



Process & Impact Evaluation

Post Project Review



LOTTERY FUNDED



Supported using public funding by
**ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND**



South East Midlands

Project Overview

In March 2019 MK Gallery reopened to the public after a transformative capital project designed by award-winning architects 6a.

Project objectives

- Become a destination venue and cultural and social centre by increasing gallery capacity and environmental control to support the introduction of contemporary and historical 'blockbuster' shows.
- Double the number of visitors from 30,000 to 60,000 visitors per year and expand cultural and educational programming
- Build financial and environmental sustainability
- Meet the leisure needs of Milton Keynes' expanding population

Project details

The aim of the project was to provide an expanded and welcoming setting for visual art, education, cross-art form and film programmes, making MK Gallery an accessible and enjoyable leisure destination in the city and wider region. The ambition and design of the new building, the quality of materials used and the new social and cultural opportunities it offers audiences all contributed to an exceptional visitor experience. The project also provided new jobs and skills and launched new catering, retail and private hire businesses.

Project Outputs

	Actual	Target
Jobs safeguarded	2	2
Jobs created (temporary)	20	28
Jobs created (permanent)	42	13.36
Jobs created (indirect)	17	3.51
Volunteer roles created	247	100
Apprenticeships created	1	2
Visitor footfall in 2019-2020	134,903	70,000
SMEs supported	349	249
Individuals in training	2381	760
Reduction in public subsidy	45% of turnover	52% of turnover
Private sector investment (capital)	£2,673,167	£2,800,000
Private sector investment (revenue)	£727,798	£1,925,000





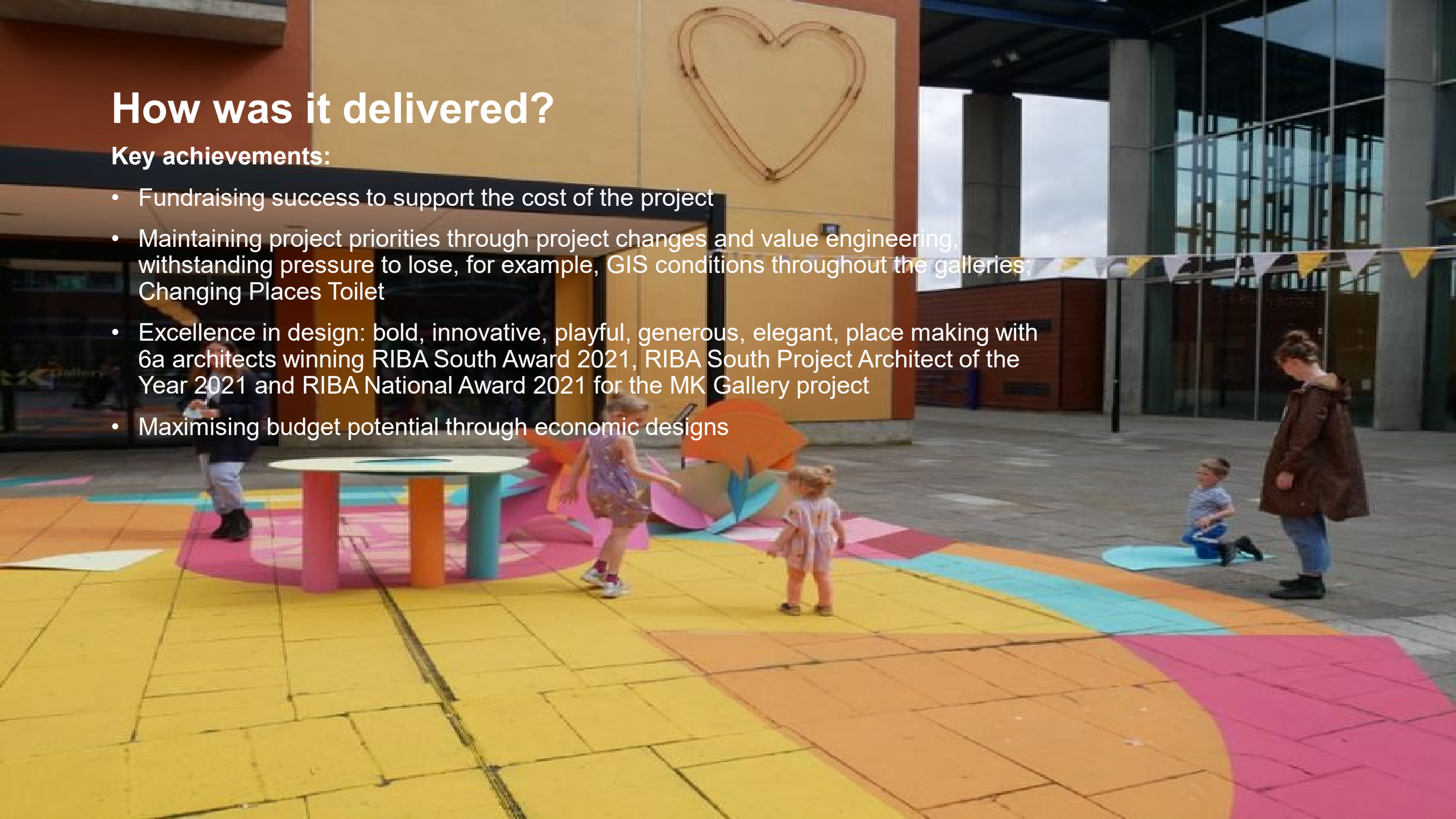
Project Outcomes and Impact

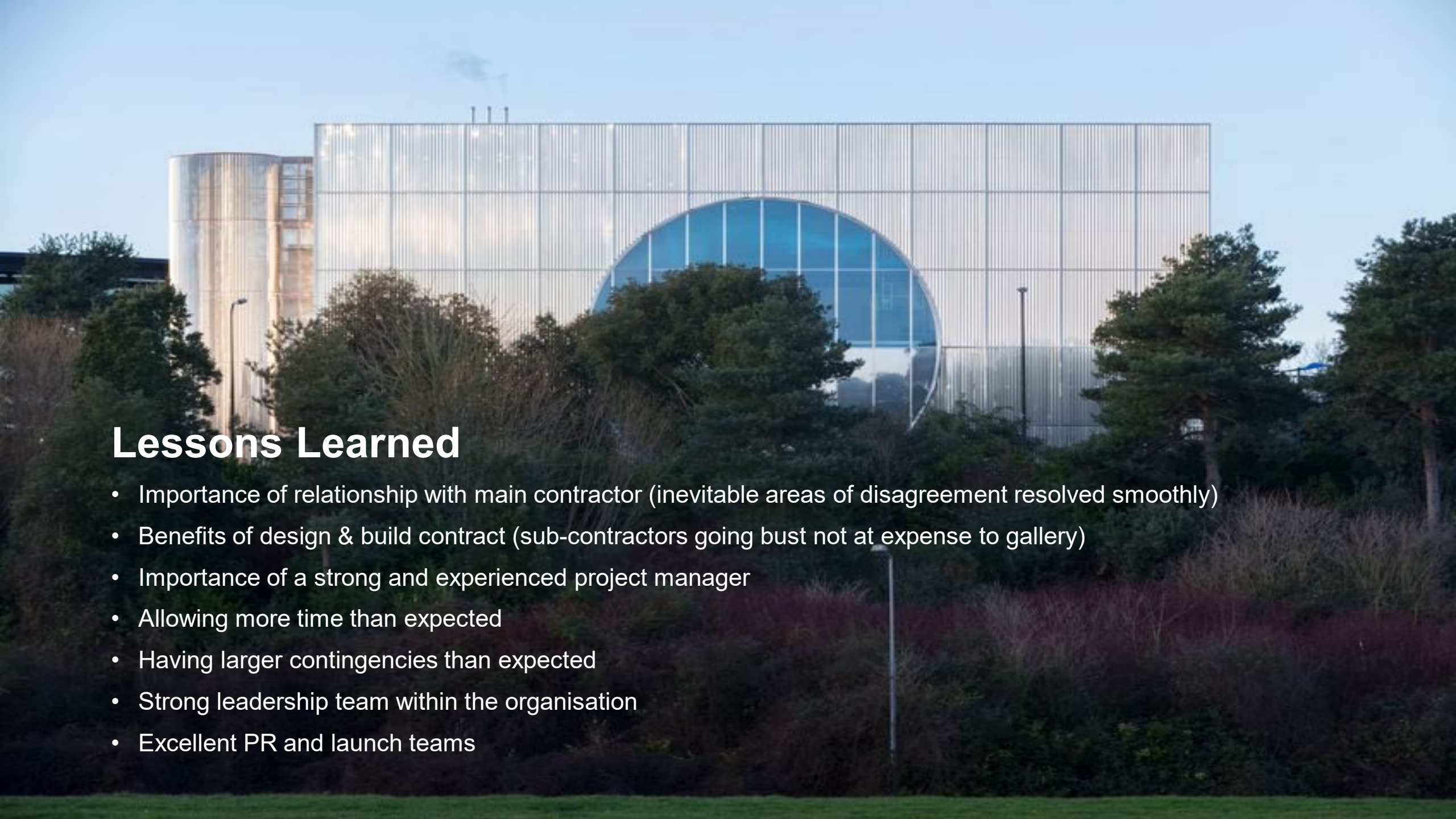
- MK Gallery welcomed over 150,000 visitors to the new building in the year following reopening.
- MK Gallery delivered a high quality and broad-ranging programme including blockbuster exhibitions, independent music and film, workshops for children and families, international conferences and numerous other educational talks and events.
- MK Gallery's family programmes attracted over 3,500 participants over the year.
- MK Gallery's newly launched schools programme engaged over 4,100 children and young people from Early Years, Primary, Secondary and Post-16.
- 1,610 children and young people took part in MK Gallery's Young Dancer competition.
- MK Gallery produced four new exhibition catalogues, commissioning many new essays for both and making sales of 6100 across the year.
- New catering, retail and auditorium spaces enabled the organisation to generate earned income equating to 30% of annual turnover.
- The redevelopment enabled the Gallery to create a number of new jobs within its team as well as casual, freelance and volunteering opportunities.

How was it delivered?

Key achievements:

- Fundraising success to support the cost of the project
- Maintaining project priorities through project changes and value engineering, withstanding pressure to lose, for example, GIS conditions throughout the galleries; Changing Places Toilet
- Excellence in design: bold, innovative, playful, generous, elegant, place making with 6a architects winning RIBA South Award 2021, RIBA South Project Architect of the Year 2021 and RIBA National Award 2021 for the MK Gallery project
- Maximising budget potential through economic designs



A photograph of a modern building with a large circular glass window and a cylindrical tower, partially obscured by trees. The building has a metallic, corrugated facade. The scene is set against a clear blue sky with some light clouds. The foreground is filled with dense green foliage and trees.

Lessons Learned

- Importance of relationship with main contractor (inevitable areas of disagreement resolved smoothly)
- Benefits of design & build contract (sub-contractors going bust not at expense to gallery)
- Importance of a strong and experienced project manager
- Allowing more time than expected
- Having larger contingencies than expected
- Strong leadership team within the organisation
- Excellent PR and launch teams