



Business to Arts
Developing Creative
Partnerships



DEVOS INSTITUTE
OF ARTS MANAGEMENT
AT THE UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND

New Stream 2015 - 2016 Business to Arts / DeVos Institute Case Study Irish Museum of Modern Art

Diversifying income through Annual Giving and Corporate Investment in Commissioning new Work

The Irish Museum of Modern Art (IMMA) aims in all its activities to create for the public an enjoyable and engaging experience of contemporary art. It achieves this through a dynamic and changing programme of exhibitions and education programmes based in its home at the Royal Hospital Kildmainham and working with partners nationally and internationally. As the national institution for contemporary art IMMA is committed to supporting artists' work, and works with artists and partners to support the development, understanding and enjoyment of contemporary art in Ireland.

IMMA joined the New Stream programme in 2013, working with the DeVos Institute via a series of seminars, online master classes, and one-on-one consultations. They then secured a place to continue that work through the 18-month Capacity Building Programme in early 2015. When they joined this programme, IMMA had just returned to their building after two years, as work was ongoing to upgrade their space, which forced a focus on very short-term objectives around fundraising.



1 *Planning for Success in the Arts: A Capacity Building Intensive for Arts Managers and Their Boards* is a New Stream Partnership with the DeVos Institute of Arts Management. New Stream is operated by Business to Arts and supported by Bank of America Merrill Lynch.

The Challenge

The Irish Museum of Modern Art moved back to its home at the Royal Hospital Kilmainham in 2013 after two years, and had much ground to make up on audience development, institutional marketing and the re-establishment of their Membership Programme.

They didn't receive sanction for a Head of Audiences & Development until mid-2015, and so the fundraising function was being managed over the previous two years part-time by the Director with support from the Acting Head of Marketing.

The severity of 48% budget cuts over the past number of years has meant that State subvention to IMMA only supports the building and staff costs, but contributes nothing towards the programme or development of the Collection. Without a cross-organisational focus on developing new income, IMMA had no way of delivering on its mission to make Contemporary art accessible to visitors and beyond, and to support artists and the enjoyment of contemporary art in Ireland.

At the start of the 18-month DeVos Institute programme in early 2015, IMMA wished to consolidate the work they had done in the previous two years, and to:

- secure partnerships for major upcoming exhibitions
- continue to build income from Patrons
- improve membership figures
- create fundraising campaigns or events
- engage the Board to reach out to networks
- empower the Board to act as ambassadors

Strategy 1 - Build Audience Interest in IMMA and Ways to be Involved

When IMMA moved back to their building in late 2013, they had a lot of ground to make up to remind Dubliners to take the journey to Kilmainham.

The opening weekend signalled a new approach to opening IMMA to new audiences. In addition to the traditional 'art world' opening on Friday night, IMMA staged an Open Weekend with free talks and family programmes, culminating with a tea-dance on Sunday afternoon.

Since beginning this strategy of multi-disciplinary event-based programming targeting specific audiences, along with utilising all of IMMA's site, it has expanded people's perceptions of a

visit to a Museum. Examples include the two Summer Rising festivals incorporating food, music, performance and family programme. The 'Primal Rising' and 'Hot on the Heels of Love' one-off performance events were programmed in conjunction with exhibitions. This, combined with an active social media programme, has contributed to a significant growth in audience, with particular growth in the under 40 age group and family visitors.

IMMA has had a Membership programme for a number of years, but the success levels have ebbed and flowed. In 2013, working with the DeVos Institute, the Membership offer was reworked in advance of the Eileen Gray exhibition, with more levels of entry ranging from €50 - €500. A focused membership drive brought in 304 Members, a third of them through an Irish Times Readers discounted offer at €30, down from €50.

The new lower cost Memberships were attractive as they included free entrance to special exhibitions. As there was an admission charge to get into the 2013/14 Eileen Gray exhibition, a Friend Membership had real value for people who wanted to repeatedly visit the show. There was significant growth in the newly established €50 membership level in this period.

New Patrons, paying €1,000-€4,000 were targeted through invitation to an exclusive dinner marking the Eileen Gray opening. Three new Patrons joined. Membership levels in this brief period saw over 700% growth. However, at this stage there was no one working full-time in a Development role at IMMA. The Director and Acting Head of Marketing were working part of their week on fundraising, so it was difficult to maintain momentum.

In 2014, 50% of the new Members who came in through the discounted offer didn't renew for a second year. Membership dropped to 141, but, significantly, the value of many members had pushed up. There were now 10 Benefactors and Patrons paying between €500-€4,000.

Another push on Membership in 2015 was focused around the 'This Is What We Call Love' exhibition and some Members upgraded from €350 to €1,000 Patron level. In 2015 IMMA set an ambitious 80% retention goal on new members, and planned four membership drives each year, to be appropriately resourced and tracked.

In 2015, membership stood at 105, but the reduction was mostly at the individual and concession level (€50 and €30 respectively). Benefactors and Patrons paying €500-€4,000 was now at 12. Income raised from Members and Patrons in 2015 exceeded the highest levels achieved before the building closure.

In late 2015 recruitment for Head of Audiences & Development was complete. A new institutional marketing plan was instigated. The 2016 Programme launch was leveraged, for instance through short films with interviews with artists and audience, and high-level digital content released through social media. The IMMA blog gave insights and access to below the line aspects of IMMA's work, like research partnerships, as well as access to the museum's archive of past talks.

Membership is currently at 218, with Patrons and Benefactors at 14. IMMA understand that memberships and annual campaigns typically take an onramp of several years to initiate. This is the basis for growth in years to come.

Special Campaigns - IMMA1000

The IMMA1000 campaign was created in 2015 by John Cunningham, a business person concerned that IMMA no longer had a purchasing budget and so was no longer building the Collection or supporting artists through investing in their work. After several months of discussions the IMMA1000 campaign was developed as an ask of €1,000 from individuals in order to build a fund for IMMA to invest back into Irish artists through its programme, acquisitions and residencies.

The work began with John Cunningham engaging his network, with a soft launch and other events mid-2015. There was a full launch of the project in March 2016 with the announcement of €20,000 already raised from individuals, plus support of Goodbody's as Corporate Founding Partner creating a fund of €60,000 for year one of IMMA1000. Goodbody's core interest is in supporting Irish artists. After the launch follow up letters were sent to attendees and those who were unable to attend, and there was an Irish Times article on John Cunningham and individual approaches made on IMMA's behalf. The total IMMA1000 fund now stands at €100,000.

It is worth noting, however, that the IMMA1000 campaign has taken focus from their Patrons programme which is key to IMMA's Annual Giving.

The IMMA Development Advisory Group

IMMA's Board is appointed via the State Appointments process by the Minister for Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs. The State Appointments process allows IMMA to identify skills and experience that is needed to strengthen their Board. Although Fundraising is key, the focus of the Board is on governance and management issues. However, some Board Members, especially those from business, are supportive of the fundraising process.

Working with an external fundraising advisor in 2014 who supported the selection of individuals, IMMA created a separate Development Advisory Group who were approached with the objective of working specifically on income generation. The group is made up of well-networked people from business, sport, art collectors and so on who support IMMA and have offered to act as advocates for IMMA to their networks. The group operates informally, and much of the business is done by conference call.

"I believe that IMMA will always need an Advisory Group for private investment, as a significant aspect of the Board's focus is and should be on governance. Those on the Board that are assisting with private investment are doing it very well. The Development Advisory Group are very motivated and have made a great contribution to IMMA"

Sarah Glennie, Director, IMMA

Strategy 2 - Create Compelling Reasons for Corporates to Invest in IMMA

IMMA has undertaken a number of strategies to build new Corporate Partnerships. These include the Corporate Members, starting at €1,000 and growing to €10,000 with different levels of benefits added at each level.

Conversations with potential corporate partners has revealed a greater interest in involvement in ongoing strategies in IMMA's programme than once-off involvement in single exhibitions. As well as the Goodbody three-year founding partner investment in IMMA1000 to purchase work, IMMA has successfully negotiated a series of partnerships with corporates to support commissioning, purchasing and programming. These partnerships have been supported by the Development Advisory Group.

Discussions with Hennessy were around their interest in supporting Irish art. This has led to meaningful support that will create a legacy through 'The Hennessy Art Fund' which supports new acquisitions to the IMMA Collection. The work must be made in Ireland within the last five years by artists who haven't been in the IMMA Collection before. A curatorial panel selects the work for purchase, which will always be acknowledged as a purchased by the Hennessy Art Fund.

A further unique corporate partnership has been developed with the law firm Matheson. IMMA's relationship with Matheson developed through their interest in supporting the creation of 'new art'. This work is specifically for the temporary programme and can be for exhibitions or projects. Matheson are interested in the international aspect and the association with commissioning new work.

Hotel partners have proved an invaluable source of support to IMMA's programme with the provision of in-kind accommodation and hospitality greatly assisting the international programme. The Dylan Hotel was IMMA's hotel partner in 2014 and 2015 and in 2016 IMMA formed a new collaboration with the Dean Hotel.

The sponsorship discussions came back into play for the Freud Centre project, a multi-year space which will be the international focus for study of the work of Freud in the coming years and will open in late 2016. A new approach was taken for this project with the creation of a Freud Circle incorporating multi-annual commitments by BNP Paribas and Credit Suisse, and support from Corrigan and Corrigan and Christies, as well as private donors.

Outcomes

With the support of the Development Advisory Group, IMMA has successfully diversified their income, and switched their energies from short-term corporate relationships with sponsors for individual exhibitions, to multi-year investments that support the Collection and broader Programming.

Corporate investment in IMMA has increased by 877% from 2014 to 2016 (excluding support in kind) from €29,500 in 2014 to over €250,000 projected in 2016.

Those investments, along with growth in annual giving at Patron level have given IMMA the comfort to strengthen artistic programming which is now back up to 24 months in advance, having been eroded back to 12 months due to the pressure of funding cuts.

Individual donors increased by 325% between 2014 and 2015, with a number of Members moving up each year to Donor level (investment of over €1,000 annually). In 2013 three individuals and corporates joined at €1,000. By 2015 that number was 10, and now sits at 14.

There has been significant continued engagement of Members, with a staff member now working full time looking after Friends, with a focus on special events and renewals. The administration has been moved on to eTapestry for that purpose. IMMA is hosting about 18 Membership events a year, with curator-led tours and field trips. A further 10 Patron events per year includes private dinners after openings, lunches, Collectors and Artist receptions.

Noting this success with moving people to Patron level, IMMA has found the highest-level Patrons more challenging to recruit. A decision around an annual €4,000 investment is still challenging individuals, and the process of moving Members up in their investment proves more challenging at that level.

These strategies combined produced a 31% increase in private investment in 2015 and are projected to produce a 137% increase in 2016. These advancements will reflect a 211% increase in private investment since IMMA began the programme in 2014. While private investment and earned income remains relatively modest as a portion of IMMA's total revenue (projected to end at 17% in 2016), IMMA's focus on developing and refining strategies for individuals, corporates, and their advisory board provides a promising foundation on which to continue to build in years to come.