allowed me to deduce 3 key criteria that will ensure the feasibility of Plein Sight: The business must use a constant location effectively to serve the community; Allow the business's values and work trickle into every day public spaces, such as cafes, restaurant, and offices; and communicate with creatives in the area and work with them.

## Case Study 2

10 April 2025 14:18

Case study 2: Community art pieces/ Socially engaged practices - focussing on community DESIGNED and CONSTRUCTED structures. - ALICE: Atelier de la Conception de l'Espace (Atelier of the conception of space)

### Intro:

State the case study, why I'm studying them and what I aim to get out of it.

### Investigation:

Provide evidence and research actions taken for this case study.  
SWOT analysis  
Link back to the intro

### Evaluation:

Summarise findings  
State how it will influence my next business actions

Another aspect to Plein Sight is showcasing what the community is able to achieve creatively. This will take the form of an installation made and designed by members of the network, summarised as socially engaged practices. This aims to create elevating opportunities for artists to lead on a project and valuable team experiences for early creatives in their career.

To explore the impacts of socially engaged practices, we will look towards the work conducted by ALICE (Atelier de la Conception de l'Espace), based in the EPFL (École Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne) a research university in Lausanne, Switzerland. Led by Dieter Dietz, the project aims to analyse how we can innovate in the ways society works together and learns, all through the holistic study of the nature, our urban environment and humans.

The specific project that will be analysed in this case study will be HOUSE 2 - COUNTER CITY, the second iteration of the HOUSE projects initiated by ALICE and one that has shown substantial impact within its community. Focussing on HOUSE 2 will provide a look at the past influence of HOUSE 1 and how it's spirit continued through the community with HOUSE 2 REPLAY. Through this study, invaluable insight will be gained on how a socially engaged practice can be feasible within the programme and values of Plein Sight.

From its inception, the project's goal was to spark change with society's way of living together. This project originally took inspiration from Richard Sennett's 'Together', who suggests that cooperation requires skill on top of good will; With modern society needing to develop new methods of working and living together, which incorporates skilful workflows. (<https://www.penguin.co.uk/books/55382/together-by-sennett-richard/9780141022109>) ALICE responds to this by constructing a temporary frame from timber, which makes the spaces flexible and malleable to the person inhabiting the space. Through this interaction, HOUSE 2 aims to create a 'pedagogical tool,' aiding people in learning through the design process, providing tacitly to the meaning of co-working. (<https://tmagazine.com/house-2-counter-city/>) From this, it is clear that ALICE aims to reconfigure society to make a change towards collaborative working, which aligns Plein Sight's visions of reshaping society to value an under-appreciated aspect of society.

### Strengths

One of the major strengths of House 2 was that it was engaging the wider community rather than solely the university campus which is what HOUSE 1 was focused on. This allowed ALICE to practise their study on a wider audience, which furthers their research into community cooperation as a way to develop and learn. Another strength can be found with their collaboration with Zurich University of Arts who have set a series of programmed events in conjunction with the venue. This grants ALICE with a guaranteed audience to test the event, under different contexts such as music, theatre and exhibitions, therefore providing additional insight in how we interact with the project.

### Weaknesses

While the project succeeds as a research project, some oversights can emerge retrospectively. The first one being the reliance on prescribed programmes that may not happen organically as part of living. This skews the results to proposed the potential uses of a space like this and doesn't directly analyse how the present community interacts with the structure. The second neglected aspect is in regards to the people working on the projects. The project is still worked on by students, putting a limit on the intentions of the structure, only suite the needs of a student, rather than the public. How would a market vendor design the space? How would religious figures use the structure? Would younger working people interact in the project in the same way? While the project is focused on developing, through practical means, how a community is able to work together, it also aims to spark debate on such topic, where they could even elaborate on and put into action.

### Opportunities

Due to the intentions of the project, opportunities of further community development and progression has already happened through HOUSE 2 - Replay. (<https://livingarchives.epfl.ch/projects/5891/house-2-replay/>) This was led by a group of 20 students who took the idea of the original HOUSE 2 - Counter City and reproduced it in a different location. While it may be within the same network, the fact that the legacy of the past project has continued under a different group shows that there is a desire for projects like these to be more frequent. This also shows a positive reaction to the values and goals of the project, working towards spaces that facilitate a collaborative, pedagogical way of working as a society.

### Threats

As with a lot of community projects, the major threat is it's dependency on willing participants. With the additional context of this being a construction project, the risk of accident would impact the interactivity of the structure as well as the health of the participants. However, these issues have not occurred nor reported on, which raises the question how ALICE have avoided this? Through scrutiny of the provided sources, it can be deduced that a successful project has been achieved through rigorous planning and collaborative expertise, evident by their detailed schedules and drawn scale plans ([https://ia-living-archives-2021.s3-zh.os.switch.ch/filer\\_public/97/61/976155b9-267d-4b5e-b731-c4d8fd2fa599/y1\\_2015-16\\_20150908\\_alice\\_2015-16\\_map\\_250x1650mmpf.pdf](https://ia-living-archives-2021.s3-zh.os.switch.ch/filer_public/97/61/976155b9-267d-4b5e-b731-c4d8fd2fa599/y1_2015-16_20150908_alice_2015-16_map_250x1650mmpf.pdf)) What this signifies for Plein Sight is to provide a detailed roadmap to design it's built projects, and for the outcomes to include extensive and well thought out plans with risk assessments.

From this analysis, there are two ways of looking at HOUSE 2: As a research project, they were successful in their practice, in producing a temporary structure that has and will engage its local community to work and learn collaboratively. Alternatively, the project provides an ideal preview of how a community lead structure could work to reconfigure how society interacts with each other. In both cases, each one informs how Plein Sight can evolve its practical and activist elements.

<https://www.epfl.ch/labs/alice/>

<https://livingarchives.epfl.ch/projects/?type=Collection&sort=date%E2%96%BC&search=y1&collection=476>

ALICE aims at valuing environment, built habitat and bodies as mutual resources. Founded by Dieter Dietz, the laboratory aims at experimenting techniques and devices of mental-physical navigation: thinking/making, drawing, event/performance, experimental writing, archaeology (catalogue) of architectural practices. In all these practices, we look at processes and operations aiming at engendering new forms of collaboration and cohabitation. We are many and this plurality offers us the chance to design in a real collective dimension.

### 2015 - 2016

HOUSE 1 is a pedagogical installation that comprises 12 studio projects built in full scale.

Built first as protostructure – a 11m x 11m x 11m balloon-frame timber construct holding the genetic code for the future projects – HOUSE 1 is an experimental format for collaborative design and construction in architectural education. As a physical manifestation of a conceptual framework the protostructure federates principles of organizing space and its construction. Over 200 students have designed and participated in a process of negotiating space, culture, idea, and the building of ONE HOUSE that still manifests the diversity of the 12 studio projects that have been articulated in groups of about 20 people.

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Each studio project consists of a project for a ROOM – a space that accommodates INHABITATION, or a TRANSITIONAL SPACE – porch, stairs, doorway or the like – that provides for CONNECTIVITY. Boundaries between projects are zones of negotiation and often naturally blurred. Accordingly each project is strongly contextualized by the others and enters into multilayered dialogical discourse with its surroundings. The spatial experience of HOUSE 1 is therefore not that of a homogenous architecture but rather that of an unfolding evolution of a space in question, often still hovering in potentialities, and open for interpretation.

In modern society traditional bonds are waning, and we must develop new forms of secular, civic ritual that make us more skilful in living with others.

From <<https://www.penguin.co.uk/books/55382/together-by-sennett-richard/9780141022109>>

### 2017

#### HOUSE 2 - COUNTER CITY

([www.counter-city.ch](http://www.counter-city.ch)) is a 240 square metre public architectural installation situated next to the Toni-Areal in Zurich. The project is based on an experimental format for collaborative design and construction conceived by ALICE (Atelier de la Conception de l'Espace).

The previous year's experiment, HOUSE 1, was the configuration of an archetypal house collectively built as an in-vitro condition: an on-campus installation in Lausanne, by students for students. The rooms of HOUSE 1 were engaged primarily in forming a series of interior relations: HOUSE 2 has evolved from this premise, turning outward, setting itself in relation to the city, and becoming a common place of activity and urban participation.

In order to foster civic engagement, ALICE, in close collaboration with the Zurich University of the Arts (ZHdK), has jointly programmed a series of events for summer 2017 to take place in the context of the installation, between May 31st and June 15th. These include guided tours, theatre and music performances, a sound installation, symposia, student critiques and exhibitions, and an open-air cinema.

To quote Dieter Dietz, "through these activities, HOUSE 2 expands the practice of collaboration into the public sphere of the city. As a forum installation, it provides a space for active exchange, debate and discussion involving the entire community."

From Zurich West, HOUSE 2 travelled on to Lausanne, where it took on a new form and new programme during the summer of 2017. In autumn, the structure was disassembled and the wood preserved to be reconfigured into HOUSE 3 for 2018.

#### HOUSE 2 REPLAY

After the ephemeral constructions of HOUSE 2 – COUNTER CITY in Zurich in June 2017, REPLAY HOUSE 2 in Lausanne-Ouest was built in July 2017.

A small team of about 20 students re-designed and participated in the process of negotiating the idea and the construction of one new project with and from the structural framework used in HOUSE 2 – COUNTER CITY.