

Ecosystem Digbeth

Digbeth and the potential for Birmingham City University (BCU) to contribute to its ecosystem, within Birmingham's growth strategy

This study report is analysing the relationship of Birmingham City University (BCU) and Digbeth (Birmingham), undertaken by Multiplicities in 2015

Ecosystem Digbeth

Imprint

© by Dr. Bastian Lange, Multiplicities
Brehmestrasse 22
13187 Berlin
Germany

www.multiplicities.berlin

MULTIPLICITIES

CREATIVE ECONOMIES
SOCIAL DESIGN
URBANISM

Outline Study Report



Study Report Approach	4

Study Report Approach



Task

To catalyse the eco-system around the Birmingham City University, BCU seeks to prepare a clear, evidence based approach on how to make use of existing talent streams and students activities, what the needs of existing local stakeholders are, as well as on the capitalisation of experts knowledge and on the role of SMEs boosting the eco system. By taking into account the eco-system perspective in Digbeth, the following aspects lead our thinking and understanding of an emerging eco-system in Digbeth:

Objectives

Digbeth is considered a district within Birmingham City Centre. As part of the Big City Plan, the area is undergoing a large redevelopment scheme that will regenerate the old industrial buildings into apartments, retail premises, offices and arts facilities. There is still however much industrial activity in the south of the area.

The Study Report asks to what extend economic links between existing organisations in Digbeth (= ecosystem analysis) work in an efficient and productive way or not. The study report aims at identifying gaps in the ecosystem, which are not currently filled locally. What are necessary ingredients and assets to provide a better locally-engaged eco-system?

The overall interest is to find out what people think about the links between the talent stream, expert knowledge, existing stakeholders and SMEs. Knowing how to meet their needs will allow us to draw a tailor-made conclusion that leads to growth and beneficial relationships in Digbeth.

Study Report Approach



Methodology

Focus 1: economic links between existing organisations in Digbeth (= ecosystem analysis)

Focus 2: identification of gaps in the ecosystem which are not currently filled locally

Focus 3: perceived pros and cons of working in partnership with BCU

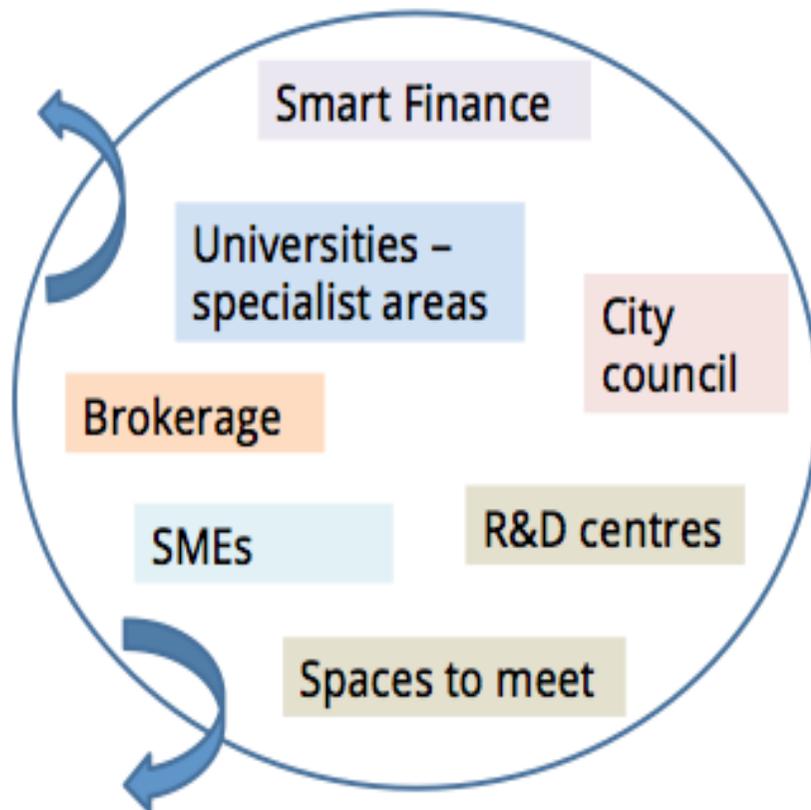
Focus 4: identification of facilities/resources currently lacking which would be of benefit to the existing ecosystem (i.e. identifying needs)

Expected findings

On the basis of these user-centre information and perceptions, we are aiming at developing eco-system policies and practices to support this process. The report will provide guidance on the selection of SMEs who will establish new, cross-boundary relationships, linking the creative sector with other growth sectors as well as with local programs and the offers of the BCU. The overall focus of the study report is to establish a proposition for/on how the needs of the ecosystem could be met in the near future. The aim is also to reconsider how the university's expertise in Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics could be used more effectively and to what extend new platforms, centres or temporary occasions (in the sense of an interdisciplinary centre) can be established as strong drivers to boost the eco-system in Digbeth.

What is an ecosystem?

Ecosystem



Defining eco-system

Using the biological metaphor of ecosystem to apply on social and urban relations, we are taking into account the communicatively established social relations among state, private entities and civic societies around a spatial area. The thematic focus of an ecosystem is dedicated to a specific objective, e.g. organising economic growth or improving governance relations.

Defining network relations in culture and creative contexts

Basically, networks can be divided into professional and personal networks. However, this distinction seems not to be suited in case of many creative workers. The social, temporal as well as spatial flexibilisation of work makes the boundaries between home, work and leisure more fluid and personal contacts can hardly be divided into private or business contacts, especially in the creative industries. Generally speaking, networks in the creative industries should not be assumed to be purely economic production networks, but rather mixed production, service industry and consumer networks. For these 'new entrepreneurs', mostly self-employed people without further employees' networks are of high importance

Why do the quality of social networks matter for cultural and creative economies?

Generally speaking, social networks in the creative industries should not be assumed to be purely economic production networks, but rather reciprocal and mixed production of service industry and consumer networks.

Introducing Digbeth



Location patterns

In the 19th century, Digbeth was one of the most heavily industrialized areas of town. Railways arrived at Moor Street Station. Digbeth was also accessed by the Grand Union Canal and the Digbeth Branch Canal. Today, there are two conservation areas: Digbeth, Deritend, and Bordesley High Streets Conservation Area and the Warwick Bar Conservation Area. Even if many companies closed down, there is still some industrial activity like manufacturing and car services. On the other hand the creative economy is emerging in the area, including digital technologies, design, TV production and arts.

Geographical patterns

Digbeth is an area in the south east of Birmingham. It is considered as part of the city center since the Inner Ring Road has been destroyed. Birmingham City University (Eastside) is located about half a mile north of Digbeth. The central train station Birmingham New Street lies within a ten minutes walk. Birmingham will be connected to the High Speed Railway System in 2026 and is therefore constructing the new train station Curzon. It will be right next to Digbeth and journey time to London will be reduced to 49 minutes.

Context information

Digbeth represents a challenge for city planners: How should it be used and given a proper identity? As the creative sector can play an important role in urban regeneration and place-making, Birmingham City Council sees the current situation in Digbeth as an opportunity. The district is meant to become a "flourishing creative and cultural hub for the city" (BCC Big City Plan). By developing the area in the context of the new High Speed Train station, the city hopes to create new jobs and attracts investors from London and beyond.

Planning for and around Digbeth



Planning documents

A series of reports have prepared the transformation processes in Birmingham: First and most notable, the **Creative City Partnership**, particularly their reports “Spaces, places and clouds” as well as “Academy of Academies”. Both have for example raised the attention for the strategic role of places as occasions for serendipity processes among like-minded thinkers and practitioner.

A series of reports have prepared the transformation processes in Birmingham: first, there is the 2010 Big City Plan, which incorporates the **City Centre Masterplan** released in July 2011 and the **Birmingham Curzon HS2** planning document from February 2014.

The Birmingham Development Plan 2031 will set out the statutory planning framework to guide decisions on development and regeneration in Birmingham until 2031. Furthermore, the Birmingham City University published the **Strategic Plan 2020** which does also contain relevant information on the future of Digbeth.

Beyond those plans, a partnership of 40 organisations, including the BBC, Microsoft, BT, the Chamber of Commerce, and the Birmingham universities, as well as Fazeley studios, the Bond, Eastside Projects, Custard Factory and Boxxed, has been installed as part of the strategy “**Digital Birmingham**”.

It aims to encourage investment in digital projects and the uptake of broadband across the city to generate economic and sustainable growth, promote greater social inclusion, and improve the quality of life.

Planning for and around Digbeth



Big City Plan. Birmingham Curzon HS2 (based on the Eastside Masterplan of 2011)

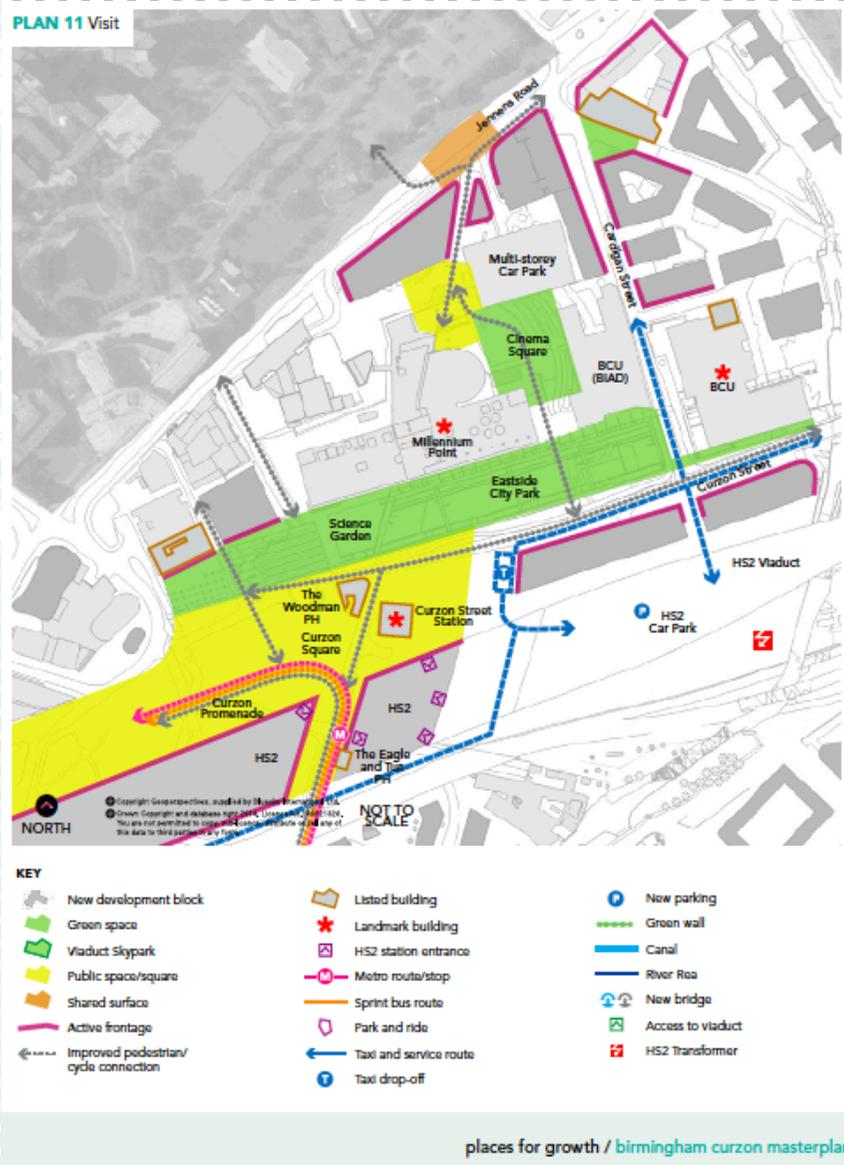
Within the connection of Birmingham to the High Speed Railway System in 2026, this planning document foresees the provision of a southern exit to the Eastside concourse which should align with the railway arches across Andover Street to create a legible route into Digbeth.

Paternoster Place will be transformed into a wide, landscaped plaza that will improve pedestrian connections into Digbeth and open up the regeneration potential of the area,

The plan sets out a City Centre Enterprise, including several sites in Digbeth. Further objectives for the Digbeth area are

- strengthen its historic character by using some of the old buildings;
- creating a high quality sustainable residential neighborhood focused around the canals;
- focusing on cultural activities: growing the arts and live music scenes as well as innovative public art;
- provide attractive walking, cycling and public transport routes.

Developing Digbeth



Birmingham Development Plan 2031 (Pre- submission 2013)

The Birmingham Development Plan 2031 will, once it is adopted, become part of the City's statutory planning framework guiding decisions on all development and regeneration activity over the period to 2031. Regarding Digbeth, the objectives stay the same: the creation of a gateway to Digbeth from the new Curzon station; making Digbeth a thriving creative and cultural hub with a high quality, exciting and easily accessible environment.

Birmingham City University Strategic Plan 2020

BCU's vision is to be recognized as the leading University for creative and professional practice-based education in the UK. The plan therefor sets out several objectives;

- e.g. supporting economic, social and cultural improvement in the city region;
- foster practice-based education, research and knowledge exchange; actively participate in the cultural and creative sectors of the city and region;
- become a leading business-engaged University in the region, supporting innovation and competitiveness in local and regional businesses;
- increase student and staff engagement in the wider community through volunteering, active participation and sharing knowledge.

With an established presence in Millennium Point since 2001, the University completed Phase 1 of its new campus development, with the opening of the Parkside Building in 2013. The Building provides facilities for the University's art, design and media courses which perfectly match with the emerging creative economy in Digbeth.

Cultural Events: Driver for bottom-up development and reputation building



Digbeth First Friday

A monthly event celebrating the cultural delights of Digbeth.

Warwick Bar

As owners of Warwick Bar, Isis Waterside Regeneration is committed to doing things differently with a focus on the flexible use and cultural life of their schemes. They have developed a cultural-led approach working closely with the network of tenants to establish a creative, mixed-use neighbourhood which celebrates new ideas and facilitates innovation.

Eastside Projects

Eastside Projects is an ever-evolving space run by practicing artists who pull in both local and international talents. The space provides exhibitions, installations and talks.

Dining Club

Digbeth Dining Club is a multi award winning event that has changed the face of Brum's alternative food scene since it started in 2012. Their aim is to introduce the best locally sourced 'street food' to Birmingham, by creating a platform for the West Midlands finest street artisans to produce incredible food in front of their customers – by providing honest food that you can trust, Digbeth Dining Club at affordable prices.

Flatpack

Flatpack's newest strand Swipeside sees the festival collaborate with Birmingham City University for an animation focused few days. which is also advert for new students to come study at BCU.

Recent trends in Digbeth



Digital Start-ups

In 2014, StartUp Britain confirmed that Birmingham had the most new business start-ups in the UK outside London in 2013.

Digbeth (postcode B5) had 268 start-ups in 2013 – 2.3% of the total for Birmingham. This places our tiny patch of the city as the 13th start-up hotspot in Birmingham.

Social Enterprises

Birmingham has one of the largest concentrations of social enterprises in the country and the number is highest in the Digbeth/Highgate area, where over 50 social enterprises are currently based.

The Digbeth, Highgate and Cheapside Social Enterprise Network (DHCSSEN) is an informal group, which has been meeting every other month since 2012. Its members are keen to engage in making the DSEQ work. They want to demonstrate the benefit to both their social enterprises and the local area of collaborating and creating a cluster in a particular place.

xy

„Creative Digbeth“ in a nutshell



is digbeth, birmingham the new clubbing capital of britain?



Strengths

- Digbeth represents a wide mixed of small-scale artists, cultural producers, media/digital entrepreneurs, gallery spaces
- Disconnected to that cultural field, there are many garage dealers, metal brushers, retailers
- Art and music festivals play a very important role attracting local and international audiences
- The build environment is considered to be an important heritage for Birmingham and the Midlands
- Digbeth has a cool attraction
- Many creative industries companies are allocated in Digbeth, a growing number of start ups, curators, artists
- Coworking, BCU-led cross-sectorial activities are held in Digbeth
- First Friday, Dining Club and events of the Eastside projects create temporary attraction

Weaknesses

- Many cultural protagonists operate rather disconnected to other cultural-creative producers and artists.
- Furthermore, the art and cultural sector operates disconnected (door-to-door) to service sector, garage dealers, logistics and retailers.
- Mutual interaction is rare, and takes only places temporarily
- Digbeth is considered to be an unsafe area during nights
- Visibility to access “hidden spaces” is missing and could be improved
- Public realm qualities are underdeveloped

Knowledge-sector in Digbeth: Perspectives of the new role of Birmingham City University (BCU)



Spatial and thematic repositioning of the BCU

Birmingham City University has invested 180 Million Pounds in the Millennium Dome. Along with that investment, the University aims at acting more pro-active, entrepreneurial and more collaborative.

To catalyse the eco-system around the Birmingham City University, wants to make use of existing talent streams and students activities as well as on the capitalisation SMEs boosting the eco system in Birmingham.

Questions / thoughts how BCU could invest into Digbeth

- Highlighting the role of external students and providing challenging as well as competitive opportunities?
- Due to its inner-city presence, BCU should act as a spatial Brokerage also regarding workplaces and micro-places.
- Extending work relations with new institutions in Digbeth
- Co-designing and generating matchmaking opportunities with other sectors and with cultural institution from Digbeth.
- Working more jointly with existing cultural and creative representatives on the basis of a cross-innovation approach
- Developing new working relations in the city, taking on a pro-active role to actively invite other sectors to come to Digbeth
- Making use of existing stakeholder groups and build new relationships on new topics, e.g. the „low-carbon“ group.
- Making use of existing strengths, e.g. EU-funding and taking on a new role as strategic European funding partner for smaller protagonists from Digbeth.

How do artists, cultural intermediaries, activists, and cultural entrepreneurs perceive Digbeth?



How did we work?

To define specific possible ways of interaction and support, we conducted interviews among the local stakeholders, asking them how they perceive Digbeth and the role of the BCU.

Furthermore, we were using existing reports and planning documents in order to contextualize the on-going efforts of Birmingham to initiate economic growth in Greater Birmingham.

Who did we talk to? (see list in Appendix)

We were interviewing key cultural activists, artists, and performer as well as cultural intermediaries in Digbeth.

During several stakeholder meetings and workshop on the 28th and 29th of April in Digbeth, we were able to encounter up to 30 (new) stakeholders while exchanging with the BCU group "Transforming the region".

This empirical material has been rolled-out and clustered according the ecosystem perspective.

On the basis of this, first findings will be presented as well as recommendation how to develop the first networks between BCU and the cultural-creative people of Digbeth. A short outlook will be given on how the industry and manufacturing sector (or others) could play a vital role strengthening the local ecosystem.

Perceiving Digbeth

“There is a hype about Digbeth already. But not everything is formally structured, it’s quite organic.”

How do the artists and creative professionals perceive Digbeth?

Digbeth is perceived as an area where a creative community evolved in an organic way, which is its strength. There currently is a hype about it but artists fear that the slow development has reached its end.

There is much going on in Digbeth but stakeholders could still be more connected to each other and work together more, especially cross-sectorial. Artists do work with other artists but they do not cooperate with the film industry for example.

There is however one good examples for joint activities between the two which the Flatpak film festival. It is also perceived as a broker between small organizations and the BCU.

Although Digbeth is seen as an area where much cultural activity takes place, there is not enough accessible information about it.

That’s why Eastside Projects developed Birmingham Art Map together with Grand Union. It is an interactive map listing all exhibitions and events that take place in Birmingham and especially in Digbeth.

Perceiving Digbeth

“Development of Digbeth? We are part of it! We have ARTMAP! We have “Best Friday”

So far, BCU is not part of it...”

How do the artists and creative professionals perceive Digbeth?

Main issue is at the moment that it seems we have reached the ceiling of growth. I graduated from BCU 20 years ago and worked in different organisations in arts here, but as there was non of them I really wanted to work with for on a long term, I decided to set up my own organisation about 5 years ago

So there are maybe not enough different organisations that make people stay here. Additionally there is a struggle in terms of space: most of the properties in Digbeth are owned by a handful of landlords. So there is a lack of spaces.

There are very strong interlinkages between the organisations working in arts, we are engaging in eastside projects, we organise a festival to bring them together beyond that we are connected to that kind of commercial culture, like record stores or skateboard shops.

Perceiving Digbeth

“Digbeth is not part of the mind-set of Birmingham...”

Digbeth is kind of a mystical beast - someone needs to understand what it even means.”

How do the artists and creative professionals perceive Digbeth? Interviewees stated:

“the BCU doesn’t use the potential of the area as much as they could - there are a lot of organisations they could work with here”

“Because students do not come here because the BCU is known for their research, they should focus on the practical side, connecting students with organisations and developing the area around to make it more attractive to students”

“They also don’t encourage their students to stay in the city they way it is now”

“the students should be better informed of what is going on in Digbeth, critical mass, better relationship with the city maybe integrate it in the curriculum”

“The public funding here in Bham is low so they should take real leadership, financial investment, this could be interesting”

“Digbeth should become a great place that people that people wanna come to to stay”

We are aware that Digbeth is Birmingham, but there is no information where is it, how to get to Digbeth...Digbeth is not part of the mind-set of Birmingham. It is hard to find it, it is difficult to find, they do not know that there is not only car garages but Art, Design etc. pp.

Perceiving Digbeth

“I don’t understand what the BCU researchers mean by “Digbeth”, it’s an area, but the experience of the space is different.”

- It’s not transparent, the connect between research and the world outside, it’s not enough
- It’s sometimes feels like another world but it should be more involved
- I do imagine they don’t really have a good knowledge of what is going on in Digbeth
- How are they able to engage when things change quickly most useful collaboration - university is thinking in blocks of 10 years but some organisations are thinking in terms of 10 months. So the University should be aware of the quick changes that take part in Digbeth
- BCU could learn from those organisations in terms of equipment: there has been some kind of crossover use - to have more of it would be useful, access to technology, to equipment, this was interesting for us when the partnership started
- Synchronising time rhythm could be a way to tackle this there should be more invitation to collaborate with them
- Communication should be used more to create a broader knowledge
- Very often they only communicate because it fits into a bigger agenda, so the relationship is often only project-led - > they should be extended beyond that

Perceiving Digbeth



Weaknesses

- Smaller institutions lack a long term funding
- Culture council only funds bigger (conventional) institutions and also do marketing for them
- Digbeth is used as parking space for the City center
- The area is not very costumer friendly - costumers do not wanna come there
- Lack of cafés etc. - lack of costumers for those connection between University and Digbeth is not very good
- Improve the pathway, install street signs „10 minutes walk to Digbeth“ or artists could work on a kind of public commissions, this would make the place friendlier and attract more people
- Fear of High Speed Train: increase the rents, make artists leave
- The boot sell and market area will also be destroyed which will make people that survive barely above poverty to live fater away, their source of income is gone though - include them in any development
- Organization are not visible, there should be more data on them

Perceiving Digbeth

„Collaboration with BCU would be great, because it's down the road“

Strengths

- Strong cultural and artistic events that stretch far beyond the radius of local audiences but include specific international audiences.
- Digbeth allows small start-ups and artists, cultural projects to find a niche to start, to begin, to test out raw ideas.
- There is a growing number of events, cultural festivals that address everyday needs (such as food, repair, education, and learning) next to cultural and artistic actions.
- xy

How do representatives of the cultural and creative sector perceive the current network relations between Digbeth and the BCU?

MADE
BIRMINGHAM

- The BCU is perceived as a big influential player that could actively support small organizations in Digbeth, for example by taking the role as a broker.
- The University is also perceived as far away from Digbeth although geographically it is right next-door.
- Several organizations are or were already working in partnership with the university.
- The relation is stronger between the BCU and the film industry or the industrial sector than between the university and smaller organizations.
- Some of them tried to initiate projects with students for example but it was hard to find participants.
- Furthermore, the slow administration in contrast to the quick changes in the creative businesses is perceived as a hindrance, for example when it comes to changes in the curriculum.
- The horizontal communication in the BCU could be improved and transparency should be an issue. There seem to be researchers from different departments of the BCU that are interested in building relationships with organizations in Digbeth. They could join forces.
- Decision making takes place inside and not in a transparent way. Communication and transparency could be improved.

What pros and cons or working in partnership with BCU are perceived?



Pros

- BCU is a big player with a lot of contacts and influence
- BCU could be strong in local and regional brokerage
- BCU is not far away
- The Parkside Gallery
- BCU should promote where there are and what could be of interest in the near surroundings.

Cons

- Only occasional collaboration
- Slow administration
- BCU should promote where there are and what could be of interest in the near surroundings.
- “We would be interested e.g. in the department of architecture”
- Regarding media students; we were hoping to produce short videos of the artists we are working with here but haven't managed to get the right person or students that would have done this

What gaps have been identified in the ecosystem and are not currently filled locally ?



- As Digbeth is perceived as a rather unsafe area, many organisations are lacking costumers.
- In their opinion, some more shops and cafés could be of benefit. Digbeth should become more accessible and open.
- There is also not much marketing undertaken for the area at the moment.
- Furthermore, the access to markets could be improved to diversify the sources of income of the art sector.
- Long term funding is not available or not suited for small companies, which is a huge problem. (The Arts Council funds bigger and more conventional organisations)
- The film industry states that students with particular skills are needed, for example in special effects. Stronger cooperation with the BCU could identify current needs.
- Smaller institutions lack a long term funding (Culture council only funds bigger (conventional) institutions and also do marketing for them)
- Connection between University and Digbeth is not very good / improve the pathway, install street signs „10 minutes walk to Digbeth“ or let artists work on a kind of public commission, this would make the place friendlier and attract more people
- Local organization are not visible, there should be more data on them.

What facilities/
resources are
currently lacking
and which ones
would be of benefit
to the existing
ecosystem?

Facilities and resources that improve the ecosystem:

- Wider range of different costumers and partner groups
- Wider access to markets and economic gateways
- Long term funding and financing models that are available for small companies
- Students with particular skills needed in the film industry - if companies hire by degree and not by CV; students are needed with skills in producers, special effects ..
- Qualified staff, especially in the film industry (lack of resources to pay them)
- Marketing for the area (including street signs etc. to make it more accessible and provide a stronger visibility and brand)
- More diversity of organizations that start to create professional representations in order to promote the capacity of Digbeth-based enterprises.
- Organisations in Digbeth should be encouraged to create briefs while the students should be encouraged to apply to them and work with them.

What could be done to strengthen the BCU-Digbeth relations?

#1

Digbeth needs a long term advocacy strategy. More success stories could be promoted, e.g. through image films about visual arts organisations, an activity that could connect institutions of different areas like arts and digital media.

Research projects could be initiated in cooperation with small organisations in Digbeth. Especially stakeholders of the art sector are interested in research projects that would connect them to other institutions (in Europe) and to exchange knowledge (e.g. through the European Culture Program or the tandem program) or to support the research of the BCU (e.g. on the impact of civic organisations).

More festivals or summer schools could be organised or the existing ones could be the basis for a more formal relationship with the BCU. It is also a good opportunity to involve students.

The students should be better informed about activities in Digbeth, e.g. by receiving the Birmingham Art Map for free. Projects with local stakeholders could be put in place and should be honored with Credit Points to motivate students. Workshops could take place in Digbeth for example or parts of pre-productions of the film industry could be outsourced to students. External lectures working in Digbeth could be invited; discussions with local stakeholders could be initiated.

The training of the students should include more liaisons to the industry to identify industrial needs like within the project "the agency" that encourages external partnerships but which is not known very well, (or the "teach first scheme" where graduates work in a company for 6 weeks).

What could be done to strengthen the BCU-Digbeth relations?

#2

The University aims to support the organic development of Digbeth and to make it sustainable for the future. In many different ways, the BCU could support the Creative Industries in the area and benefit from it, for example by engaging more students within the organisations, via internships or projects, or by providing co-working spaces.

As a big organisation, the BCU could act as a broker, helping them to access markets or the business community and to getting better known. They could also raise awareness for the small organisations and promote their needs among the City Council.

The role and connection to Park Side Gallery should be strengthened. Furthermore, the BCU could offer skills in management, marketing or data processing, e.g. through funding internships or offering consulting.

The BCU could support quicker collaboration formats and innovation funding (micro-credits).

An open access makerspace/workshop or fablab could be provided to connect students, the community and the different sectors in one building. An existing unused industrial space should be used for this. (It could also be used or visited by schools)

The University could also act as a broker between the few landlords that own available spaces in Digbeth and the small organisations on the ground.

Observations and findings of our interviews

1



Present perception of artists and cultural professionals

- Strong but fragmented cultural basis in Digbeth
- Vibrant bottom-up cultural activities, emerging co-production activities with digital start-up flavour.

Accessibility

- Affordable spaces for local start-ups
- International artistic and cultural audiences

Networks and Professionalization

- Selective internal ("Digbeth-oriented") networks
- Specific thematic ("cultural-oriented") networks
- Internal professional coherence of different Digbeth activists should be improved

Institutional differentiation

- A growing number of cultural and creative industries related enterprises in Digbeth also lead to an increase in its level of articulation and institutional differentiation.

Observations and findings of our interviews

2

Individualized actions of cultural institutions

- On the basis of the series of interviews, we recognized that many cultural and artistic institutions operate rather isolated in exclusive thematic communities. This can be observed in many cities, but it leads to individualized actions regarding joint reactions in respect to existing public planning attempts.

Few temporal cooperation

- Among the cultural and artistic communities, a number of temporal events and festivals guarantee on-going exchange and cooperation. Apart from that, only subsector-specific activities and joint entrepreneurial actions can be found.

Cultural Diversity

- Embracing cultural plurality on the one hand leads to an increase in internal governance efforts.

Cultural and semantic exclusivity

- BCU-stakeholder dialogs with cultural representatives tend to be a rather exclusive dialogue format, regarding its semantic cultural subtexts and procedural character and practical effects. Paradoxically, it is good and the only way to interact on exe-level with cultural activist, the communicative processes is transparent and allows trust-building. Nevertheless, the speed of on-going planning attempts, market and technological changes around Digbeth and its power relations do not mirror this communicative approach.

Challenges and needs developing Digbeth

#1



Building new multi-level relationships

New governance relations with larger planning and knowledge institutions should be organized. In the same time, the “family-oriented” informal festival- and artistic-events should be stretched toward representatives from formal institutions.

The objective should be to invite and to integrate them: Only when once know how Digbeth feels, you can judge, plan or act on behalf of this district and its cultural representatives.

Proactive role of BCU

BCU and the “Transforming the region” group should continue to act proactive and act as a boundary spanner among different and so-far unknown stakeholder groups.

Co-Designing cross-innovation processes

The BCU “Transforming the region” group should initiate wider cross-sectorial events aiming at stimulating thinking and doing on various types of innovation.

Formats such as “Interactivos” and “Policy clinics” represent proven and EU-wide honoured formats that have the potential to create evidence based communities that last longer than the temporal event.

Challenges and needs developing Digbeth further

#2

Maker dimension and the role of FabLabs

New modes of urban based production spread across large agglomeration in the last years. Open accessible resources play an important role and bring innovators together.

Hard vs. soft infrastructure? → hard plus soft infrastructure

Physical places (e.g. a “House of innovation”) could pave the way to a wider and stronger BCU commitment in Digbeth. Keep in mind, that the operational soft infrastructure is even more important (justifying the building costs) to demonstrate wider results for innovation, economic growth and stronger BCU-driven communities of practice.

Formats to stimulate exchange and communities

We consider the

Brokering for land to transform in a different (non-economic) way

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consetetur sadipscing elitr, sed diam nonumy eirmod tempor invidunt ut labore et dolore magna aliquyam erat, sed diam voluptua. At vero eos et

Building a place or a “house of innovation”?

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consetetur sadipscing elitr, sed diam nonumy eirmod tempor invidunt ut labore et dolore magna aliquyam erat, sed diam voluptua. At vero eos et

Focussing public space?

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consetetur sadipscing elitr, sed diam nonumy eirmod tempor invidunt ut labore et dolore

Perspectives strengthening the ecosystem of Digbeth

Bastian

Extending the existing networks

long term advocacy for the area
promote more success stories
marketing of single organisation e.g. through image films
help to get access to markets, to the business community that
would provide private funding (diversifying the income of the CI,)
connect the Digbeth institutions to other businesses of other areas,
digital media for example (connection beyond the art area, to the
different types of people here in Digbeth,

Getting tangible

Xy
Xy
Yx

Prototyping

Xy
Xy

Additional questions

Xy
Xy
Xy

Scalar perspectives

xy

xy
xv

Outlook #1

The role of other sectors, such as manufacturing, production, logistics and health stimulating the ecosystem?

Extending the existing networks

Xy
Xy

Getting tangible

Xy
Xy
Yx

Prototyping

XyXy

Additional questions

Xy



Outlook

#2

xy

Ingredients

XyXy

Getting tangible

Xy
XyYx

Prototyping

XyXy

Additional questions



Recommendations

#1

Makerplace Digbeth

Extending the existing networks

Xy
Xy

Getting tangible

Xy
Xy
Yx

Prototyping

Xy
Xy

Additional questions

Xy
Xy
Xy

xy

xy

xy
xy



Recommendations

#2

Placemaker BCU

Extending the existing networks

Xy
Xy

Getting tangible

Xy
Xy
Yx

Prototyping

Xy
Xy

Additional questions

Xy
Xy
Xy

xy

xy

xy
xy

Recommendations

#3

Professionalisation

Extending the existing networks

Xy
Xy

Getting tangible

Xy
Xy
Yx

Prototyping

Xy
Xy

Additional questions

Xy
Xy
Xy

xy

xy

xy
xy

Recommendations

#4

Tangible formats

Extending the existing networks

Xy
Xy

Getting tangible

Xy
Xy
Yx

Prototyping

Xy
Xy

Additional questions

Xy
Xy
Xy

xy

xy

xy
xy

Appendix

xy

Reports covering (Greater) Birmingham

xy

Appendix

European Reports

European Commission (2012a): European Design Innovation Blog. <http://europeandesigninnovation.eu/>

European Commission (2012b): Guide to Research and Innovation Strategies for Smart Specialisation (RIS 3). Brüssel. http://s3platform.jrc.ec.europa.eu/c/document_library/get_file?uuid=a39fd20b-9fbc-402b-be8c-b51d03450946&groupId=10157

European Commission (2012c): Promoting cultural and creative sectors for growth and jobs in the EU. Brüssel.

European Commission (2013b): Implementing an Action Plan for Design-Driven Innovation. Commission Staff Working Document, SWD (2013) 380 final. Brüssel. http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/innovation/files/design/design-swd-2013-380_en.pdf

European Commission (2014): Design for innovation. http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/policies/innovation/policy/design-creativity/index_en.htm#h2-1

European Commission (2015a): Creative Europe. Supporting Europe's cultural and creative sector. http://ec.europa.eu/culture/creative-europe/index_en.htm

European Commission (2010): Conclusions of the Council and of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States, meeting within the Council, on the Work Plan for Culture 2011-2014. Official Journal of the European Union (2010/C 325/01).

<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2010:325:0001:0009:EN:PDF>

European Commission (2009): Creative Growth. <http://www.creative-growth.eu/CreativeGrowth/tabid/537/Default.aspx>

European Commission (2012): Joint policy recommendations for cultural and creative industries in Europe. Brüssel. <http://www.crea-re.eu/wp-content/uploads/2012/12/PolicyRecommendations2.pdf>

European Commission (2014): OMC-Good Practice Report on the Cultural and Creative Sectors' Export and Internationalisation Support Strategiepp. Brüssel.

Appendix

References

- O' Connor, Justin (2002): Local scenes and dangerous crossroads: punk and theories of cultural hybridity. *Popular music* 21 (2), pp. 225-236.
- Adkins, Barbara/Foth, Marcus/Summerville, Jennifer, et al. (2007): Ecologies of Innovation: Symbolic Aspects of Cross-Organizational Linkages in the Design Sector in an Australian Inner-City Area. *American Behavioral Scientist* 50 (7), pp. 922-934.
- Lange, Bastian/Kalandides, Ares (2008): Governance of Creative Industries in Berlin – Paradoxes, places, practices. In: Helen Wan, Yueng, Erin, Yueng, Theresa (Hrsg.): "When Creative Industries Crossover with Cities", Hong Kong: Hong Kong Institute of Planners (HKIP), pp. 122-133.
- Lange, B. (2014): "Entrepreneurship in creative industries", In: Sternberg/Krauss (eds.) (2014): *xy*
- Nordrhein-Westfalen, Clustermanagement (eds.) (2011) *Ecologies of Innovation: Four scenarios for CCI in NRW 2020*, Düsseldorf: Ministerium für Wirtschaft, Energie, Bauen, Wohnen und Verkehr des Landes Nordrhein-Westfalen
- Lange, Bastian (2012): Field Configuring Events: How Culturepreneurs use space for the purpose of professionalisation in the design segment of Berlin In: Giep Hagoort/Aukje Thomassen/Rene Kooyman (Hrsg.): *Pioneering Minds Worldwide: On the Entrepreneurial Principles of the Cultural and Creative Industries*, Delft: Eburon Academic Press, pp. 117-120.
- Lange, Bastian/Bürkner, Hans-Joachim (2013): Value-creation in the creative economy - The case of electronic club music in Germany. *Economic geography* 82 (2), pp. 149-169.

List of interviews and in-depth-discussion partners

Alicja Kaczmarek
Director
Polish Expats Association
Centrala
<http://centrala-space.org.uk>
Cheryl Jones
Grand Union
www.grand-union.org.uk
Emma Larkinson
Craftspace, Operations and
Development Manager
www.craftspace.co.uk
Gavin Wade
Eastside Projects
www.eastsideprojects.org
Ian Francis
Flatpack Film Festival
www.flatpackfestival.org.uk
Jonnie Turpie
Founder Director
Creative City partnership (CCP)
Maverick televisionk
www.mavericktv.co.uk
Laura McDermott
Fierce Festival
www.wearefierce.org
Lisa Meyer
Creative Director
Capsule
www.capsule.org.uk

Robin Vickers
Founder & CEO
Digital Life Sciences,
www.digitallifesciences.co.uk
Ruth Claxton
Eastside Projects
www.eastsideprojects.org
Sandra Hall
Founder & main artist
Friction Arts
www.frictionarts.com
Tim Frankling
Fundraiser
Friction Arts
www.frictionarts.com
Karen Newman
Founder / Director
BOM - Birmingham Open
Media
www.bom.org.uk
Sue Ball
Warwick Bar
www.warwickbar.co.uk
Sarah Crawley
CEO
Initiative for Social
Entrepreneurs
www.i-se.co.uk
Nicola Shipley
Grain Photography Hub

Multiplicities

www.multiplicities.berlin

Strategic focus

Multiplicities is an independent research and consultancy office operating on the cutting edge between the creative industry, urban development and policy making. The project management service is active in the fields of business consultancy, urban research and the fostering of innovation. Our client base is comprised of creative enterprises, administrative and political entities and also intermediary organisationpp.

Point of departure

Multiplicities analyses socio-economic transformation in the creative knowledge age, providing transparency within the fields of politics, industry and the creative scenep. Multiplicities recognises new trends in complex structures and brings them to maturity for the benefit of planning processepp. In an age in which the established and emerging parameters between labour and production appear caught up in disruptive interference, Multiplicities lays the foundation for a new path in the development of added value in the processes shaping tomorrow's citiepp.

Products

In a sense, Multiplicities therefore acts as a translator of microtrends for the benefit of cultural policies, civil society, urban planning and business promotion. Multiplicities supports administrative and political entities, cluster managers and creative enterprises in defining and implementing their strategic processepp. We advise leading mediators, creative economy agencies, local governments and ministriep. We see ourselves as intermediaries and cultural translatorpp.

European Networks

As a European network, Multiplicities participates in academic studies, scientific articles, strategic consultancies and communication processepp. In our philosophy, co-working spaces, FabLabs, open workshops und other hubs represent pivotal starting points for identifying new value added configurationpp. Multiplicities plays its role in the fashioning of structural transformation within the regions, tailoring the emergence of a new society as creative and knowledge-based.