

# A Client's Guide to Sheffield School of Architecture's Live Projects

[www.liveprojects.org](http://www.liveprojects.org)



## Introduction



Live Projects give our students the opportunity to work outside the University with community clients on **real projects that make a real difference**.

Running every year for the first 6 weeks of the academic year, from **late Sept to early Nov**, the projects are carried out by Masters in Architecture and Masters in Architectural Design students.

The students work in groups to produce built, strategic or detailed design proposals for clients. These projects have a particular emphasis on **community participation and collaborative working**.

The Sheffield School of Architecture Live Project programme, running since 1999, is **widely recognised as pioneering in UK architectural education**.

Live Projects are at the heart of our teaching at SSoA because we believe that architects should be trained to practice socially-engaged architecture. Our clients benefit from a level of **high quality creative input** they would not be able to achieve any other way and students learn to **test their ideas through real-life experience**.

## What is a Live Project?

Live Projects vary immensely in scale, subject and scope but they all **share a social and sustainable agenda**. Clients are from the public or third sectors, e.g. charities, local council organisations, schools, arts organisations and volunteer groups.

Some projects involve construction, others are more strategic, proposing visions at building, local, city, regional, national or international scale. All projects support their clients to **promote inclusion and diversity in order to widen participation** in the production of buildings, streets, neighbourhoods and city centres.

All project teams are **expected to deliver useful outputs for their client**. Often the work can open doors to funding, raise ambitions and capacity in a community, and lead to even bigger projects. Outputs can include detailed design drawings, participation toolkits, websites, archive research, survey drawings, models and built prototypes.

Live Projects **support socially engaged organisations** that can't afford to pay normal architecture fees and we very rarely carry out work for privately funded or commercial clients. Neither the students nor the University are paid for the work, although each client is asked to **provide funds for material costs and travel expenses**.



## Live Project Examples



We run a wide variety of Live Projects of differing types, locations and scales. Here are some recent examples:

*Project: The Vestry Hall, Client: ISRAAC, Location: Sheffield*

Working closely with the local Somali community, students developed design ideas and a funding strategy for the future sustainability of this community-owned building.

*Project: Creative Capital, Client: Blackburn is Open, Location: Blackburn*

Development of a vision for the town centre to celebrate and enhance its cultural offer, reanimate the high street and kickstart The National Festival of Making.

*Project: Foodhall, Client: Foodhall, Location: Sheffield*  
Our students were instrumental in the launch of this volunteer-run 'pay as you feel' cafe and community space. They designed and built the kitchen, and developed a vision for the use of the new venue.

*Project: Made in Brussels, Client: Flanders Planning Dept., Location: Belgium*

An urban strategy to value and intensify industry in the neighbourhoods of Brussels, revising the city as a 'productive city' for its diverse population. A design toolkit was developed for different types of sites.

## Being a Live Project Client



The best Live Projects result from close collaboration between students and client and where **learning occurs on both sides**. It is important to understand that Live Projects are educational projects and that **our students do not provide professional architectural services**.

The students will work closely with you to define the brief and the appropriate outputs. A **'client contact'** should meet with the students at least once a week during the project.

If the project **involves construction** then statutory regulations may apply. It might also be necessary to seek advice from a specialist consultant. We can advise you on this as the brief develops.

Copyright of Live Projects rests with **The University of Sheffield** and so if you copy, distribute or publish the work, it must be credited to 'The University of Sheffield School of Architecture'.

We do not ask clients to pay the students or the University for the work they do on Live Projects. However, **we ask you to contribute towards student expenses**. We usually require a fee of £600 for a local project that involves basic printing and drawing/modeling materials. If a project is sited further afield and/or involves larger scale expenses for printing, presentations, exhibitions or construction a larger fee will need to be agreed.

## Impact of Live Projects

Our clients find working with our students on Live Projects very useful and rewarding:

### In Castlegate, Sheffield:

Live Works worked with local stakeholders to secure £800,000 growth funding from Sheffield City Council.

*"It's made us realise as a group that we shouldn't be blinkered and we should welcome all kinds of ideas and creativity around what the project might be"*

Martin Gorman, Friends of Sheffield Castle

### In Blackburn:

*"As a result of the students' work we have secured £800k capital funding for a new FabLab in Blackburn town centre."* Claire Tymon, Blackburn is Open

### In Tinsley, Sheffield:

*"The outcomes will be invaluable to us. The documents will provide support for our funding bids. It sometimes needs 'outsiders' to point out the glaringly obvious, this has been a real positive as we learned things."*

Graham Whitfield, Tinsley Forum

### In Barnsley:

*"This has been invaluable to us, without the students' work we were at risk of undertaking small scale remedial improvements to the area and missing the full impact that could be achieved."*

Fiona O'Brien, Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council



## Introducing Live Works



Sometimes clients ask us to work with them beyond the Live Project. In order to continue to help clients we have set up a project office, 'Live Works', that employs our graduates to **deliver architectural services on a more professional basis**.

We offer **architectural and urban design services** at all stages of a project; inception, feasibility, strategic design, detailed design and construction. We embed **community participation** throughout the entire process of a project, ensuring that the project is useful to those who will use it.

Clients benefit from the creativity and innovation of SSoA graduates, supported by the Live Works core team who have **many years of practice experience** working on community design projects throughout the UK.

If you want to continue working with our students and graduates **beyond your Live Project** then we would be very happy to hear from you now or in the future.

[www.live-works.org](http://www.live-works.org)