

Rebranding Civic District

Engage art and cultural communities

In its search for a branding agency to develop a “clearly identifiable visual identity” for the Civic District (“A brand new look at Civic District”; June 15), the National Arts Council (NAC) should take a step back.

The Civic District is a unique and special space that houses many cultural institutions.

Not only is there a myriad of art schools, museums, galleries and concert halls located there, but it is also a space that has changed and evolved over the years.

It means different things to different people.

A brand agency should be used only at a later stage of the marketing process of the Civic District.

First, the NAC should engage the different art and cultural communities in and around the zone.

Explain the need for a rebranding process and allow interested parties to identify the challenges and opportunities.

Second, generate a bottom-up process that allows them to define the identity of the Civic District for the rebranding process.

After all, the identity should be relevant and authentic to them.

It should, of course, also capture the imagination of residents and tourists.

Third, give the process time.

Creativity is about experimentation and breaking boundaries.

And working together will not be easy; coordination is needed.

Engaging the local art and cultural communities can be cumbersome and time-consuming, but it will be worthwhile.

Indeed, this would be a rare opportunity to tap local creative minds and bring the different art and cultural communities together.

The brand agency can join in later to support the process.

It could well be that a new brand identity may be found to be unnecessary.

Instead, the precinct may be best marketed in ambiguous, fluid and dynamic ways.

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