

Prototyping an Institute for Twenty- first Century

Prepared by Vannesa Ahuactzin
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DESIGN
TWENTYFIRST
CENTURY

Positive change through design thinking

Learning is not tidy. Nor is it singular.

Learning does not fit into blocks and start and stop when a bell rings.

Learning is constant, invisible, iterative, complex and messy.

Learning is the greatest gift that we can give and receive.

Learning builds legacy.

Ireland needs an inclusive, holistic and dynamic new learning system.

We need new and better methods for fluid learning.

We need learning mechanisms that show students how to find solutions to global challenges while integrating responses to local citizenship and community action.

We need students who are engaged in collaborations between the city, citizens, businesses, academia, politics, researchers and policy makers.

We need a learning system that unites topics around a project rather than separating topics into silos.

Learning needs to be reinvented and iterated so that it reflects and responds to the curiosities, dilemmas and questions that Ireland and the world are facing today.

Linking the big challenges.

As Dublin City expands, intelligent and affordable, housing, transportation, energy and sustainable thinking across citywide initiatives has become increasingly complex.

Dublin City and Dublin County Councils are pressured to come-up with new and smarter solutions, policies and strategies to multiple urban challenges. But Dublin City and Dublin County Councils, like any other global councils, cannot solve these challenges on their own. They need to come up with a fresh and collaborative way to design and test their projects with citizens, businesses, universities and so on.

That is why Dublin City has the opportunity to invent and execute on a new learning model.

A model that is multi-disciplinary, iterative, inclusive, real world, public, international and which most importantly understands how people can contribute to the future of their country and to the world in the 21st Century.

We know that...

1. Students need a new learning system that teaches the skills to collaborate and solve 21st Century challenges.
2. Dublin City and Dublin County Councils need to collaborate with a diverse range of people and organizations – business, citizens, policy makers, officials, universities, scientists – to invent better solutions, smarter strategies and a greater quality of life in Dublin City.

We propose to invent a new learning model for Ireland called, *Institute for Twentyfirst Century*

A new learning model could serve as the mechanism to unify – Students, Dublin City and Dublin County Councils, Citizens, Universities, Businesses, Scientists, Politicians and so on to work collaboratively on 21st Century challenges.

How could Dublin City build a new learning model that equips all collaborators with 21st Century tools?

Currently each university in Dublin is its own entity.

Each one is recognized for key expertise, their own international networks and a gamut of initiatives. Each one wants to be the best in their field.

In the process of becoming the best...

Everyone is looking to invent new ways of learning.

Everyone is looking for more international brainpower.

Everyone is looking to innovate in their practice.

Everyone is looking to contribute to society.

Everyone is looking for funding.

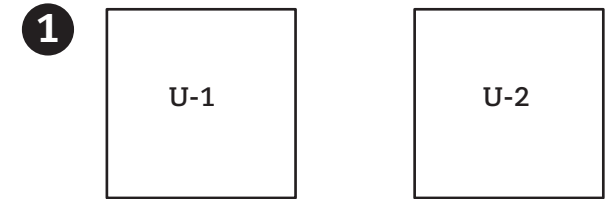
Above all everyone is looking for excellence.

Excellence comes from inventing new models that respond both to the needs of the universities, the students, the city and business. That is why we believe that the opportunity lies in combining the assets from each university to create a unified learning front that combines the skills and excellence of each university.

**How could the Institute for Twentyfirst Century model work?
There are many possible ways!
Following is one prototype...**

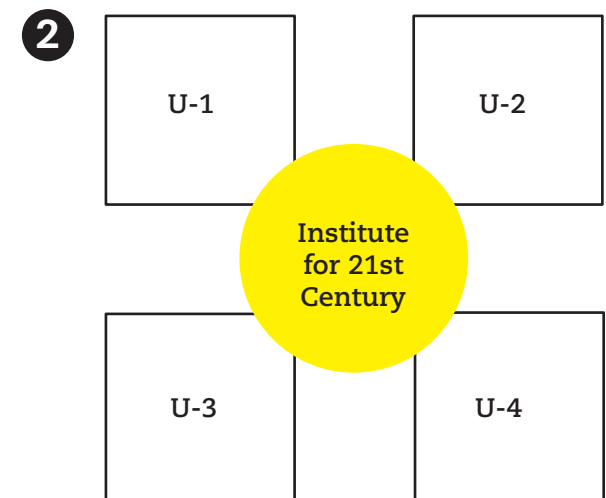
1. Currently each university in Dublin is its own entity.

Each one is recognized for key expertise, their own international networks and a gamut of initiatives.



2. A new learning model could emerge if an executive was formed that was part of but separate to the universities.

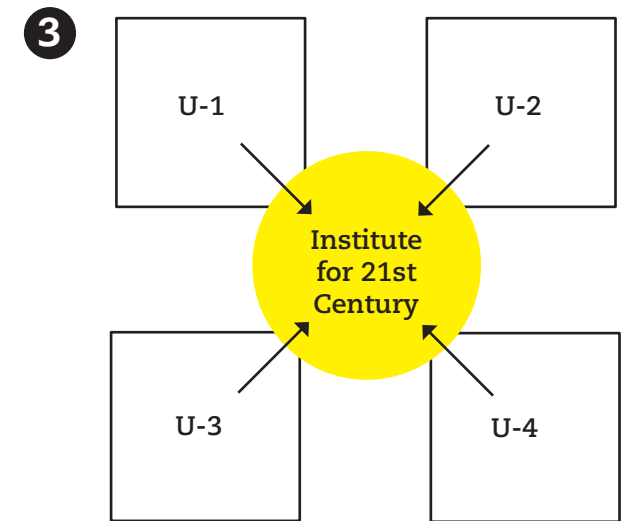
Two people would be assigned from each university to form part of the executive.



3. Each university would use their application channels to open two positions for the *Institute for Twentyfirst Century*.

The call for applications would be as wide and international as possible. One position would be given to an Irish candidate and the other to an international candidate through each university. The level would be post-graduate.

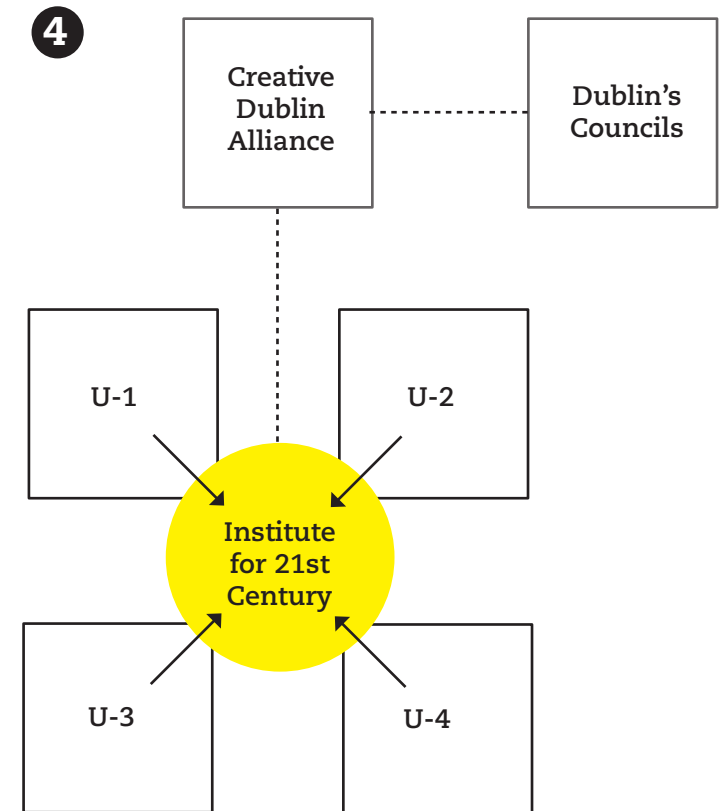
- The executive and special invited guests would interview the possible candidates. Eight students would form part of the *Institute for Twentyfirst Century* for the course of a year, after which a new set of students would be selected.
- The post-graduate students would be housed in a new cultural institution such as the Science Gallery or an alternate place.



4. The Institute for Twentyfirst Century would be directly linked to the Creative Dublin Alliance.

The Creative Dublin Alliance houses the key players for the new learning initiative – Dublin City and Dublin County Councils, University Presidents and Business members.

The Creative Dublin Alliance would be responsible for mentoring and selecting the projects that the Institute for Twentyfirst Century collaborates on.



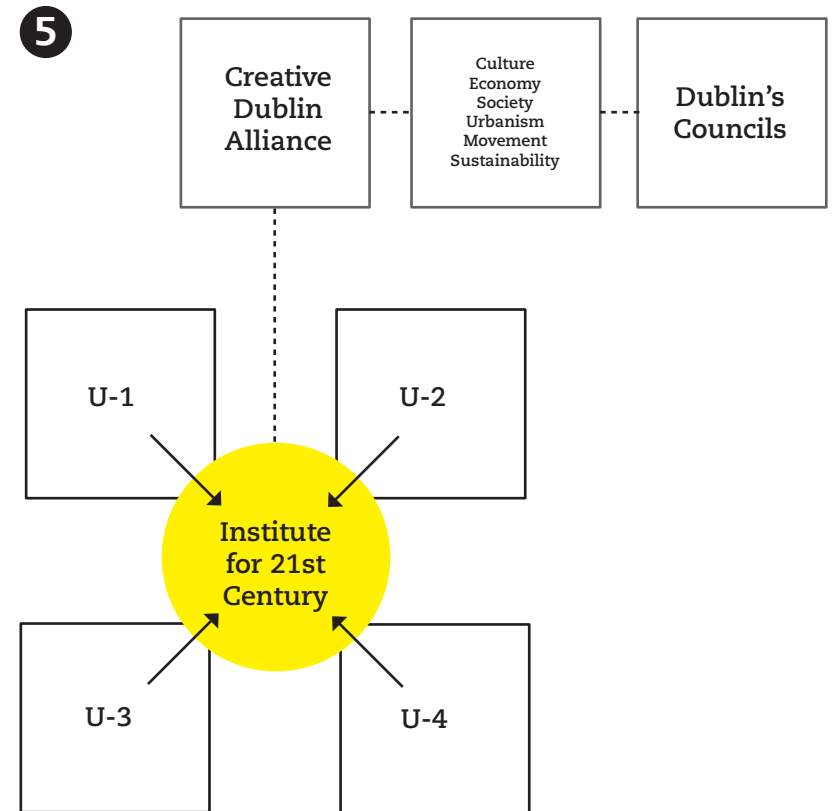
5. The Institute for Twentyfirst Century would give post-graduate students the opportunity to work on projects in one of the six areas being addressed by Dublin City and Dublin County Councils:

Culture, economy, society, urbanism, movement, and sustainability.

Each year a new theme would be addressed by the *Institute for Twentyfirst Century*.

As such...

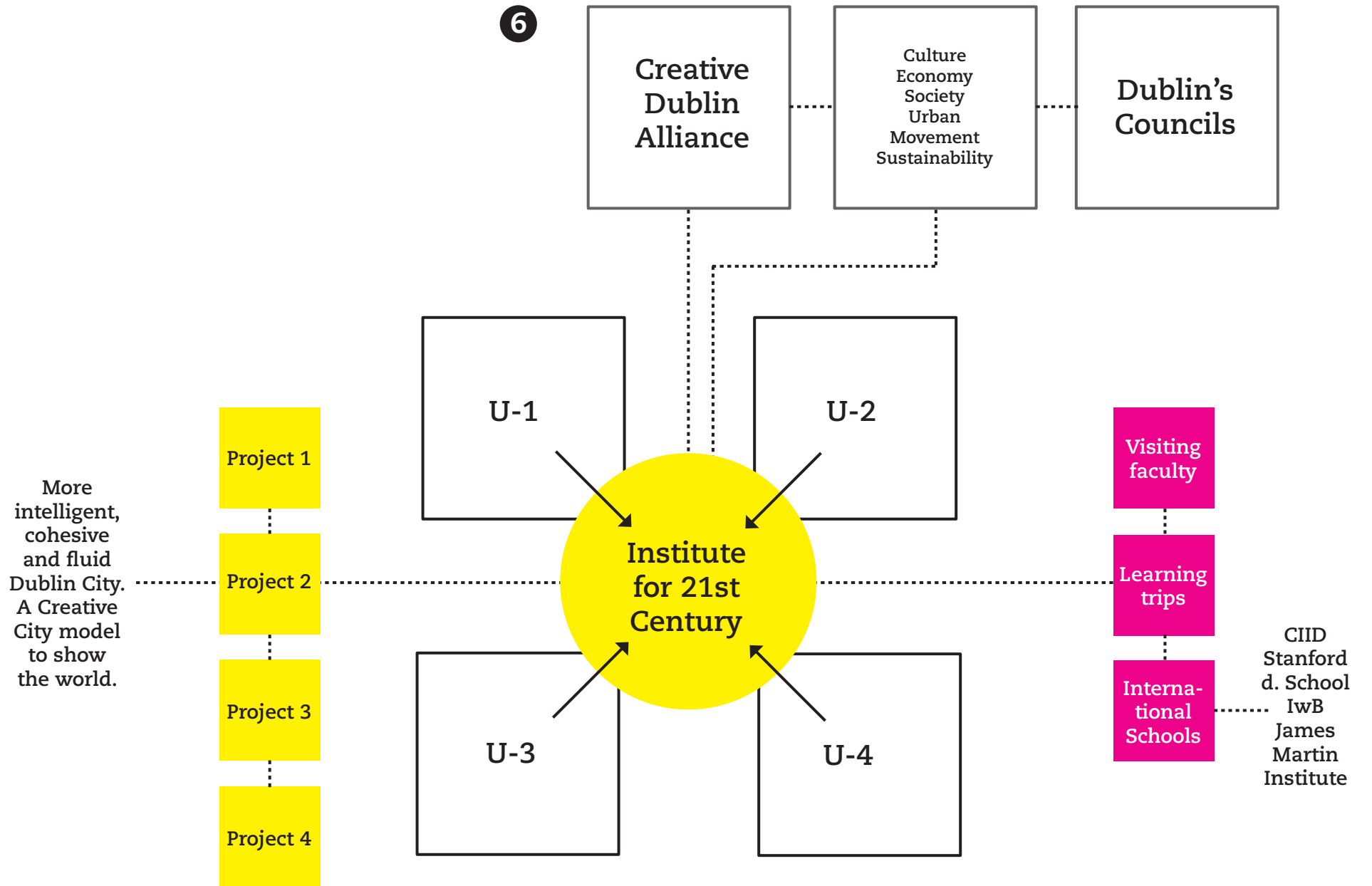
- Creative Dublin Alliance would select, approve and mentor the year long project.
- Dublin City and Dublin County Councils would provide the project.
- The Universities would provide the knowledge.
- The Science Gallery or alternate space would act as the cultural link that would house the students.



6. During the course of the year the *Institute for Twentyfirst Century* post-graduate students would...

- Be paired with the city team who is working on the assigned theme.
- Research and visit the people and cities that are affecting change.
- Have access to international thinkers and doers via research trips and through visiting faculty.
- Collaborate with other like-invented new learning models worldwide.
- Interview and listen to what citizens want.
- Apply their findings to the project and iterate.
- Create a public event like an exhibition or a festival to show and test their findings with Dublin's citizens.

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In the process, students would also gain knowledge of:

How to ask questions

How to listen

How to frame and carry out inquiry and research

How to interpret information and develop critical insights

How to present

How to make mistakes

How to bravely walk away from good ideas

How to design effective communication

How to visualize invisible concepts

How to find relevance in obscure detail

How to use design software

How to facilitate creative change

How to link business capacity with social interests

How to develop and manage projects

How to lead and allow others to lead

How to enjoy the fruits of one's labour

* from Institute without Boundaries website.

A conclusion.

The *Institute for Twentyfirst Century* is a viable opportunity. It offers a new way of thinking and solving challenges by getting ideas quickly into the urban context, not as perfect and fixed strategies but rather as iterative gestures that can be shared and tried.

The *Institute for Twentyfirst Century* will enable:

Students with the necessary tools to help solve Ireland's challenges,

Dublin City and Dublin County Councils with smarter and plural solutions for the Dublin Region,

Citizens with a stake in their future,

Universities with a low-risk way to test new learning models,

Businesses with innovative leaders,

Policy makers with a renewed understanding of solution thinking,

Ireland with an exportable learning model that can be replicated everywhere.

Adopting an *Institute for Twentyfirst Century* will place Dublin City ahead of other cities. It will bring design thinking and tools into the city fabric. It will build a framework for future generations to understand their city as a sustainable component in a larger context. Most importantly it will allow Dublin City to be a living laboratory where solutions are tried and tested in an open, meaningful and purposeful fashion.

The Institute for Twentyfirst Century will be your legacy to your children.

Appendix: Other new learning models that might be of interest to you.

- **Institute without Boundaries**
<http://www.institutewithoutboundaries.com/>
- **Stanford Institute of Design d.School**
<http://www.stanford.edu/group/dschool/>
- **Kaospilots**
<http://www.kaospilot.dk/>
- **Copenhagen Institute for Interaction Design**
<http://ciid.dk/>
- **James Martin Institute**
<http://www.martininstitute.ox.ac.uk/jmi/>
- **Archeworks**
<http://www.archeworks.org/>
- **Henry Ford Learning Institute**
<http://www.hfli.org/>

**We invite you to be a partner in forming the
Institute for Twentyfirst Century prototype!**

We are open to suggestions, ideas on the model presented and any other thoughts that you have. For comments and questions please contact:

Jean Byrne, Founding Partner
Design Twentyfirst Century
jean@design21c.com

Jim Dunne, Founding Partner
Design Twentyfirst Century
jim@design21c.com

Vannesa Ahuactzin, Creative Director
Design Twentyfirst Century
vannesa@design21c.com