

Where Library meets Classroom meets Community

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The Problem

- Children need to be exposed to STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Math) topics at an early age
- Children may not have access to these types of services in low-income neighborhoods
- St. Thomas Public Library recognizes this problem, and in partnership with the City of St. Thomas and the Thames Valley District School Board, proposes the creation of a unique facility that will address this issue

The Solution

Part makerspace, part community hub, part classroom experience, the Wellington Street School in St. Thomas is being re-imagined into an entirely unique space, with a focus on exploration, learning, imagination, creation and development.

- As a classroom destination, students will be challenged and inspired in STEAM-focused fields
- As a community hub, the public will have access to a unique space to grow their ideas, start their businesses, and learn new skills

Community Engagement

November 2015 - Speaker event:

- Over 130 community members joined us for an evening speaker session with special guest speakers
- Attendees were encouraged to provide feedback and ideas, on paper sheets affixed to every table

December 2015 - Public consultation:

- Over 50 community members attended the consultation session, where attendees chose the agenda items and themes discussed

Business Model

Proposed governance model:

Initially administered through the library, with plans to register as an independent non-profit / charity

Potential dedicated areas:

- Flexible space / classroom / meeting space
- Art space / display area
- Workshop
- Commercial kitchen
- Sound studio
- Photography studio
- Computer lab / software / design
- Digital space / 3D printers / laser cutters

Sustainability

Proposed revenue streams:

- Endowment fund
- Field trip fees
- Membership fees
- Room rental fees
- Corporate sponsorship
- Grant funds



Public Consultation Agenda

Public Library

Increased impact - Library as Community Hub:

- St. Thomas Public Library is continuing its leadership with innovation and support for the local creative community
- Libraries have an important role to play in providing equal access to valuable services



50 Wellington Street, St. Thomas

Outcomes

- Optimized use of available resources and partnerships, which reduce poverty, inequality, and exclusion
- Increased access to services for all members of the community
- Documentation of resources and best practices

Next Steps

- Consulting team UnLondon to deliver business plan
- Formalize governance structure
- Capital implementation (IT, infrastructure, etc.)
- Staffing