



DORSET
Local Enterprise Partnership

Innovation Suite

End of Project Report

March 2021

PROJECT SUMMARY

Arts University Bournemouth (AUB) is a world-class arts, design, performance and media university. AUB is committed to supporting local growth and regeneration through working with start-ups and Small Medium Enterprises (SMEs) and developing entrepreneurial behaviours and future skills capabilities in our students and graduates.

Over the last four years AUB have invested in their own resources and attracted investments from the European Regional Development Agency (ERDF) and the Dorset Local Enterprise Partnership (DLEP) to grow support for local business. AUB have worked with over 250 SMEs to develop new skills and prototype and test new products and services.

AUB's strategic aims are to upskill the region through the development of specialist skilled postgraduate students and researchers, specialist CPD and in-work training, and supporting innovation projects in the local SME community.

This project consolidated specialist equipment in a purpose-built facility to enable ease of access and use for students, graduates, start-ups and SMEs. The project also allowed for the creation of a dedicated purpose-built room for Mixed Reality (Virtual Reality and Augmented Reality applications). It allowed upgrading of the facilities required to power the digital and advanced manufacturing kit. This project is part of an overall investment to create an adaptive and future thinking Innovation quarter on campus. See also the project reports on the Innovation Resources and the Innovation Studio.

The project objectives were:

The creation of a high-quality innovation facility containing social/workspace and specialist equipment for use by PG, Research students, Local SMEs and external enterprises.

Access for external businesses and practitioners, including residents of the Innovation Studio to specialist equipment.

Total funding from Dorset LEP - £230,000

Project start date	30 th September 2020
Project completion date	31 st March 2021

OUTPUTS AND OUTCOMES:

Outputs:

The outputs generated by the project were as follows:

The creation of a high-quality innovation facility containing social/workspace and specialist equipment for use by postgraduate, researchers, start-ups, Small Medium Enterprises (SMEs) and external enterprises. This project refurbished 288m Square of Learning floor space.

Enabling access for external businesses and practitioners, including residents of the Innovation Studio to specialist equipment. This project upgraded specialist data rendering equipment (enabling the processing of complex digital assets and experiences) and the graphics cards and personal computers needed to drive specialist equipment.

The project refurbished an existing administrative space to create an Innovation Suite. This Suite is co-located with easy access to the Innovation Studio and the Workshop to create a visible and accessible Innovation Quarter. The Suite provides a specialist digital fabrication equipment and a collaborative work/social space that can be used for collaborative projects, networking events or delivery of Continuing Professional Development (CPD). The Innovation Suite will be part of the resources and facilities that enable activity to upskill the region and support local innovation, business growth and sustainability.



Figure 1: Collaborative working space



Figure 2: Equipment in Suite

Before this project, specialist equipment was spread across the campus making it difficult to resource and provide safe access to external users. Consolidation of equipment and concentration of collaborative industry research and innovation projects to one focal location on campus makes access easier to manage, especially for activity out of core hours. The project provides a space to encourage networking, collaboration and experimentation, access to specialist equipment and upskilling in digital and digital fabrication, facilitating innovation, growth and productivity.

This investment has enabled AUB to enhance their digital infrastructure and support more efficient processing of data and digital assets. By extending previous rendering capabilities, it enables us to handle the additional load this increased capacity will put on the system; improving processing speed and supporting multiple projects simultaneously. Thus enabling AUB to meet its obligations to students while increasing the amount of collaborative industry projects we can support.

Outcomes:

The intended outcomes of the project are as follows:

OUTCOMES MATRIC – AUB Innovation Suite		Unit	FY 2020/21	FY 2021/22	FY 2022/23	FY 2023/24	FY 2024/25	TOTAL PROJECTIONS
Outcome	Definition		Annual Projections					
Jobs Created/safeguarded	The total number of newly created and safeguarded permanent full-time equivalent jobs as a direct result of the intervention at predetermined employment sites.	FTEs	0	0	3	5	7	15
No. of Job Years (accumulative)	Economic assumption that every job created exists for 3 years only, so GVA benefits are multiplied by this but not beyond.	FTEs	0	0	3	6	10	19
Learning floor space created	The amount of training/learning floor space refurbished to improve building condition and/or fitness for purpose.	m2	288	-	-	-	-	288 m2
Enterprises receiving non-financial support	Number of SMEs receiving support (inc. advice and training) with the intention of improving performance (i.e. reduce costs, increase turnover/profit, innovation, exporting, minimum of 2 days of consulting advice).	No.	0	10	11	12	12	45
Match funding	AUB contribution £65,000 (100% third sector)	£	£93,715	£0	£0	£0	£0	£65,000
Annual GVA (assuming job benefit lasts for 3 years)		£48,703	£0	£0	£146,109	£292,218	£487,030	£925,357
Annual GVA (Discounted by 3.5%)		£	£0	£0	£136,060	£262,596	£422,343	£820,999
Cumulative GVA (Discounted)		£	£0	£0	£136,060	£398,657	£821,000	£1,355,717
(GVA – from Addendum)		£	0	0	0	£93,997	£234,992	£704,975

AUB are on course to deliver against these targets. Initial outputs have been realised against the linked projects Innovation Studio and Innovation Resource. The facilities created by this project will be heavily utilised after September when Covid restrictions are fully lifted. The space is being used for access to the Mixed Reality equipment and the Body Scanner, as well as safely enabling working groups of students. We have already exceeded our match-funding obligations but will continue to record and report on our investment in the space.

BENEFITS REALISED TO DATE

The new workspace is already being used by graduating fashion students for final projects, and collaborative projects utilising the body scanner and experiments with the MR kit. This is enabling AUB to utilise new technology in curriculum development.

AUB have already attracted an internationally significant company to work with us on a collaborative research project. The ongoing benefits of the project will be felt over the coming years.

FINANCES

We prioritised maximising the LEP budget. We have made a greater match investment as the works discovered some additional structural issues that need fixing and we also funded additional elements to improve the space for the end user.

LESSONS LEARNT

Procurement was via the PAGABO Framework, which was extremely agile and responsive and will be used again for projects that need delivery in a short time frame. The project was relatively smooth and communication with the contractors Wilmot Dixon was good from involvement in the design process to everyday progress.

Because we were moving to complete the works in a relatively tight time frame we should have increased the Contingency budget.

SUCCESS STORY

The project has been successful. AUB have created an exciting multi-disciplinary workspace. We are installing, deploying, testing the resources it contains as we are making it available to external companies, internal staff and students. We are already attracting some big national and international names down to work with us. This is only the beginning of the project; AUB's next annual report will have stories of what we have achieved.

Continued uncertainty over Covid restrictions, as well as adding the finishing touches to the buildings, means we have delayed our big publicity launch. This will now happen in October 2021 but we have soft launched by engaging with individual companies.

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