

LiA: Community and culture centres. Comparison between Dublin and Copenhagen



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The Brief

Project Deliverables/Leadership tasks

Led an informal workshop focusing on cultural exchange and folk tradition preservation.

Assisted in the running of cultural and community events, including music events, community kitchens and local festivals.

Engaged with local stakeholders and event spaces to produce a preliminary report on the accessibility of community cultural spaces in Copenhagen and Dublin.

Plans for change and change of plans

Initially I was to lead a workshop on the role of the European Union at a local level.

After arriving in Copenhagen and experiencing the high quality cultural and community spaces open to the public, my focus shifted - to understand how this rich community infrastructure operates, and what we could learn from it in my home city of Dublin.

While I continued to volunteer at a number of local events (primarily relating to the music scene), I began researching the difference in policy between the two cities and observing the functioning of the many cultural and community events I took part in.

The Results

Preliminary findings: comparison of policy on providing cultural spaces in Dublin and Copenhagen

Dublin

Dedicated cultural spaces: few and far between

Difficulty of finding free or discounted spaces

Decentralised - difficulty locating spaces

Need to be 'in the know'/have contacts

Often school or church spaces

Expense: high cost of living renders many spaces inaccessible to locals - venue hire costs can be extortionate

Exclusivity (example: Trinity College Dublin)

Copenhagen

Access to municipal **Kulturhuse** (culture houses)

Accessibility: admission is free/price of a coffee/pay what you can

Municipality-supported - free or cheap venue hire

Often linked to other public services eg libraries

Dedicated cultural spaces, local funding available

Recommendations (Dublin)

Free/council-funded venue hire for community/cultural events.

Creation of 'culture houses' for community events.

Repurposing of derelict buildings and sites.

Database of existing venues for events, detailing costs and grants available to organisers.

Improve visibility and processing time for local initiative grants.

Reflections and conclusion

My LiA taught me more than anything the importance of trusting my gut and understanding when I am the most qualified person to do something and when it's better to step back.

I also learned the importance of being confident in the things I am qualified for, and the importance of speaking up and asserting myself at appropriate times.

I would like to take my project further by compiling a full report and submitting my recommendations to Dublin City Council to try and make accessible cultural spaces a reality in my home city.

