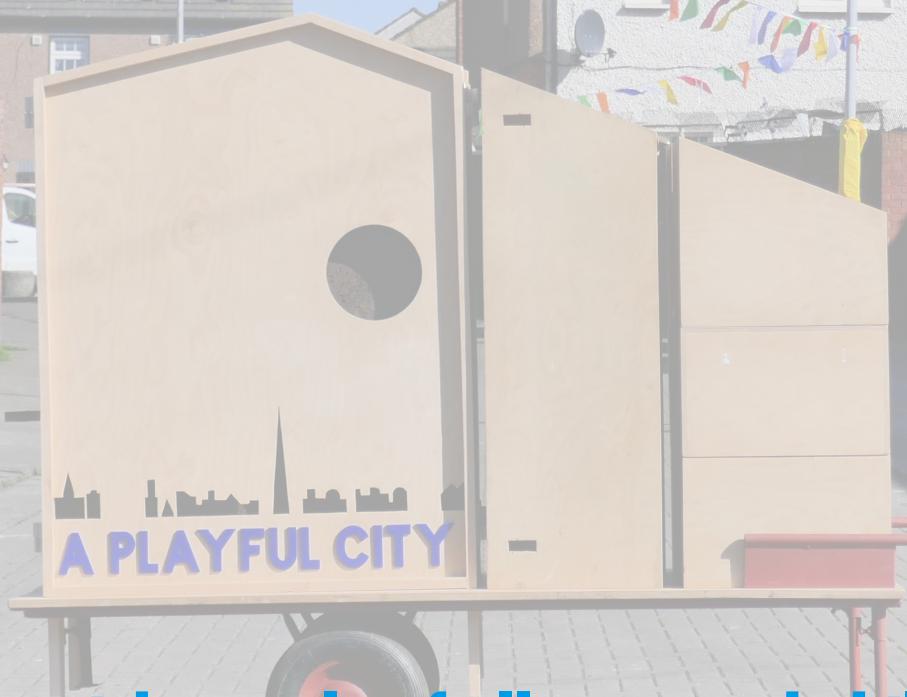




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THE SPIEL MOBILE

A tool to playfully consult with people of all ages and abilities



WHAT?

“The Spiel Mobile is a tool to playfully consult with people of all ages and abilities”

The Spiel Mobile tool provides for mobile, pop-up consultation that is playful, engaging, and meaningful. It creates a space that attracts and engages people of all ages and abilities in a community to come together, and share their insights to feed into the design of playful spaces in their areas. It is particularly important that The Spiel Mobile only be used when the consultation will lead to real and tangible impact for the community.



WHY?

Public space is consistently being relinquished in the name of economic growth, fracturing urban communities. At a Playful City we recognise the growing negative impact of this lack of space. Therefore, we work to carve out and design interesting, playful, purposeful and inclusive spaces for all ages and abilities.

To carve out and create these valuable spaces for ages, it is critical to co-create these spaces. Therefore, the tool we developed responds to the need to consult and engage meaningfully with communities in order to design spaces with and for them.

We worked with a multidisciplinary group of +100 experts to put together a design brief for such a consultative tool. The design brief highlighted the need for a device that:

- Could be easily stored and easily transported
- Eye catching in order to draw people over for
- could be manipulated into different urban spaces
- creates spaces that could be tailored to consult with people of different ages and abilities

This design brief was then handed over to the award winning Sean Harrington Architects and, using insights from hundreds of Dubliners, 'The Spiel Mobile' was born!



Since mid-2017 The Spiel Mobile has been successful as a tool to encourage people of all ages to gather, discuss and give feedback on A Playful City's projects.

Such consultations at the Spiel Mobile have led to:

- The design of a playful public seating area for young people
- The creation of a musical instrument installation
- Co-creation of play streets across Dublin (via one of our A Playful City initiatives, A Playful Street).

While the end results are important, the process of The Spiel Mobile is critical - it has acted as a mobile public space which provides positive scenes for social interaction within communities and help build a more inclusive, culturally aware and socially accepting Dublin for all ages and abilities.

HOW?

1. CO-CREATE A SPIEL MOBILE

You can talk to our team at A Playful City to help with designing your Spiel Mobile, or you can create your own version!

Regardless of what path you choose here, what's important here is co-designing The Spiel Mobile in collaboration with the types of people that will be the 'end-users' - ie the ones you will use The Spiel Mobile to consult. Try to understand what would attract them to the consultation space, how they like to share and discuss their ideas and their needs, what makes them feel heard, how they want to interact with something like The Spiel Mobile, etc - what would make it their own?

It's also critical that the Spiel Mobile is mobile, easy to open up and put back together, easy to fit into different spaces in the streetscape / public realm, and be eye-catching to attract consultees.



2. DEVELOP THE PROJECT

Once you have your Spiel Mobile, you can use it to playfully consult people of all ages and abilities. It works best when used to consult communities to gather their insights for a new public space, installation, or even programming in a local area. To find a space / project and the resources (and agreement) to make it happen, you may talk to your local council, local community groups, private sponsors, and other such stakeholders. Often a multi-stakeholder approach is needed.



3. DESIGN YOUR CONSULTATION TOOLS AND GAMES

Once you have the brief and the purpose of your workshop, it's now time to develop the various consultation tools to use within your pop-up playful consultation space. The idea of the pop up consultation space of The Spiel Mobile is that it enables you to have different consultation activities going on (potentially for different ages) in the different areas of the space.

For example, you could consult people via:

- Games: Transforming a normal game such as a hoop toss into a consultation game by asking questions as part of the game
- Drawing: Asking children or adults alike to draw what they'd like to see in the area
- Mapping: Printing out an accessible / simple map of the area and what assets are around it - and then getting people to show you how their routes through the area (as a way to learn how the area is used already and what is missing)
- Conversation spaces: Putting out chairs and having facilitators lead casual discussions about the space to pull out needs and wants
- Make & Do: Facilitating children to show you what they love and what to see by helping them make versions of it with recycled materials, some tape and glue!
- Postcard from the Future: Designing a postcard from the future that shows the current version of the space you are consulting about - and invites consultees to draw a future version and write about it

There are so many possibilities for this - let your imagination run wild! You can also look into workshop tools online such as from IDEO or countless others.



KEY TIP

Make sure you have selected facilitators to facilitate each consultation activity and another to man and oversee The Spiel Mobile as a whole. Also make sure that for each consultation activity you choose, there is a clear and easy way to document the findings - rather than just trying to remember what people said.



4. SPREAD THE WORD

We recommend letting people know when The Spiel Mobile is landing in their area - and why! It's important to do this weeks before you use The Spiel Mobile so that the consultation process becomes more of a dialogue rather than a once off (as we recommend ultimately going back and forth between designs for the space and the community and keeping them updated / asking for their insights throughout the whole design process).

To spread the word - you can put up flyers that explain what's happening, go door-to-door in the area, or come up with other creative ways to get the message out there!

Often times, we have the Spiel Mobile pop up at a community event that is already going on or we create our own event where we can have the Spiel Mobile as a part of it (such as A Playful Street that turns the street into a play space).

SOME TIPS

Do try to get other community members / community nodes / resources on board to be a part of the planning process. The Spiel Mobile is really one piece of what the full co-creation and design process should be.

5. IMPLEMENT

Today is the day! Now, it's time to pop up The Spiel Mobile! Get to the space early and give yourself enough time to set everything up and brief all the team members and community involved. After the event, make sure to carefully put away all the consultation materials all in one place so you'll have an easier time of analysing them after.



6. ANALYSE AND CONNECT BACK

After the event / use of The Spiel Mobile, the next steps is to analyse the findings, and incorporate what is possible into the new design of the space / activation.

DON'T FORGET...

...to include the community throughout and ensure it is a back and forth conversation. Ideally, after the initial design concept is developed, you then go back to the community and get feedback, then design a second iteration, and so on.

7. BRING IT TO LIFE

And last but not least, once the design process is completed, it's time for the final outcome: to bring the new co-created space / activation to life!

By engaging and consulting the community throughout, it will be something that is wanted and needed in the area - and something the community feels ownership of so will make a real tangible impact!



HELPFUL LINKS

- [Other projects by A Playful City](#)
- [Form to contact A Playful City](#)
- [Our City? Countering Exclusion in Public Space:
pages 269-275](#)

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