



Dollar
Academy

fi**da**
FUTURES INSTITUTE AT DOLLAR ACADEMY

BE PART OF THE FUTURE



As the oldest co-educational day and boarding school in the world, Dollar Academy's influence and impact stretches over two hundred years. Nonetheless, there is no room for complacency. We have a strong vision for the future, which places Dollar at the forefront of educational development, charitable outreach, and sustainable architecture.

Through the FIDA initiative, we have co-created seventeen courses with industry partners - each one addressing a UN Sustainable Development Goal - as well as a range of related workshops, competitions, and challenges, to engage pupils from primary to senior years. These innovative resources have gained support across the board, and, through FIDA, Dollar Academy has found a strong voice in the current national discussion about the future of education.

FIDA content is global, forward-thinking, and freely accessible to all via an online platform and in-person workshops. Over fifty local authority schools make use of FIDA materials and thousands of pupils, from Dollar Academy and far beyond, have benefited from them. These efforts have seen Dollar Academy redefine charitable outreach in the independent education sector.

In the 19th century, William Playfair designed our beautiful Playfair Building. In the here and now, one of the leading architects of our age, Andrew Whalley, has gifted us his blueprint for the country's first truly sustainable building. It is from our new Futures Institute that we will continue to develop our educational offering in a bold and contemporary way.

We have significant momentum. I hope you enjoy learning more about our ambitious plans. With your support, we will together be able to help thousands more young people emerge from school better equipped for the opportunities and challenges of the 21st century.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Ian Munro". The signature is stylized, with the first name "Ian" and the last name "Munro" written in a cursive-like script.

Ian Munro – Rector of Dollar Academy



OPEN-ACCESS EDUCATION TO TRANSFORM THE FUTURE

We know young people today need to think, problem-solve and innovate to face the challenges of their rapidly changing world. Launched in May 2021, FIDA is our new open-access education initiative designed to offer young people throughout Scotland, the opportunity to learn in a different way.

FIDA is about innovation, inclusion, and doing more for all our young people. It's about leading the much-needed change in Scottish education, redefining what charitable status means for an independent school, and for Dollar Academy to play a more meaningful role in our local community and across the country.

Through FIDA challenges and our International Sustainability Diploma, we've created a future-focused educational offer for as many young people as possible – built on collaboration between independent and state schools, industry, and academia.

All FIDA courses and challenges support the development of important skills such as problem-solving, creative thinking, collaboration and citizenship, which are all essential for learners to thrive in the world beyond school.

Our FIDA content is co-designed with experts from industry or universities and requires learners to design a solution

to a real-world problem rooted in one of the 17 UN Sustainable Development Goals.

Seven schools across Scotland delivered our new SCQF Level 6 International Sustainability Diploma in 2024/25, a qualification recognised by universities, colleges, and employers. Feedback from pupils and teachers has been very positive and demonstrates we are achieving our original goals for FIDA.

Total number of pupils & teachers directly enrolled

600+
550+ Pupils
70+ Teachers



75,000+
learners supported
through online videos



**Shared Leadership
& Accountability**



8
Local Authority teachers
and education leaders
make up our Steering
Group

17
Innovative Global
Challenges designed
9 launched so far



fida
Futures Institute at Dollar Academy
in 2025

50+
Local Authority
schools engaged



Our International Sustainability Qualifications



- ✓ International Sustainability Diploma - Accredited at SCQF Level 6 (Equivalent to a Higher).
- ✓ International Sustainability Certificate now available at Level 5.
- ✓ recognised by universities, colleges, and employers.



70+
pupils in **6** schools across
Scotland studied our
International Sustainability
Diploma in 2024/25.
12 schools are delivering the
Diploma in 2025/26.

Our Collaborators



**Locations of
participants**

The Futures Institute Building



The construction
of our Futures
Institute is
underway



ENDORSEMENTS

"FIDA's bold approach to education places the student experience at the centre, providing critical opportunities to engage with industry and stakeholders beyond the classroom. This aligns closely with some of the recommendations I made in my report to Scottish Government on a future vision for Scottish education and I am highly impressed with what the initiative aims to do."

*Professor Ken Muir - Independent advisor to the
Scottish Government on the replacement of the
Scottish Qualifications Authority*

"To be given access to this resource has been an absolute godsend and the support FIDA has given me has been immeasurable. More importantly, the resource being made available to my students has boosted their confidence and ability immensely."

*David Thomson - Head of Modern Studies at
Morgan Academy in Dundee*

"Scotland finds itself in a fast-changing, digital world. We aspire to play a leading role in that world, so it is vital that young people leave school with more than just knowledge taught in the classroom. FIDA is demonstrating the enormous potential of a new way of working that will equip young folk with the skills they need to thrive and succeed in the modern workplace. And this new way of working demands a new kind of space. I really feel that the proposed new building, with innovative spaces to think, design, create, collaborate and communicate, is exactly what FIDA needs to offer these vital educational experiences to young people from across our country. I strongly support this ambitious and important plan."

*Tim Allan CBE - Chair of the V&A Dundee and
entrepreneur, investor and philanthropist*



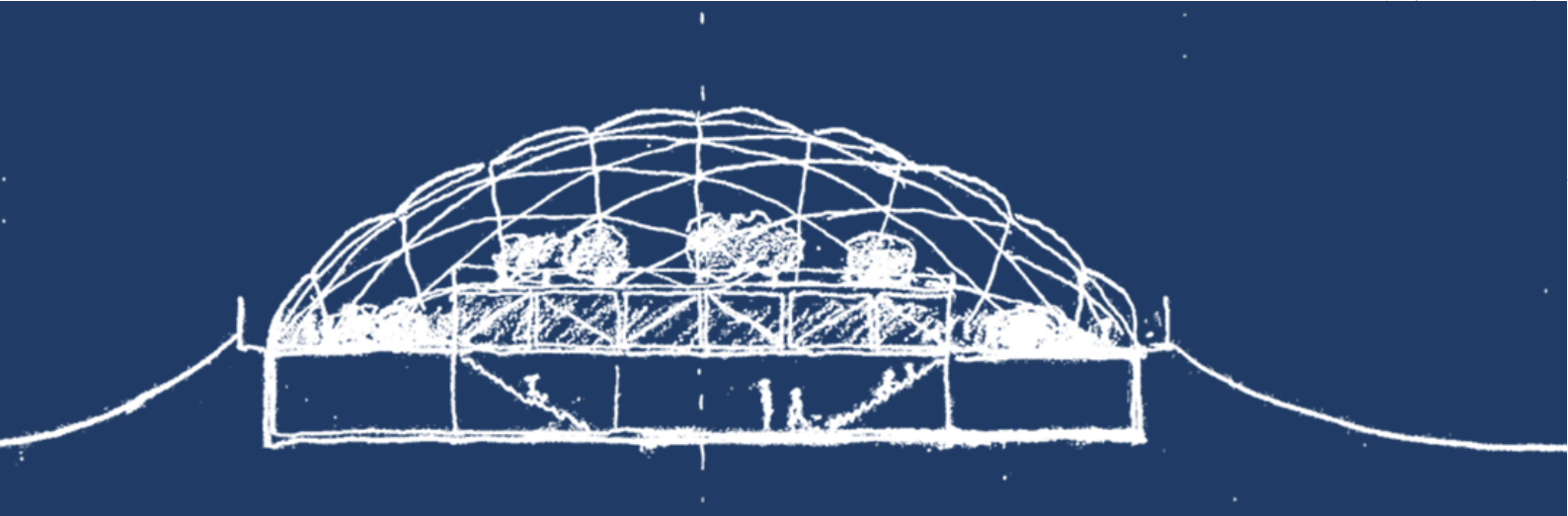
THE FUTURES INSTITUTE BUILDING

While thousands of pupils from over 50 local authority schools across Scotland have already benefited from taking part in FIDA projects or using our resources, a significant limiting factor is the lack of a purpose-built educational centre designed to support and enable the FIDA way of teaching and learning. Without a dedicated building, we can only offer these opportunities in traditional, single-subject facilities which are not fit-for-purpose.

Our vision is to have teaching and learning spaces where young people can think, design, create, test, collaborate and communicate, all integrated under one roof.

The Futures Institute building has been designed for this purpose; having received planning permission in July 2023, it will offer:

- A range of innovative learning environments, including maker spaces, a science lab and creative art spaces;
- A centre for the sharing of emerging educational practice and technology, teacher collaboration and training;
- Flexible space for public lectures, seminars and events from the worlds of education, business, science, technology and the creative industries.



THE DESIGN

World-renowned architect Andrew Whalley OBE, Chairman of GRIMSHAW and Former Pupil of Dollar Academy, has designed our breathtaking new building, that not only delivers sector-leading teaching and learning environments, but also affords FIDA the opportunity to have a building designed using the principles of the Living Building Challenge - the most rigorous benchmark of sustainability in the built environment.

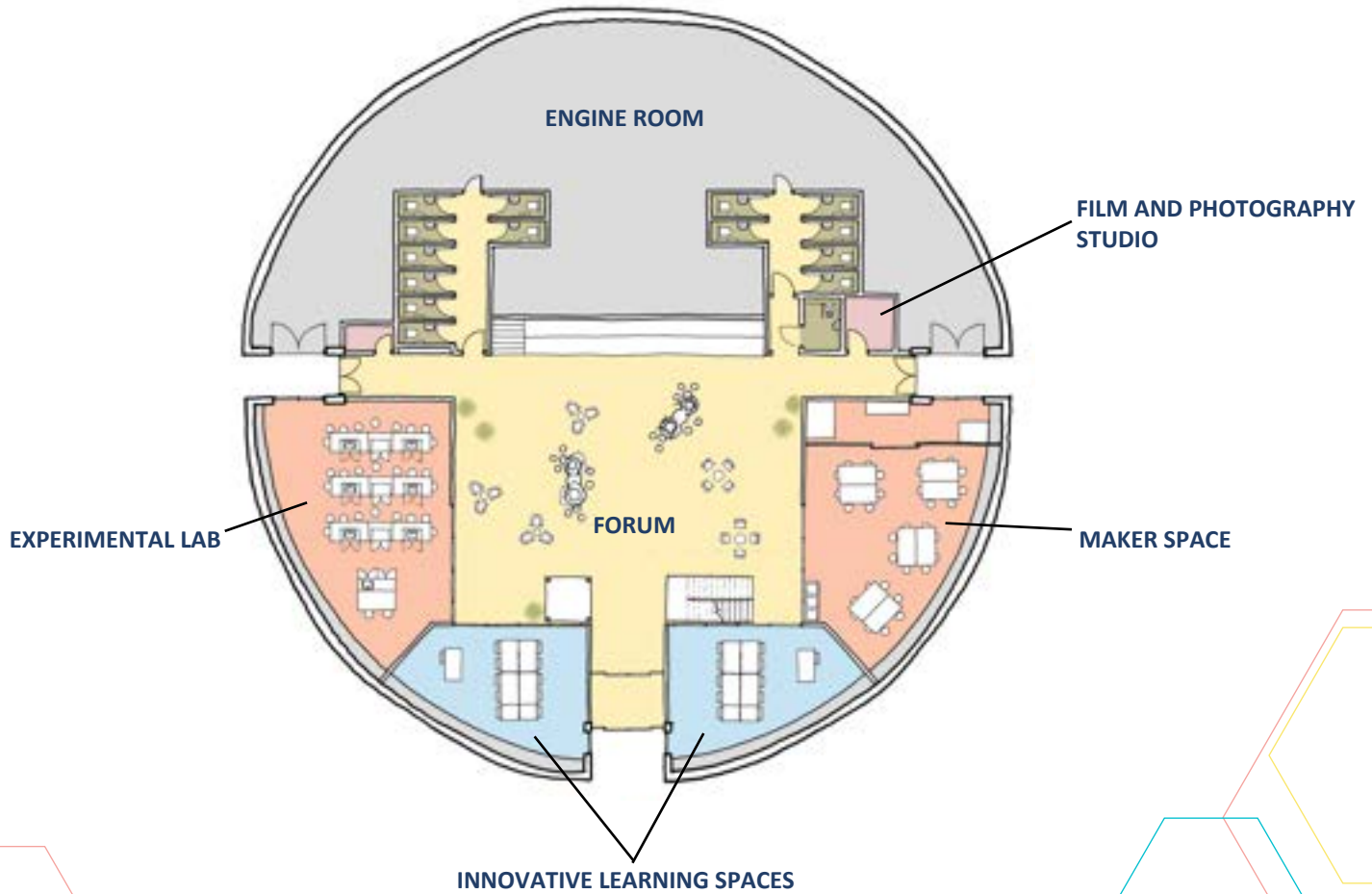
FIDA's exemplar building will have a regenerative net zero design with the building and surrounding landscape becoming part of the learning process.

The building will also have considerable civic value, being of national significance and serving as a beacon project for the UK in the fields of education, charitable outreach and architecture.



"I am extremely proud to have been involved in FIDA from its early conceptualisation through to designing the innovative Futures Institute. The new building will help develop our successes to date and inspire young people to tackle the planetary problems we now all urgently face."

GROUND FLOOR PLAN





FORUM 304 Sq.m

The Forum – a place for coming together, respectful debate, sharing ideas and looking to the future - is at the beating heart of the FIDA building.

With a capacity for around 400, the Forum is a large, flexible open space that will be used for talks and lectures from leading experts and change-makers, as well as workshops, performances and exhibitions.

It is from here that aspects of our innovative educational offering will also be live-streamed across the globe, maximising our charitable reach.

Flooded with natural light, the Forum will capture the sense of being in a highly tempered outdoor space. It is linked to the first floor by stepped auditorium seating constructed from sustainably sourced timber.



19 °C

11000
kWh

ENGINE ROOM 308 Sq.m

The new building will have at its core a vast array of cutting-edge mechanical, electrical and plumbing (MEP) systems, which ensure that water and energy use are net positive. These innovative technologies will be interwoven throughout the building in what is collectively known as the Engine Room.

All processes will be controlled by an intelligent building energy management system - BEMS - which incorporates sensors, sub-metering, software and automatic controls in order to minimise energy consumption and carbon emissions.

Crucially, so that the Institute and its systems can act as a teaching resource and stimulus, information regarding energy use and carbon emissions will be shared from BEMS in real time to displays throughout the building.

Many of the MEP systems will also be on show throughout the Institute so that users can come to know and understand the innovative green technology that makes up the Engine Room.



EXPERIMENTAL LAB

85 Sq.m

From vaccine development to increasing food production for a growing global population, science holds many of the solutions to the grand challenges we all face. It is in the Science Lab that our students will explore emerging techniques and understand how they can be applied in a very practical way to the world around them.

For example, young people could design a solar array to power a medical clinic in rural Africa, or they might develop a rapid soil decontamination tool so that brownfield sites can be re-purposed to grow crops.



Located on the ground floor, the lab will provide a cutting-edge space for scientific investigation. It will be equipped with a comprehensive suite of apparatus to support empirical learning and experimental science programmes.



MAKER SPACE 85 Sq.m

Maker spaces foster innovation through hands-on creativity. They are places where prototypes can be built, and products and services created using both high-tech and no-tech tools.

For example, students can design and code robots that pull plastic from oceans or construct large scale intergenerational playscapes that can be enjoyed by people of different ages and abilities.

Sitting adjacent to the main entrance, our Maker Space will be an exciting, practical space that enables students to design, experiment, build and invent. The space will be fitted with wood and metal working benches and equipped with associated hand and bench tools, as well as Arduinos and other electronics platforms. The workshop area will include 3D printers and a laser cutter.



FILM AND PHOTOGRAPHY STUDIO

5.5 Sq.m

A dedicated space with state-of-the-art equipment for students to document their learning and showcase their work through photography and film.

Here, they will have the opportunity to learn the technical aspects of photography.

They will also build skills in video editing and graphics creation, so that they can harness the power of the visual image to present their work in creative and engaging ways. This will enhance their portfolio and enable them to engage a wider audience through web and social media platforms.



INNOVATIVE LEARNING SPACES (x2)

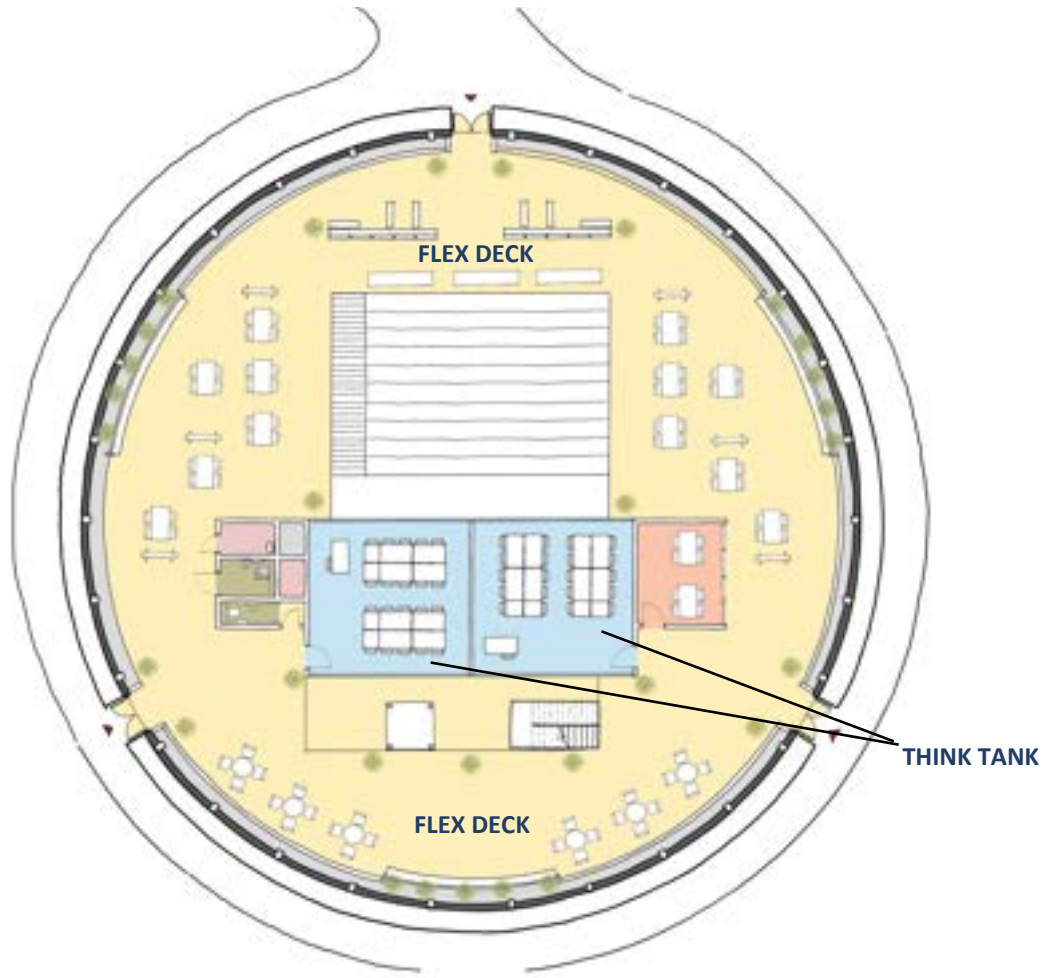
42 Sq.m

The ground floor will feature two learning spaces, designed for multi-modal teaching.

In these areas, a piece of physical theatre might be performed, a lively group discussion had, or a large-scale art installation made. The generous size of the spaces will allow for groups from different schools to come together, work collaboratively and learn from each other.

The rooms have been designed with wellbeing in mind. Glass walls to the centre of the building will allow in plenty of natural light, but will be fitted with electrochromatic technology to interchange between transparency and an opaque state if more privacy is required.

FIRST FLOOR PLAN





FLEX DECK 570 Sq.m

This versatile space is designed to stimulate ideas and discussion, facilitate interdisciplinary working and link the building physically and conceptually to the wider world.

We plan to use state-of-the-art technology to display real-time data from a wide variety of sources, from the building itself to deep space. This will inspire and connect students to the wider local and global context of every project they undertake.

Displays linked to live projects will promote thinking and learning – for example, a pair of jeans might be displayed alongside a closed-loop water feature to highlight the fact that 10,000 litres of water are required to make a single denim garment.



We aim to create a modern, interactive museum feel, where permanent and temporary displays encourage contemplation and discussion. The Flex Deck will be used for brainstorming, creative conversation and collaboration, breakout sessions, student-led discussion and small group teaching. It will also provide room for individual study and personal reflection.

The space will feature moveable planters, acoustic screens and 'street furniture' to allow students and staff to configure it as needed.

THINK TANK_{100 Sq.m}



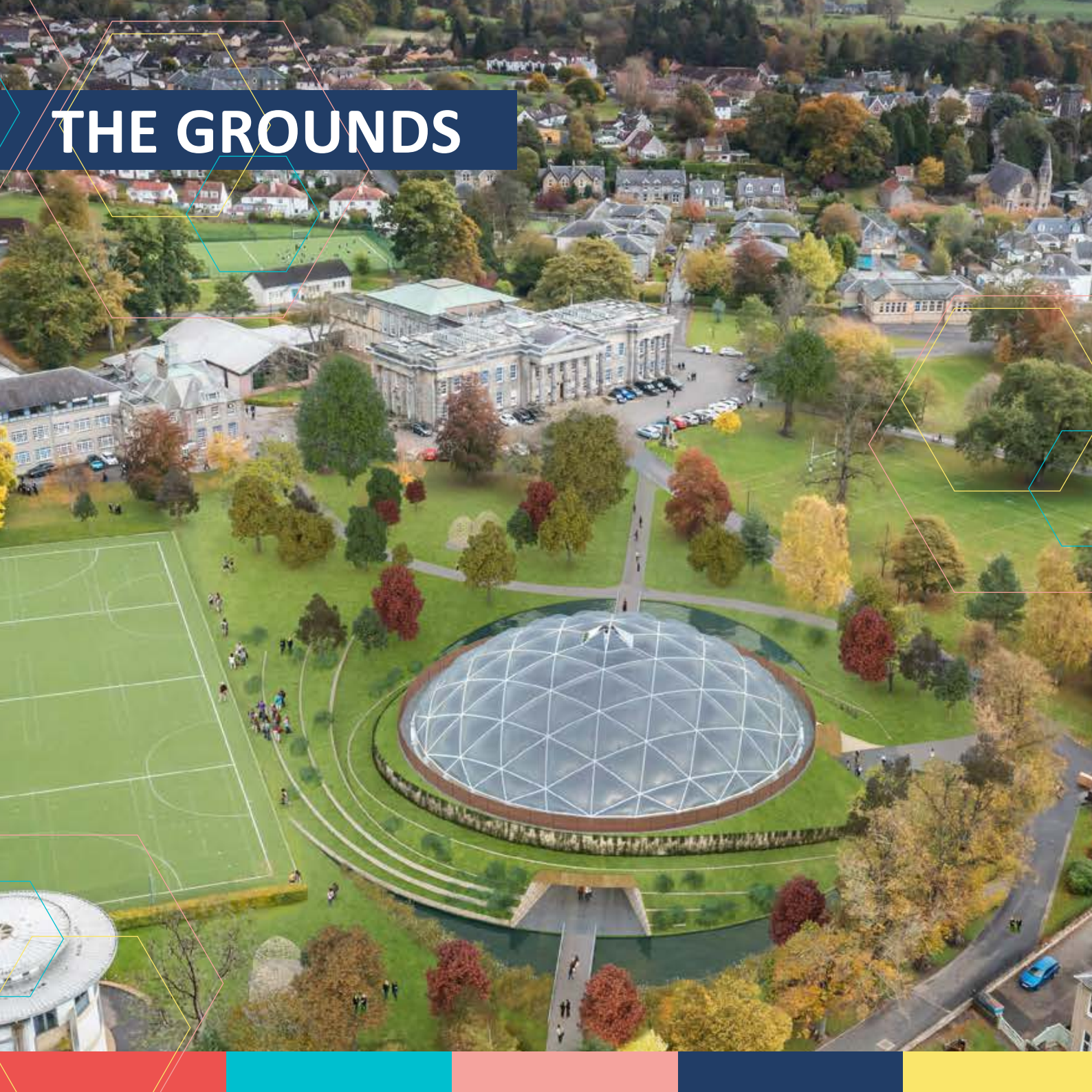
The Think Tank is comprised of three rooms, all designed for multi-modal teaching. The walls between them can be reconfigured to create one large space, if required.

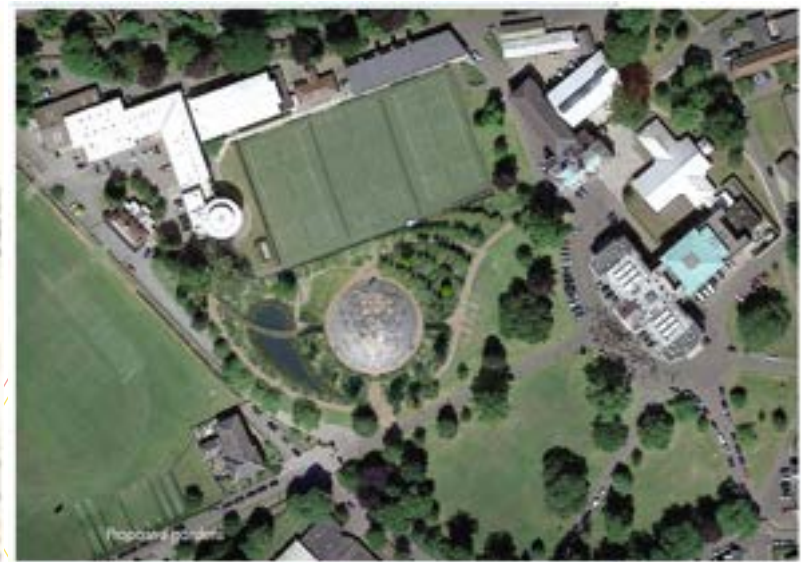
It is here that teachers from across the country will work collaboratively, with greater emphasis placed on solving real-world problems through interdisciplinary working. Peer-to-peer learning will be commonplace, both for students and teachers. Great importance will be placed on research-informed practice, with teachers making use of the best high-impact techniques from across the globe.

The rooms have been designed with wellbeing in mind. Glass walls to the centre of the building will allow in plenty of natural light, but will be fitted with electrochromatic technology to interchange between transparency and an opaque state if more privacy is required.



THE GROUNDS





When William Playfair originally designed Dollar Academy he ensured the main school building was surrounded by a beautiful botanical garden. There was no West Approach leading to the steps of the Playfair building; instead, there was a rich garden area with curving pathways and varied plant life.

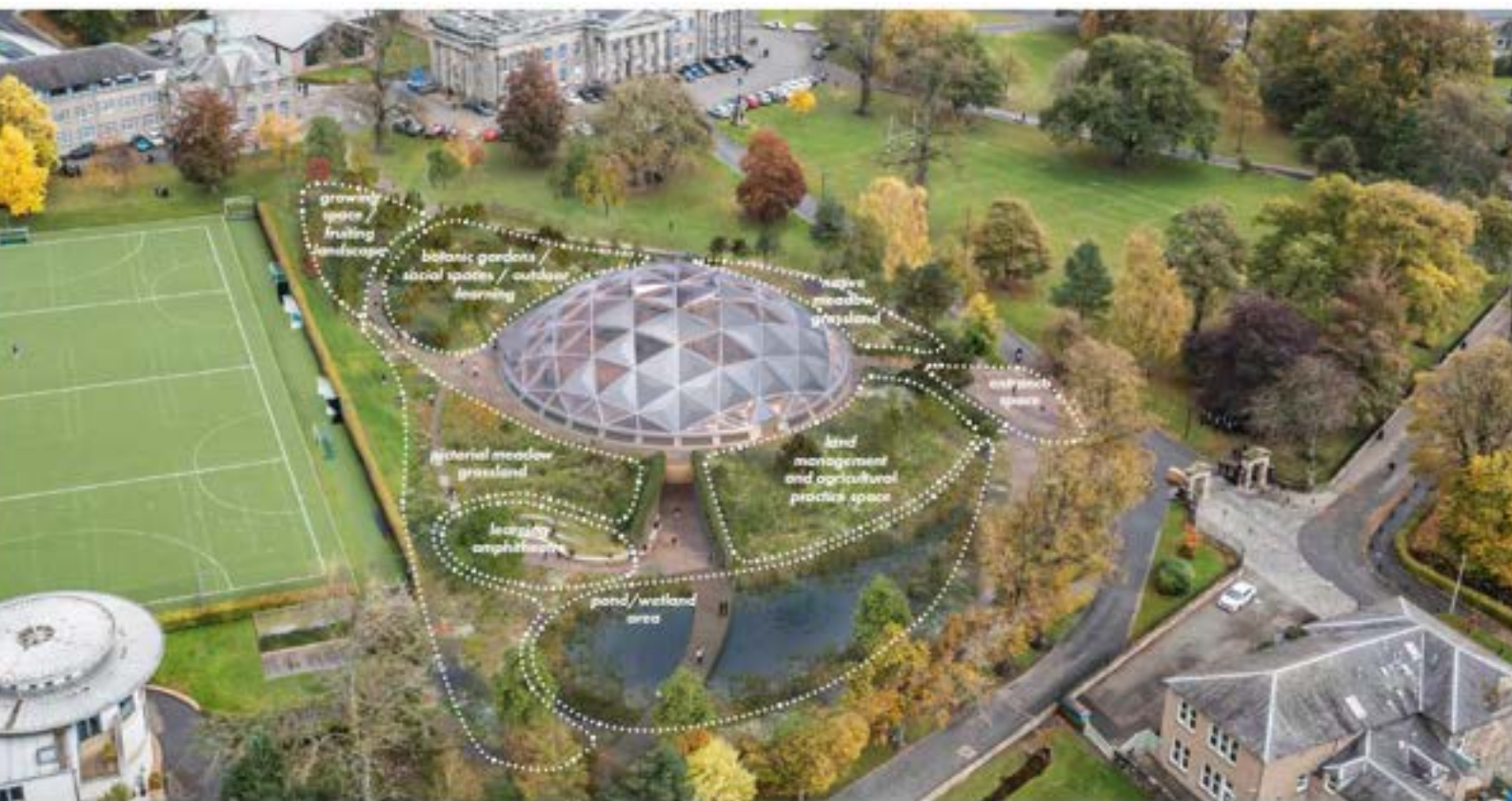
The gardens were a teaching resource and very much part of the learning process of the school.

The design of our Futures Institute and its surrounds aim to continue this tradition.

We have purposefully placed the new building in the location of the former botanical gardens, and you will see from the images above that it echoes the form of the original round landscaped area.

Our aim is to re-imagine this historical setting and aspirations for the space in today's context.





The grounds of the Futures Institute have been designed as a learning and teaching resource providing multi-functional areas accessible to pupils and to the wider Dollar community.

For example, the amphitheatre will be formed with reduced-carbon concrete and designed with the Bhutan pine as a focal point. It will provide space for teaching, performance, debate and recreation.

A bridge will connect the western entrance of the Futures Institute with the Maguire Building and give level access to the amphitheatre.

The various planting areas will deliver multiple functions, including climate mitigation, flood prevention and biodiversity enhancement.

There will also be a series of protected spaces, creating areas to hold small groups of pupils, or support independent learning.

The furniture and seating within the grounds will provide creative and exciting recreational space to support our growing school roll.

Supporters may be interested in the whole area or more bespoke sections.



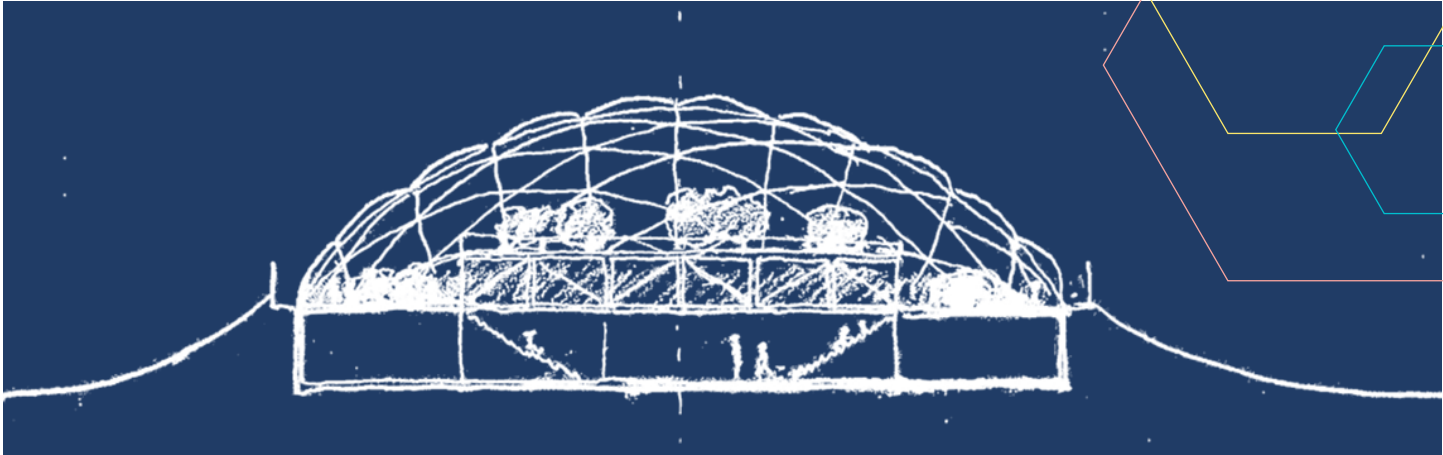
BE PART OF THE FUTURE...

With the majority of the required funding already in place, we hope that supporters of this project will join us in realising this world-class development.

Your contribution will help to deliver a truly transformative educational initiative to young people from Dollar Academy and across Scotland.

All supporters who make a donation of scale will have the option to be recognised in a prominent way in the new building. In addition, there are specific naming opportunities available which are detailed on the following page.

Major donors will also be invited to a VIP opening event and tour with architect Andrew Whalley OBE.



NAMING OPPORTUNITIES

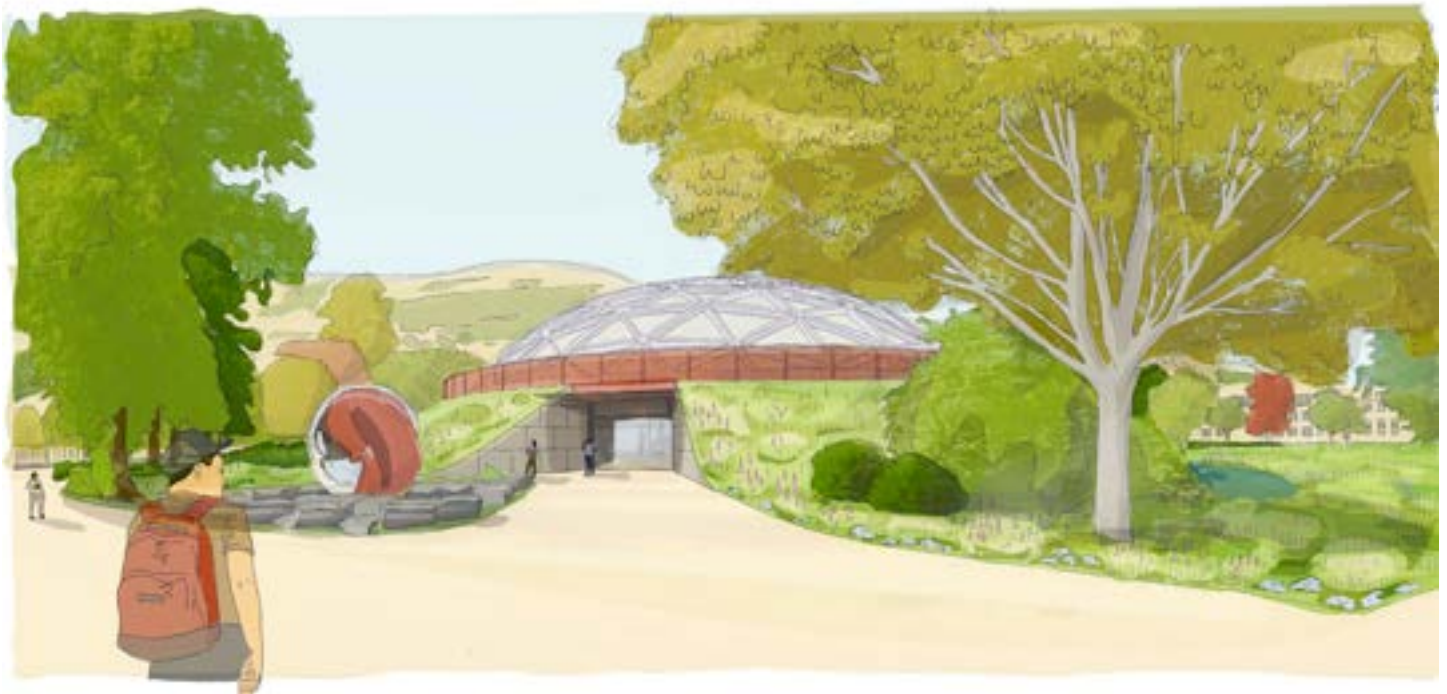
While we are always delighted to receive all levels of donations, we endeavour to connect donors with concepts that match their own interests and philanthropic preferences.

We therefore have a variety of Futures Institute naming opportunities available. We would welcome the opportunity to discuss these, or any other options, with you in more detail.

| | |
|-------------------------------|--|
| Overall Naming Rights | £2,000,000 |
| Forum | £1,000,000 (taken) |
| Flex Deck | £500,000 |
| Science Lab | £250,000 (taken) |
| Maker Space | £250,000 |
| Think Tank | £125,000 (taken) |
| Engine Room | £100,000 |
| Innovative Learning Space x 2 | £50,000 each |
| Film & Photography Studio | £10,000 (taken) |
| The Grounds | £1,000,000 (smaller options available) |

NEXT STEPS

If you would like to support us, or discuss the project further, please contact Ian Munro directly on: rector@dollaracademy.org.uk or +44 (0)1259 742511



As a registered charity, Dollar Academy is committed to the principles of ethical, professional and transparent fundraising.



I am excited that Dollar Academy is embarking on such an innovative educational project. The Futures Institute will provide enormously enhanced opportunities for all pupils at Dollar Academy and build upon the established FIDA programme for those beyond the campus.

All our futures depend on our young people, and FIDA's mission is to provide an education that enables pupils to think in new ways and to develop innovative approaches to overcoming the challenges they will face in their rapidly-changing world.

FIDA has already provided significant benefit to many pupils throughout Scotland and beyond but the scope for wider public benefit is plain for all to see – this new and dynamic initiative is exactly how we believe a modern educational charity such as Dollar Academy can widen its impact by providing project-based learning that is accessible to all pupils and delivered free of charge.

This is how I believe a modern and high-quality school such as ours can make the biggest difference to the largest number of people.

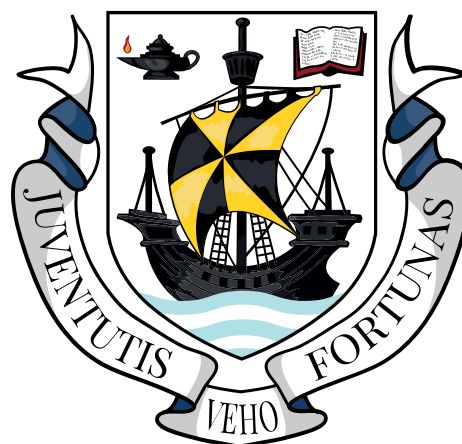
Russell Morris

Professor Russell Morris - Chair of Governors





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The Governors of Dollar Academy Trust is a charity registered in Scotland (SC009888)