

Living in Belfast: A study in housing

Open Call for exhibition proposals

Feilden Clegg Bradley Studios and PLACE

Introduction

Feilden Clegg Bradley Studios and PLACE are pleased to issue an Open Call for proposals for an artwork on the theme of 'housing'.

Feilden Clegg Bradley Studios is a UK based architectural practice whose urban planning and architecture are deeply engaged in how cities evolve, support communities and prosper. The practice works on a broad range of projects which focus on design excellence and the practical issues of knitting together fractured cities, addressing climate change, and supporting the development of sustainable educational buildings. The 38 year old practice currently employs over 200 staff, focusing on education, master planning, housing and urban design.

PLACE is an independent not-for-profit organisation dedicated to promoting great architecture, design and planning in Northern Ireland. Our purpose is to create a better place to live, work and play. We work with various types of organisations, institutions and government department across Northern Ireland to encourage high standards of design and engineering, and increase public engagement with their built environment to promote community development and healthier societies.

Context/theme

Belfast has development potential unlike any other UK regional city. This allows the city to reinvent itself but the reasons for its development potential also present a distinct set of problems; the models applied to foster the development of other cities may be applicable in part but significant issues associated with transport, land values, tenure and government structure present the need to create bespoke solutions.

The wheels of government have successfully delivered or facilitated major projects such as the Titanic Quarter, Victoria Square and, in the near term, the Ulster University's Belfast City Campus. Equally, there are projects which are challenging to deliver owing to the economic context. All of these projects are large in scale and therefore, should they fail to be realised, impact large areas of the city.

'Iconic', 'landmark' and 'gateway' projects dot the city but the background fabric of the city itself is anemic. While there are pockets of the city which capture a sense of vibrancy and are constantly active, the city generally appears to be tentatively occupied and used solely to support office workers or spots of night time economy including restaurants, bars and theatres. Missing in this equation is organic residential development around historic cores and new residential development appropriate to create a city. The missing piece of Belfast's puzzle is dense residential development typical of urban environments.

We are interested in exploring the issues which have frustrated urban living in Belfast and the opportunities that supporting a vibrant urban centre can bring to the city and region. Clearly defining the development and architectural typologies that can successfully infuse the city with both small and large scale residential development is the focus of FCBS Belfast study on residential development in the city. There are plenty of landmarks, we just need a place to live.

Open call

We are asking for proposals for an artwork reflecting the 'housing' themes and interests outlined above. The selected entrant will receive £750 to be used to develop and realise the artwork. The artwork will be exhibited in the FCBStudios Belfast offices in Spring 2017.

Please submit a PDF including:

- Name, email, phone number and postal address
- A written description of the proposal (500 words to include an outline of the idea and description of the exhibition contents). The work can be new or existing.
- Given the nature of the brief, familiarity with the local context, Belfast in particular, is recommended. Please include a short statement (150 words) on your connection and experience of Belfast.
- A budget breakdown.
- Up to 5 images or material to support the proposed idea (optional).

Additional info:

- The medium can be of any suitable to the environment (images of the office available on request). Please be aware however that this space is adjacent to the main office environment so the inclusion of flashing / bright lights or sound etc. would not be deemed suitable.
- Groups and collectives can apply.
- Catering for the launch event will be covered separate to the £750.
- The exhibition run and dates will be decided in conversation with the selected individual/group.
- The exhibition space will be open to the public during office hours.
- A selection panel will consist of members from FCBS, PLACE and the visual arts sector in Belfast. Feedback on unsuccessful proposals will be at the discretion of the panel.
- There is no fee to enter.

Please send proposals to Brighdín Farren, brighdin@placeni.org by **5pm on 20th January 2017**.