

Design Centre for Excellence

Creative in Cumbria, South Lakes Creative Industries Affinity Group, has now been running for almost a year. One of their original ideas, proposed by group Chair, Alison Tordoff of Fidget Design, is a building where Creative businesses can come together to work, network, exhibit, socialise etc. The project, named 'The Design Centre for Excellence' is currently considering a number of prospective buildings and discussing possible funding streams with the NWDA.

In order to take the project to the next stage, the group needs help from businesses within the sector to tell them whether they would like a Design Centre and what they would like from it. This may be business support, incubator units, central meeting rooms or administration facilities etc. Alison comments "The group is really excited about the prospects for a design centre to both support creative businesses and also promote them, both within Cumbria and on a national, or international, basis. But before we can progress any further, we need to know what other creative businesses think"

Cumbria supports a huge number of creative organisations, many of whom are sole traders and work from home. The Design Centre could provide these businesses with support in marketing, sales avenues via retail space (within a building, or online,) work space etc. Derek Armstrong from Cumbria Chamber of Commerce is also keen to see the project go ahead. "We now have four Creative Industries Affinity Groups across the county and they are all keen to promote Cumbria as a region where creativity can flourish. In order to put Cumbria on the map as a centre of creativity, we need projects such as the Design Centre."