

FLOOR 99

# yes Youth Innovation Hub

DISABILITY Workshop Summary

Prepared with care by:  
Curative



# Background

## Two floors of amazing!

After much consultation and energy, the team at YES have secured the lease to the RSA Building in Takapuna, and are now working closely with Younite, the Devonport-Takapuna Youth Board, towards their shared vision of creating a unique youth innovation space.

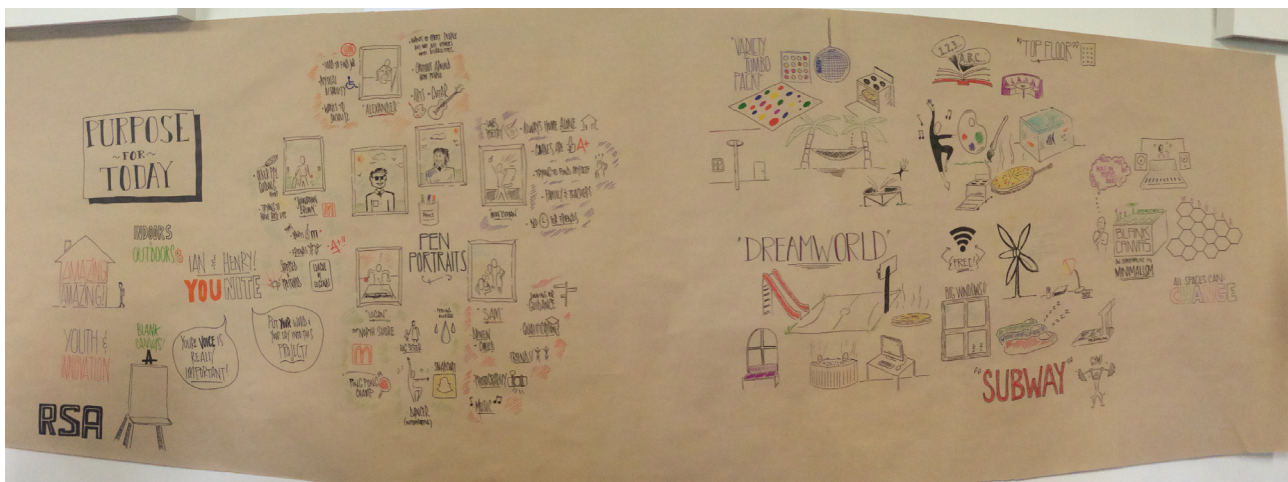
To ensure that the space truly honours the needs and hopes of our young people, YES are using a co-design approach to help gather insights, direction and momentum from young people, and those who work with young people.

The intention is that the new space supports the growth and development of young people so that they can step into their future potential. Along with this, there is a desire to ensure we honour the legacy of the Returned Services Association (RSA) and the veterans in the space.

To help explore the possibilities and start to clarify how the space could work, Curative facilitated a 5 hour workshop on Saturday 17 September which involved approximately 40 young people aged between 14 - 24.

## Through this workshop we:

- **Talked about young people and their wants and needs**
- **Brainstormed and prototyped ideas for the space**
- **Discussed with subject matter experts social enterprise models, STEM, Arts &**

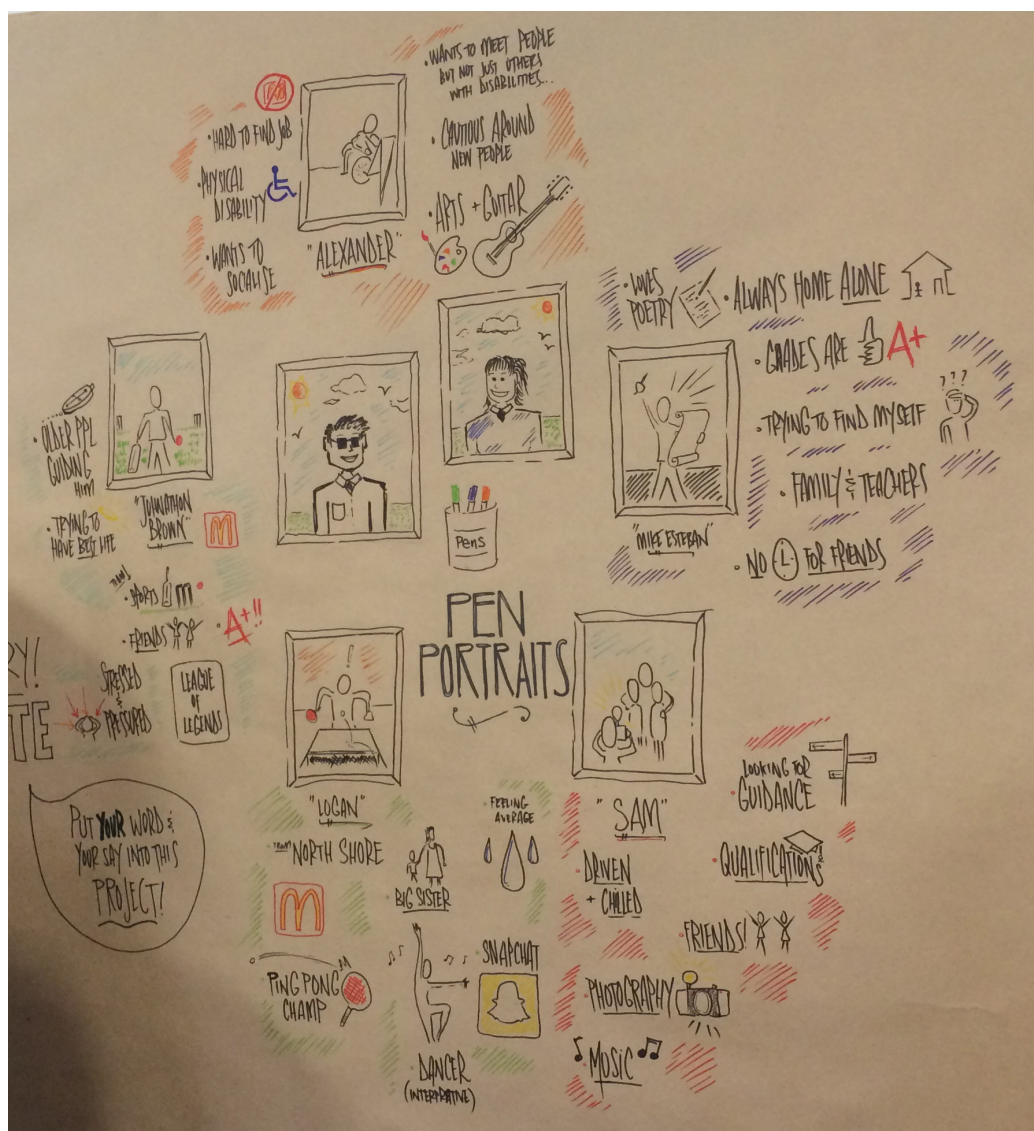


# Understanding Audience

Using a Pen Portraits exercise, we worked in groups of 5-6 to explore what life looks like for young people.

Most of the participants illustrated youth lifestyle that looked very similar. There were two strong personality types that emerged.

The following shows a composite of indicative young people from within the session. This is not representative of the full breadth of the audience for this project, but does provide some useful insight into the lives of young people.





Mike Esteban  
15 ½ years old  
Auckland Central



#### Education

Mike is a fairly average student, but so far is passing NCEA. He doesn't really know what he wants to do when he finishes school, his main ambition is to be happy, and to find his own way to make the world a bit better. He could use extra support with his studies, and would love someone to help him figure out what to do with his life. He feels pressure to figure it out; the world is full of interesting people doing interesting things, and he wants to be one of them.



#### Peer Groups & Social-life:

Mike spends most of his time with his friends and his football team mates. He loves giving new things a go and is currently trying slam poetry, and has been known to do a bit of busking both singing and dancing. He often shares his new songs and poems online, and is building up a pretty good following on instagram.



#### Support & Influence:

Mike has lots of role models in his life including his mum, friends, teachers, his church youth worker and his football coach. He also reads a lot, and is online heaps. He always knows the latest trends, and follows heaps of celebrities on Instagram and SnapChat. His friends often come to him to find out about new music and technology.



#### Family & Home-life:

Mike lives at home with his mum; who is often working. Mike spends quite a bit of time at home by himself, and is currently teaching himself to cook so that there is something interesting on the table when his mum gets home.



#### Health & Wellbeing:

Mike often keeps himself busy so that he doesn't feel too alone or too overwhelmed and stressed out by all of the choices he feels he needs to make. He's pretty upbeat and happy most of the time, and doesn't want to trouble anybody else with any of his own stresses. He thinks he's got it pretty good really.



Samantha Johnson  
16 years old  
Takapuna



#### Education

Samantha is an overachiever, and she knows it. She is excelling in her studies, and is already thinking about what she might do when she goes to University in a couple of years. She takes on a lot of extra-curricular activities, and is a key part of the student council. Samantha has strong beliefs and isn't afraid to make sure her voice is heard.



#### Peer Groups & Social-life:

Samantha fills a lot of her time with study, and school activities, but she still finds time for friends. She is well liked, and has a really close group of friends, many of whom are on the student council with her. They love to hang out and talk about how they can make the community better; but they also like to just hang-out and watch Netflix or youtube for hours. Samantha is always looking for excuses to bring people together and have fun; earlier this year she even organised a gathering for people to catch pokemon.



#### Support & Influence:

Samantha is hugely connected to her school, and gets most of her support from her teachers and her peers. She is also well known in her local community, and gets involved with different groups who give her support and energy. Her mum and dad try to give her space to just be herself, but she knows that they are always there if she needs them. She's fiercely independent and proudly carving her own identity. She follows lots of awesome women on Facebook and Instagram, and feels strongly about equality.



#### Family & Home-life:

Samantha lives at home with her mum, dad, older sister and two younger brothers. Home is a busy place, full of life and energy, with people always coming and going. She gets on pretty well with her siblings (most of the time), and always looks forward to family holidays when they can actually spend time all together.



## Key Insights:

- Young people seem to be overwhelmed with all of the choices that they need to make. They are conscious that they are forming their identity and feel that there is a lot of pressure on them to 'do the right thing'
- Young people like to experiment and try new things, but want to do it safely and without judgement. They haven't formed full opinions yet about what they like or don't like
- Young people have opinions, and they want a space to explore them and to have them heard
- Young people want space away from adults, where they can hang out together and get to know themselves and each-other
- Young people seem to have an appetite for creativity; they want space to make things: music, art, dance, film, writing, performance, recording and editing, gaming
- Technology is very important to young people, and they want access to the latest gear if they can. They use technology as a form of expression, learning and growth
- The internet is integral to the lives of young people, it fulfils their needs to stay connected, expand their knowledge, be in the know and be entertained. Access to mobile data and WiFi is seen as essential to everyday life
- It's important for young people to have both formal and informal ways to connect with one-another
- Many young people don't seem to know where to turn to for support or advice; even when they do have strong networks
- Young people love food. But they don't just want to eat it, they want to learn how to make it, serve it and sell it
- Young people have a lot of energy. But they also need a space for rest and reflection. Many feel that they

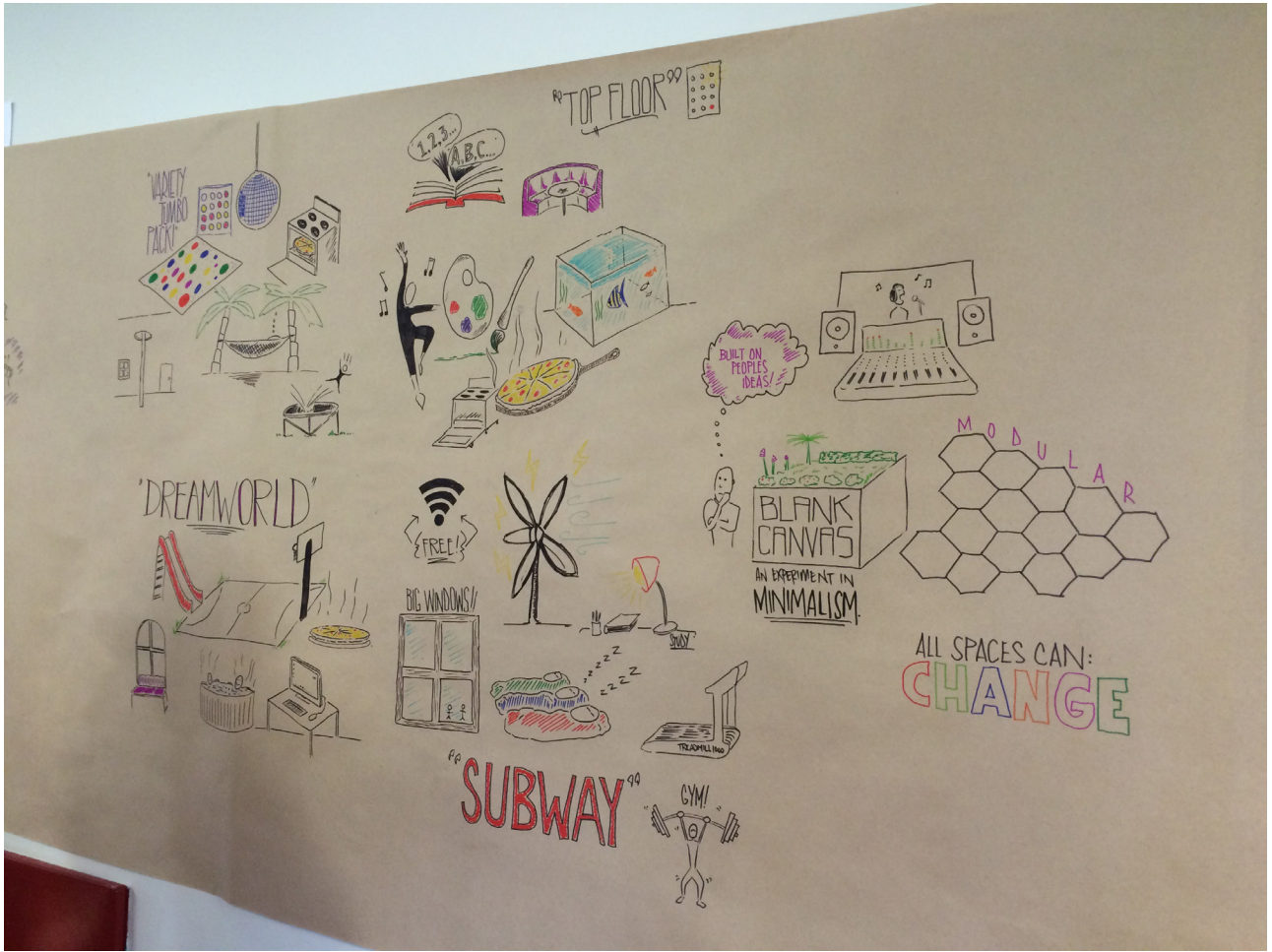
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# Ideas:

After exploring the lives of young people, our participants then imagined what they might need from an innovative new youth space.

The ideas that emerged included:

- **Blank Canvas: An experiment in minimalism**
  - » Using modular furniture so that the space can constantly change to meet the needs of the community using it
  - » This would include spaces for people to create their own ideas, music, art, performance, events and gatherings
  - » A rooftop garden also featured in this idea
- **Top Floor**
  - » This is an accessible space, including a lift to ensure that all people can participate in all areas of the youth hub
  - » There would be places for cooking and eating; including a Pizza Oven
  - » Dance and art would be nurtured here
  - » A giant fish-tank, that must be cared for by the people who use the space, is a key feature. This is both to create a relaxing atmosphere and a learning opportunity
  - » There is space for learning, and extending studies. A library which includes NCEA & Cambridge resources, and quiet space for study would be included
  - » The library could be a book swap; where for every book you take, you must leave one behind
- **Dreamworld**
  - » This space was largely for fun, play and relaxation, with a recreation space and a giant slide
  - » A spa pool also featured in this space; but there was a suggestion that there would need to be some rules around how and when it was used
  - » There is access to leading technology, with a full computer suite
  - » Quiet reading nooks were also a key feature of this space; with big window seats to curl up into read or study in
- **Variety Jumbo Pack**
  - » Again, play was a big feature of this space, with giant board games, trampolines, disco-ball dance floors, basketball hoops and spaces to play
  - » There is space to sleep and relax in hammocks and giant bean bags
  - » Space to cook and share food (including another pizza oven) was also important in this space
- **Subway**
  - » This space was the most environmentally friendly, with strong consideration for renewable energy and sustainable practice
  - » There was a desire for the space to be big, light and open with large windows
  - » Space for rest and sleep also featured
  - » Free-Wifi and space to study was included
  - » There was also an active exercise and workout space





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## Social Enterprise:

Insights & ideas relating to social enterprise that emerged during the session were captured in a business model canvas as follows:

### Who will help you:

- Experienced local cafe owners and restaurants (ie Adrian Chilton)
- Joy business group for outside funding and sponsorship
- Audio engineer
- Volunteer gateway
- Students
- Sponsors; Event Cinemas, Sky City, Shopping Centres
- Local dance schools
- Gyms
- Health boards
- Local businesses
- Tutors (people who know what they're doing); possibly the people who attend may then start their own courses
- Weta Studios
- Other design organisations - international and national
- Alumni individuals and businesses

### What do you need?

- Computers & Library
  - » 10 x computers
  - » Donated/sponsored books
  - » High-end tower machine
  - » Graphics Tablets
  - » Consoles
  - » Room: Computer Lab
  - » Server Room
  - » 1080p screens
  - » Ergo Mouse and Keyboard
  - » Editing software
- Stage/Makeshift stage
- Soundproof room - large enough for drums + 3 other instruments
- Soundboard and mixing desk
- Lift between floors
- Kitchen space
  - » Professional kitchen, multiple workstations, large chillers, sanitisers, stoves, ovens, counter and cashier
- Distinct serving area, tables & chairs (perhaps a dozen tables, 40 x chairs)
- Bifolds, Mirrors & Beams (can be moved around)
- Office spaces

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## What do you do?

- Educational Programmes
  - » Holiday Programme
  - » After School Programme
  - » Using the spaces existing in the youth centre
  - » Cheap membership to come all year around
- Recording Studio
  - » Rent out cheaply
  - » Term Competition for free recording
  - » Volunteer audio engineer (gateway)
- Music/Dance Class
  - » Young people teaching others how to dance ie Salsa (not too serious)
- Game Creation Centre
  - » Holds programming seminars
  - » Digital art seminars
  - » Game maker courses (long and short)
  - » Game publishing
  - » Novice to advanced
- Pizza oven as a full cafe space
  - » Use it to generate opportunities for young people to work and move into management roles (like Joy Ice-cream in the viaduct)
- Social Events Weekly
  - » Entry fee required

## How do you interact?

- Constant Networking, special offers (discount if you bring a friend)
- Interaction with other people - if you like this, you may like...
- Face to face
- Small game maker courses
- Provide employment opportunities with other partner organisations
- Quality food & positive dining experience; to create regular customers and encourage them to bring more people in
- Artist group; get involved in other events ie perform at events, use in promotional videos
- Membership (cheap)
  - » First Course free
  - » Incentives
  - » Competitions
  - » Invite a friend and get a free session

## How do you reach them?

- High school advocacy
- Social media

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- Design institutes
  - Word of mouth
  - Advertising in schools, other youth organisation and local community
  - Contacting dance studios

### **Who do you help?**

- Youth emerging artist
- High-schooler wanting to record a demo EP
- High School/Tertiary Students
- Those without UE
- People wanting to pursue a career in game production
- People who love dance and music
- Young people who are passionate about their hobbies
- Youth willing to take time to learn outside of school
- Business people (wanting to support young people)

### **How much will you make?**

- Flat fee for audio engineer to cover power etc. eg. \$30 first hour, 15 surplus hours, 5 hours max
- Price depends on the event
- Short courses @ \$100 per person
- Long courses - student loan applicable? \$1500
- Scholarships provided for long courses
- Optional Payments
  - » Yearly is cheaper
  - » Monthly
  - » Pay per session

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## STEM:

Insights & ideas relating to STEM that emerged during the session included:

- STEM seems to connect naturally with enterprise
- There is a desire to make STEM fun, with cool competitions, gaming spaces. And a connection to art
- There was suggestion that there could be science fairs, hackathons, and clubs to create more opportunities
- The space itself could use renewable energy and sustainable development; and this could be a learning and practice opportunity for the young people involved
- There is a special formula that will be needed to make STEM work well which includes assets + right people + mentors
- There is a need for STEM to be accessible to all levels of ability and knowledge
- There is an opportunity to involve real companies and tertiary (eg. Massey University, and international institutes) to help build networks, provide real work experience, and explore innovative new ideas together (eg. test within the Youth Space)
- There could be group projects and extra-curricular work
- Coding, programming and robotics could be taught and shared within the space
- More information and mentorship around wet science could be provided

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## Arts & Culture:

Insights and ideas relating to Arts & Culture that emerged during the session included:

- A display room where young people can freely put up artwork, scribbles, doodles, photography or inspiration. They want to do mini exhibits here as well where they can display or sell art. There's a need for a safe place for self-expression, as well as an interest to see what other young people are creating or are interested in
- A bookshelf/mini library where young people can do a book exchange. Things they'd like to see in the bookshelf include other young people's sketchbooks; reference books on photography, drawing, painting, design or writing; coffee table books; fiction books, poetry
- Art supplies and stationery available for everyone, and a quiet space where young people can freely create (ideally in the same room as the bookshelf/book exchange)
- Themed days/nights wherein young people can come together and share their craft or art-form with others. There's an appetite to come together in this way to meet other young people in other schools that they may not necessarily have the chance to meet
  - » Movie nights with bean bags, with home baked treats and student films/documentaries to watch
  - » Stand up comedy nights with popcorn
  - » Storytelling nights with popcorn and bean bags
  - » Spoken word nights, freestyle public speaking, hip hop emcees
  - » Youth bands' gigs
- There's a huge appetite for regular workshops and classes to learn from. There's strong curiosity among the group on a diverse range of creative subjects. They're keen to hear from people with expertise, or to do short classes on the following:
  - » Cooking / baking / food decorating
  - » Makeup tutorials / cosplay / bodyart / rainbow hair
  - » Painting / drawing / Life drawing classes with music
  - » Pottery / painting ceramics
  - » Dance (belly dance, zumba)
  - » Writing
  - » Language
  - » Spoken word
  - » Public speaking
  - » Henna
  - » Jewellery making
  - » Cross - stitching / knitting / embroidery
  - » Software graphics for design (beginner's Photoshop)
  - » Special niche interests such as:
    - » Steam punk
    - » Yoga, meditation & spirituality
    - » Tattoo culture
    - » Laughing yoga
    - » Manga / Anime / K-pop is popular right now with this group
    - » Meme culture - how to make memes

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## Community:

Insights and ideas relating to Community that emerged during the session included:

- Building a strong community around the space is important to young people.
- There was a sense that this space could be like a 'home away from home'
- This should include 'warmth, humour and food'
- Young people crave a space where they can just be themselves, where they don't have to 'act a certain way', where they can explore their personality and identity, and meet other young people
- A suggestion was made that the space could be run by young people, for young people
  - » This could be run with 'adult' guidance ie; an advisory board, financial support, council connection

**To build community several suggestions were made including:**

- Creating shared rituals; sunday lunches, wednesday pizza nights, a handshake that you do when you arrive
- Setting community common sense rules
  - » Treat each other the same
  - » Respect equipment
  - » Rules from school & family - apply here too
  - » Clean up after yourself
- There could be artwork or cute posters that share the values of the space
- It could be a space that celebrates diversity, allowing people to share their language and culture through food, performance, cultural evenings, artwork
- There could be a culture of 'giving back'; those who share and use the space, could do regular work to support those less fortunate
  - » There could also be a sense of generosity and reciprocity with people sharing their skills and teaching or mentoring others within the space
- There needs to be a balance of structured activities and informal connection to help ensure that people keep coming back
- The community should be supported both online and off
- Each year the artwork in the space could be created, or there could be walls in the space that are always being updated by people who use the space
- The space will need leadership. These leaders should:
  - » Have no expectations; but be able to bring out the best of people
  - » Be motivators; get inside any group to help them work together
  - » Be fun, passionate and full of energy
  - » Do it for the love of it - and be hugely committed

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# Next Steps:

There are a lot of ideas and insights to consider as the project develops.

## The key points that the young people felt were important to keep in mind were:

- The building needs to be **accessible and acceptable**. It's a place that should be able to be accessed by all young people, and a place where you feel accepted
- The space needs to feel safe, a place to try new things, meet new people, and feel open to new ideas
- The space shouldn't ever be static; it needs to **evolve and grow** and change as young people do (the modular approach was strongly suggested to meet this need)
- The space should **strike a balance** between informal, organic activities and structured programmes
- The space should **embrace all cultures**, and be a place where people can learn about themselves and others, and express who they are and where they come from
- There should be a strong sense of **equality** in the space
- The space should be an exemplar, and we should always **aim for excellence** in all we do with the space
- Always **keep young people in mind** as new ideas are explored, and the space is established and managed ongoing
- If you feed them, they will come. **Food** (and in particular a pizza oven) will be a big drawcard for people to spend time in this space
- Let's get started, if we have access to the space now, we should start using it now and **co-create it as we go**.

**“No-one can grow if they're forced to hide. This space will encourage confidence and pride in our young people so that they can reach their potential”**

From here, we suggest that the Steering Group creates a framework to help make decisions about what is and isn't included in the space.

## This may include:

- Does this feel right for young people?
- Is this a sustainable option? Is the idea an enduring one?
- How much will it cost to establish? And what will it cost ongoing?
- Does this meet the intentions of the space: Will it help young people to unleash their potential?

For now, a summary of the intention and needs of the space has been captured within a draft communication document.

Once this document is finalised, the Steering Group will circulate it to potential stakeholders and funders to seek support and commitment to the development of the 'Blank Canvas - Two Floors of Amazing'.



# Thank you

**Prepared with care**

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**for**

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**YES Disability**

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DISABILITY