

EXAMPLES IN CROWDFUNDING ARCHITECTURE

When thinking about the success of crowdfunding architecture projects it is customary to make a distinction between donation based crowdfunding and reward-based crowdfunding.

With the donation based model, tangible returns are not the cause of donations, so the success of the campaign depends only on the implication and identification of the community with the campaign's cause. Reward based crowdfunding is the best known type of crowdfunding. Here, the campaign owner offers something material in return for the funds given, making the campaign appealing to potential donors not attached to the cause.

DONATION BASED CROWDFUNDING.

“I make Rotterdam”

This campaign tried to recuperate the city centre of Rotterdam making it more pedestrian-friendly attempting to crowdfund a pedestrian bridge in the middle of the city. The great success of this campaign is due to the ability it had to attract media attention by using a powerful statement as a logo (“The more you donate, the longer the bridge”) that managed to gain community's empathy; every donor recognises the problem and wants to be part of the solution.

“Franklin Park Coalition “

Campaign launched at Razoo. This campaign sought for the reactivation and maintenance of a local park. The key of the success of this project was the specific destination of the donation. When donating the investor knew exactly what his money was financing. It was a success in two aspects, raising the needed funds and engaging others to raise funds in the same purpose.

“Rebuild the Joplin Mosque”

Launched at Indie Gogo. After the locality of Joplin, Missouri, was hit by a struck of tornados and storms, the areas infrastructures were damaged. In this case, the campaign had a settled goal, 250.000 \$, that was met in less than one week. As the platform used allows to exceed the settled amount as long as the receiver specifies the use, the additional earnings were used to improve safety measures as well as an expansion on the pre-existing infrastructures. Although a honour plaque inside the park was offered to donors, the main reason for the campaign success is the previous engagement of the community with the cause.

REWARD BASED CROWDFUNDING

“Artist hostel in San Diego”

The campaign offered stances at the hostel once it was built as a reward, filling it up. It did not work for two main reasons. First of all it is required a certain activation at the beginning of any campaign, usually achieved through family and friends, that was lacking in this case. More over, the risk investors needed to take was too high; the reward depended on the non constructed hotel, so in case the campaign was not successful they will only loose money.

“KC Streetcar starter line”

Launched at neighbour.ly. This campaign pretended to create a float of streetcars as a more eco-friendly alternative to rail light and similar transportation methods. The failure of the campaign was due to its excessive goals. It pretended to achieve a 10,000,000 \$ amount in two months. Such an ambitious goal requires a great previous media campaign, similar to the one in the “I make Rotterdam” project.

“Bikestarter KC”

Launched at neighbour.ly. This campaign pretends to achieve 1.200.000 \$ in order to fund the maintenance of a self-service bike rental system. It has already raised over 400.000 \$. The success of this project in comparison to the previous ones lays on its operation on existing facilities in order to provide the reward, as the sought funds are to expand an existing infrastructure.

MIX STRUCTURES

Other possible solution would be the integration of both donation and reward based crowdfunding. An example on this would be the “lets build ... Tesla Museum”, an initiative launched at Indiegogo. In this case the great success is due to the communication strategy and an interesting reward structure.

MAKE ARCHITECTURE HAPPEN

Apart from initiatives in general crowdfunding sites, in April 2014 a new webpage was funded that tried to “make architecture happen”, according to its creators. Make architecture happen intended to be a way to complete the need of funding for young artists and architects. It tries to connect the creators with the potential investors.

This platform uses a Paypal payment method. None of the launched campaigns have been successfully funded. The explanation for this may lay on the fact that the site takes no responsibility nor on the production of the project neither on the final destination of the given money.

CONCLUSIONS

When crowdfunding architecture campaigns, those initiatives related to urbanism and community services seem to be more likely to achieve their goals than those focusing on the construction of an object. The easiest recognisable cause is their ability to create an engagement between the community and the funded object. Initiatives such as parks or street interventions are more willing to achieve their goals, apart from the fact that usually the required amount of money is considerably lower, because the benefits of these projects will directly affect the investors.

SOURCES:

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<https://www.makearchitecturehappen.com/blog/>