

students learning with communities

# Designing a bait-hive to attract people and bees



Students Learning with Communities



DIT Access & Civic Engagement

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## Background & Project Goals

DIT Manufacturing & Design Engineering students under the supervision of lecturer Fionnuala Farrell and with support from the DIT programme for Students Learning with Communities collaborated with Kaethe Burt-O'Dea of Desireland who leads the LIFELINE Bí Project. This project challenged the students to design, build and test a practical bait-hive to attract people and scouting honey bees in North-west Inner city Dublin.

In teams, following a brief introduction to a structured design process and guidance on using fundamental project management tools, students worked hard on defining clearly what was required by the community partner. This included an aesthetically intriguing design which raises public awareness whilst also attracting bees who can then be easily transferred from the newly designed bait-hives into standard bee-hives. The design should also be easy to assemble and maintain and inexpensive to acquire.

## Students Engaging with Community Partners

To gain some in-depth knowledge of beekeeping, expert Liam McGarry from County Dublin's Beekeepers Association (CDBK) voluntarily worked with students on the practical elements of the design. One student and the supervising lecturer attended CDBK's 9-week beginners bee-keeping course to ensure ongoing practical knowledge and support for the project. Continuous feedback and interaction with Kaethe, the client, ensured students could clarify objectives and respond effectively to suggested changes. Partnership with the timber technology department within DIT facilitated the construction of the prototypes.

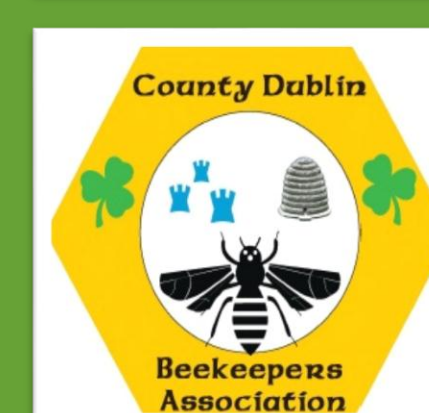
## Project Outcomes

Following a rigorous conceptualisation phase initial prototypes were reviewed and feedback was provided by the community partners and extended DIT staff. Iterations to the designs along with a detailed customer survey was conducted before final prototypes were built, analysed and presented. The response was positive and evoked a healthy discussion on the broad spectrum of aspects considered from manufacturability and commercial awareness to further functional testing and material evaluation.

Overall the feedback from students' reflection on the project was very positive with comments including "I would highly recommend working on a community based partnership to gain invaluable first-hand experience of a real world project"; "we learned from our mistakes" and "you get a much better understanding of what is needed to work within a team"

## Benefits

By engaging in a collaborative design process the LIFELINE Bí Project initiative gained some creative bait-hive prototypes to continue to develop further and were used to raise awareness of their work in events such as Bloom Fringe festival in Smithfield. DIT Manufacturing & Design Engineering students developed their research, design process, teamwork, project & time management and communication skills, as well as learning from interacting directly with a client in a real-world environment by responding to and meeting their client's needs.



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