The transformative impact of the new library extension at Maynooth University

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SCONUL Library Design Awards 2016
Institutional context

Maynooth University

St Patrick’s College Maynooth

Maynooth town

“Town and gown”
Rationale for new library

- Significant institutional growth
- Longstanding concerns
- Catalyst for change (internal and external)
- Remove ‘barriers’
**Stakeholder Feedback/Priorities**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Students</th>
<th>Faculty</th>
<th>Wider Community</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>‘Green’ building</td>
<td>Dedicated PG / staff space</td>
<td>Publicly accessible areas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More electrical outlets</td>
<td>Exhibitions area</td>
<td>Café</td>
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<tr>
<td>Diversity of learning styles catered for</td>
<td>Meeting rooms</td>
<td>Exhibitions area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dedicated postgraduate/staff space</td>
<td>Non-timetabled space</td>
<td>Community space</td>
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<tr>
<td>Training spaces</td>
<td>Café</td>
<td>Exemplar building</td>
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<tr>
<td>Personal service &amp; support</td>
<td>Library staff area refurbished</td>
<td>Welcoming building</td>
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<tr>
<td>Opening hours</td>
<td>Subject ‘ghettos’ – disciplines confined to old areas</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Café</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Sense of pride</td>
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Catalyst for change

- Evolution of building, space and profession
- Change *where* we work / change *how* we work
- Organisational review: 2011-12
- New organisational structure for a new space
Architectural Vision

• To create a world class library facility in the heart of a historic campus setting.
• To create an open, bright, modern, naturally ventilated, healthy environment in which to study.
• Always apply the Librarian Mantra – KEEP IT FLEXIBLE!
Architectural Vision
– from concepts to reality

Maynooth University
National University of Ireland Maynooth

Scott Tallon Walker Architects – St. John Handley
Architectural Vision
– from concepts to reality
Architectural Vision

- Healthy environment – intelligent facades.
Architectural Vision

- Healthy environment – intelligent facades.
A transformative project

- Learning environments
- Collections
- Strategic position
- Professional
- Cultural Hub
- Nexus for collaboration
Learning environments

- Flexibility of space
- Variety of learning styles
- Future proofed
- Evaluate and understand
Collections

• Reassess
• Reconfigure
• Showcase and highlight
• Death of print?
• Unique and Distinctive Collections
• Accessibility
Strategic Position

• Building as enabler
• Show what we can deliver
• Redefine our role
• Strategic prominence
• Professional
• Cultural hub
Professional responsibilities
Cultural hub
Nexus for collaboration

• Neutral space
• ‘Town and gown’
• Stunned by the demand
• Too successful?
Metrics – the hard

- 216% increase in seating
- 147% increase in space
- 130% increase in shelving
- Consistent rise in footfall
- Consistent rise in online interaction
- New spaces
- New users
- New role
Metrics – the soft

“Love this library by the way!! Well done NUIM”

“This new Library is pretty slick!! Feel like I'm in 2020”

“The New NUIM library is UNBELIEVABLE! So excited to be essay writing all day!”

“It's official. Maynooth has the slickest library in the country.”

“The new #NUIMLibrary is like being in Willy Wonka's Chocolate Factory. #SoMagical”

Social media

Libqual improvement

“a resounding success”

2015 Quality review peer review group report
Last words....

• Vision...but be flexible and practical
• Leadership and involvement...but know when to take advice
• Team approach vital ... but make the calls when you have to
• Complex and distinct ... but must be considered in overall institutional and organisational context
• Challenging ...but worth it (x100)
• Most rewarding professional experience (to date) – duty and pleasure to share
• Never finished...
Thank you!
Go raibh maith agaibh!

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