

Business Plan Competition Merit Award Winners

Anne Egan & Fiona Cassidy – StudioXYZ

Overview

Anne Egan and Fiona Cassidy carried off the £500 Merit Award with their proposal for a visual art activity hub called StudioXYZ, which will provide flexible studio space, a venue for critical engagement and exhibiting opportunities. Both Anne and Fiona are third year sculpture undergraduates studying fine art at Bath Spa University.

About the Project

Anne Egan and Fiona Cassidy believe that the time is right to create a space in Bath, which focuses on contemporary visual art in an engaged and questioning manner. During attempts to find studio space for their own use, they realised that current provision in Bath is inadequate - both in terms of physical volume and community spirit.

The plan for StudioXYZ works on the basis of an open-plan flexible studio space of approximately 100m² with ground floor access and a large entrance way. Twelve sculptors will share this studio, with each artist's space negotiated according to each individual's working needs. The advantages of this way of working are access to more space when needed, stimulation by constant contact with other artists, and practical assistance and support.

Members of the public with an interest in the work of StudioXYZ can become an Associate member for an annual fee, which gives them access to events and previews.

StudioXYZ incorporates two other inter-related functions: ForumXYZ and ShowXYZ.

The aim of ForumXYZ is to foster an active and critically engaged contemporary visual art community in Bath. ForumXYZ will host a programme of events, including talks by visiting artists, group critiques and discussion forums. It will hold a monthly Breakfast Club meeting with artists, curators, gallery owners, critics, etc as invited speakers. ForumXYZ events will be closely linked with other contemporary visual art events in Bath and the surrounding area, including Fringe Art Bath and the Artists Moving Image Exhibition.

ShowXYZ will stage exhibitions both within the StudioXYZ premises and other available exhibition spaces in the Bath locality. Some exhibitions will include work by StudioXYZ members and Associates, using a guest curator. Other exhibitions will include work by national and international artists, depending on the curatorial theme. StudioXYZ will take a commission from any sales of work made through its exhibitions.



Anne Egan and Fiona Cassidy of StudioXYZ

Fast Facts

- Final year students, Anne Egan and Fiona Cassidy, scoop £500 Merit Award for their idea for a Bath-based contemporary visual art activity centre known as StudioXYZ
- Attending the supporting workshops to the competition gave StudioXYZ an edge when presenting to the judging panel
- Feedback from the judging panel has helped to inform the development of the business idea

Benefits

The idea of the business plan awards is to encourage an enterprise culture within the university and, for those students thinking of starting their own business, to help them follow their idea through with the aim of keeping business in the local community.

Students are supported with workshops on how to structure a business, presentation skills and one-to-one advice sessions on their business plan. All applications are assessed against a matrix of business-related criteria and feedback is given to each applicant on the strengths of their plan and areas to work on.

Shortlisted finalists get the opportunity to showcase their business idea and receive valuable feedback from the judges that they can use to improve and develop their venture. At the same time, the judging panel of local business leaders sees the talent at the university and potential ventures to invest in or support with mentoring or practical assistance.



Business Plan Merit Award Winners StudioXYZ



ShowXYZ



ForumXYZ

Outcomes

Participating in the supporting workshops helped Anne and Fiona to structure their germ of an idea into a business offering, to attract tenants, Associate members and investment. The tips and techniques that they were taught enabled them to make a very credible presentation to the judging panel and field a wide range of questions.

The judges had some useful suggestions that StudioXYZ will put into practice, to help a successful launch of the business. One of the judges also offered to keep in touch, should Anne and Fiona want further advice or a sounding board for future ideas.

Perspective

“Although it was very stressful at times, going through the competition process was a very worthwhile experience.”

Anne Egan, BA Fine Art, StudioXYZ, www.studioxyz.co.uk

“StudioXYZ is an exciting and intriguing business idea with building blocks for incremental growth and long-term value. Anne and Fiona show drive and ambition and delivered an interesting presentation.”

Simon Bond
Chair of Judging Panel, Director
of Innovation Centre in Bath



StudioXYZ

Bath Spa University's Business Support Office acts as a catalyst for engaging with employers, providing enterprise opportunities for students and graduates, and maximising on the expertise of the university for the benefit of the local business community. For further information, contact the Business Support Office at businessenquiries@bathspa.ac.uk www.bathspabusiness.com