

& LIVE &

DESIGN BRIEF

Academy of Alternative Music



2023-2024

COMPLEX PROJECTS

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INTRODUCTION

01



Berlin gentrification collage



Music and public territory

Thesis topic

Berlin, once a bastion of counterculture and artistic freedom, faces pressing challenges threatening its renowned music scene. Gentrification looms large, displacing musicians as soaring rent prices make housing unattainable. Public spaces, once hubs of creativity, are now contested by commercial interests, suffocating the alternative music scene. Meanwhile, Berlin's diverse subcultures, the lifeblood of its creative spirit, struggle for survival due to inadequate support from traditional music education systems.

In response, a dedicated music academy for alternative music emerges as a beacon of hope amid Berlin's cultural upheaval. Such an institution offers not only educational resources but also affordable housing, countering the adverse effects of gentrification and providing a stable foundation for artistic expression.

Conventional music schools, with their rigid structures and conservative curriculum, fail to meet the dynamic demands of the modern music industry, especially alternative genres. A specialized academy breaks free from these constraints, fostering innovation and pushing artistic boundaries in a flexible and inclusive environment.

Yet, the need for a music academy of alternative

music transcends Berlin's borders, reflecting a global imperative for cultural sustainability. In an era marked by urbanization and cultural homogenization, preserving alternative music subcultures becomes a testament to human diversity and resilience. Such an academy sets a precedent for other cities grappling with similar challenges, offering a model for nurturing cultural identities in a rapidly changing world.

As Berlin stands at a crossroads, confronting gentrification, contested public spaces, and subculture decline, the urgency for a music academy of alternative music becomes clear. It represents not only a response to local challenges but also a bold affirmation of Berlin's commitment to cultural diversity and artistic innovation. In an age where creativity hangs in the balance, the establishment of such an institution underscores Berlin's enduring spirit of resilience and reinvention.

1 Problem Statement

Sustainable Utilization of Subculture in Berlin

3 Building Type

Music Academy

2 Problem & Challenge

musicians nowhere
to live

contested public
territory

subculture decline

4 Project Ambitions

"POOR"

provide affordable musicians
residency

"BUT"

connect creative industry and
public life

"SEXY"

cater to multiple subcultures

Problem & Challenge

Gentrification: musicians have nowhere to live anymore

Berlin's rampant gentrification has severely impacted its artistic community, including musicians who struggle to find affordable housing. As neighborhoods undergo rapid transformation, rent prices soar, pushing artists out of their once-vibrant creative hubs. Without stable housing options, musicians face displacement, disrupting their ability to contribute to Berlin's cultural landscape.

Contested public territory: Newly introduced creative industries occupied the previous public event space

Public spaces, once vital for artistic expression and community gatherings, are increasingly occupied by commercial interests, particularly emerging creative industries. This shift restricts access to areas where musicians traditionally performed and collaborated, eroding the organic cultural fabric that defined Berlin's alternative music scene.

Subculture decline: music education cannot support the cultural sustainability of the unique case in Berlin

Berlin's alternative music scene thrived on its diverse subcultures, fostering creativity

and innovation. However, the existing music education system struggles to cater to the unique needs of these subcultures, leading to a decline in their sustainability. Without proper support and nurturing, these subcultures risk fading away, depriving Berlin of its rich musical heritage and stifling future artistic endeavors.

A new music academy for alternative music is essential to address these challenges. By providing affordable housing options, reclaiming public spaces for artistic expression, and offering tailored education programs, the academy can revitalize Berlin's alternative music scene. It becomes a sanctuary where musicians can live, create, and collaborate, ensuring the preservation and evolution of the city's cultural identity.

Research questions

How can we design a music academy that institutionalizes the music subculture?

The project ambitions can be formulated referring to the famous notion of Berlin: “Poor but sexy.” Each of the words leads to some objectives to address the problem in the typology of music schools or the context of Berlin.

“POOR”: The school should be affordable for young musicians, and the design should present a strategy of financial feasibility.

“SEXY”: The school should be dedicated to the spatial settings of learning, creating, and performing alternative music. It should propose innovative spatial configurations that transcend the traditional ones that focus on individual practice.

“BUT”: As a conjunction word, “BUT” refers to the value of connection and transition that the project will bring to its physical and cultural context.





RESEARCH FRAMEWORK

02

1 Problem Statement

Sustainable Utilization of Subculture in Berlin

3 Building Type

Music Academy

2 Problem & Challenge

Musicians nowhere to live; contested public territory;
subculture decline

4 Project Ambitions

"POOR"

provide affordable musicians
residency

"BUT"

connect creative industry and
public life

"SEXY"

cater to multiple subcultures

5 Theories

Environmental psychology

Complexity Science

6 Design Brief

Program

Site

Client

Theoretical Framework

The research process employed in this thesis follows a design-oriented question-solving framework. As outlined in the previous chapter, challenges and problems are identified in the pursuit of designing a future academy of alternative music. The integration of the research topic and this creative inspiration gives rise to key questions that serve as guiding principles for decision making. These questions relate to the definition of the site, the program and the client within the design brief, as well as influencing the subsequent design development.

To provide a practical theoretical framework, two theories are explored and applied: environmental psychology and complexity science. Environmental psychology, with a history of several decades in the field of educational spaces, focuses on understanding how environmental performance and quality affect students' creativity.² In addition, complexity science, which deals with the study of adaptive and self-organizing systems, is proving relevant to the design of learner-centered educational environments. This is particularly relevant in schools, where the focus is on fostering immeasurable creativity.³

Relevance

This research challenges conventional design paradigms by bringing the dynamism and cultural richness inherent in street music into educational spaces. In doing so, it breaks away from traditional institutional structures and promotes innovative, adaptable, and learner-centered environments.

In the EU context, where cultural diversity is a hallmark, this research aligns with the region's commitment to inclusive and culturally responsive design. It acknowledges the EU's emphasis on creative education as a driver of innovation and economic growth.

1 Dudek, *Architecture of Schools*.

2 Uptis, "School Architecture and Complexity."

3 Ho and Au, "Effect of Street Performance (Busking) on the Environmental Perception of Public Space."

RESEARCH METHODS

03

Conservatories
specializing in
popular music



Conservatories
involving
popular music



Other colleges
involving
popular music



	LA CM	POP AKA	LCCM	Conservatory involving popular music 1	Conservatory involving popular music 2	Other college involving popular music 1	Other college involving popular music 2
Vocal	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Brass/ Saxophone	■		■	■	■	■	■
Keyboard	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Guitar	■	■	■	■	■	■	
Percussion	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Bass	■	■	■	■	■		
Music Education		■		■	■	■	■
Music Theory	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Music Technology			■		■	■	■
Music Business	■	■	■	■	■		■
Producing & Recording	■	■	■	■	■		■
Songwriting	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Composing	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Electronic		■	■	■	■	■	

The undergraduate degree programs provided of each school

Program

This study uses a design-centered approach to explore research questions in a tangible and practical way, using the envisioned development of a music academy of alternative music in Berlin as the project context. The decisions made throughout the design process and the expected outcomes are intended to embody the essence of the research questions. Consequently, the investigation and demonstration of the program, the client, and the site - typically considered three essential prerequisites in architectural design - are treated as distinct issues, each employing different methods.

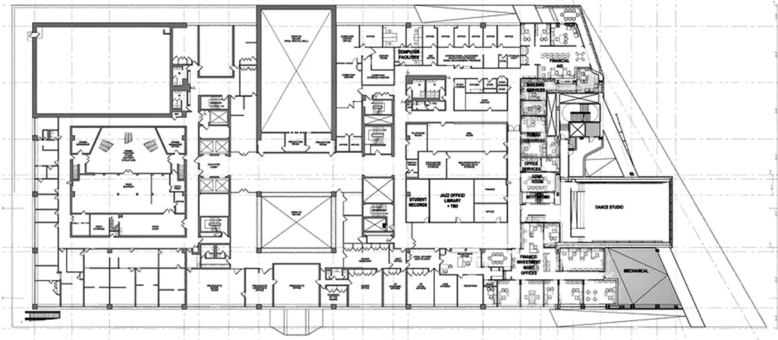
Before addressing the architectural programs, the curriculum design of the academy of alternative music is examined. The methods used to establish a feasible and innovative curriculum are chronological case studies and literature review. First, the academic programs and courses of different categories of music institutions will be listed and compared on the timeline. After setting a benchmark, they will be reflected and adapted to fit the research question based on literature reviews of the German music industry report, studies on music pedagogy, and the comprehensive understanding of street music.

Based on the curriculum, the architectural program design will apply case studies,

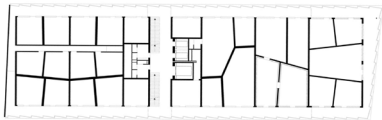
comparative analysis, classification, and acoustic experiments. After establishing a benchmark by comparing different types and sizes of music schools, there will be critical thinking on the pros and cons of contemporary spatial prototypes, such as the excess and lack of circulation space or the flexible adaptation of classrooms. The European Green Deal will also contribute to the reflection of the programmatic problems of the cases. Afterwards, innovations of the program bar based on the research question will be proposed. Moreover, the rooms will be categorized according to acoustic requirements, publicity and sizes. Finally, the initial program bar of area and percentage requirements of different functional spaces will be acquired.



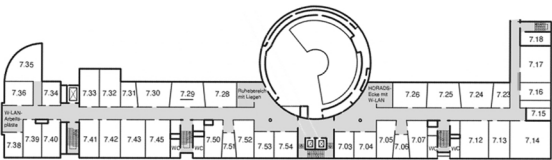
The Juilliard School of music



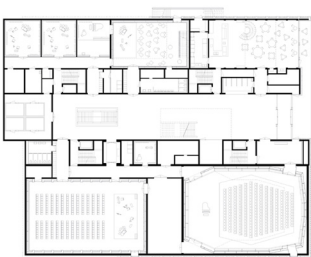
Conservatorium van Amsterdam



HMDK Stuttgart



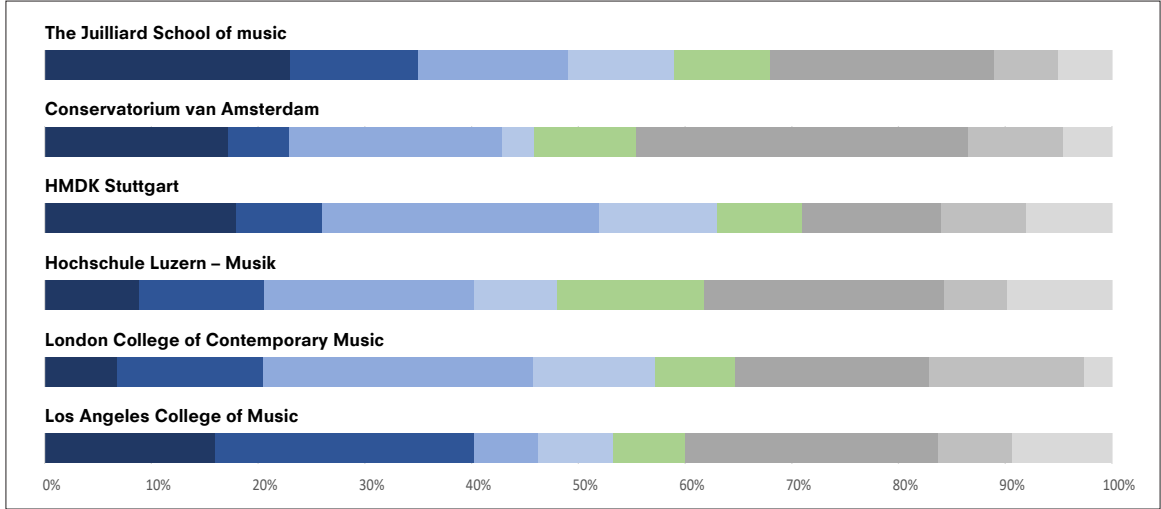
Hochschule Luzern – Musik



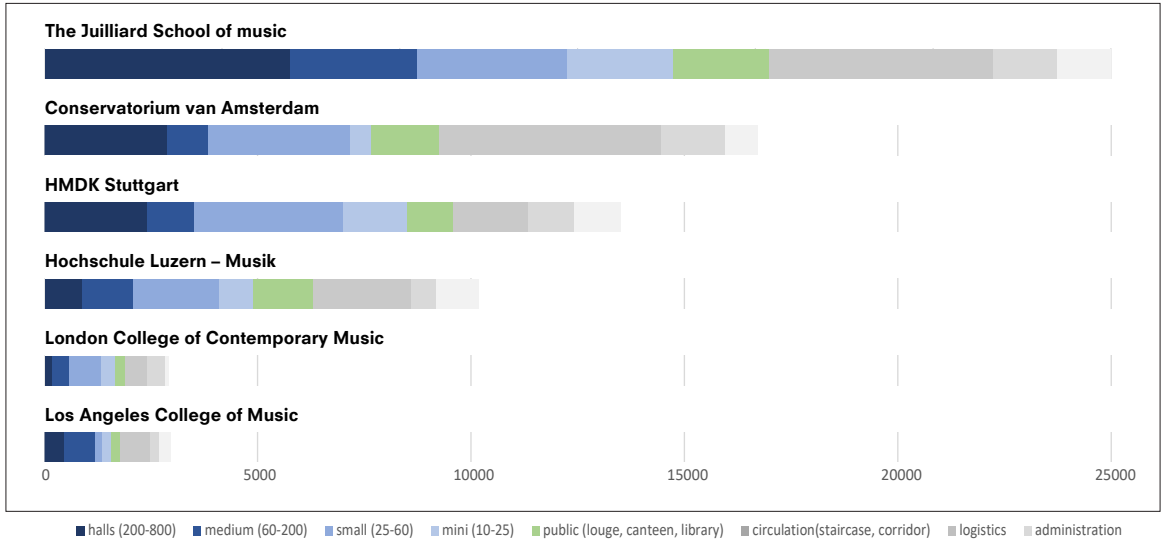
London College of Contemporary Music

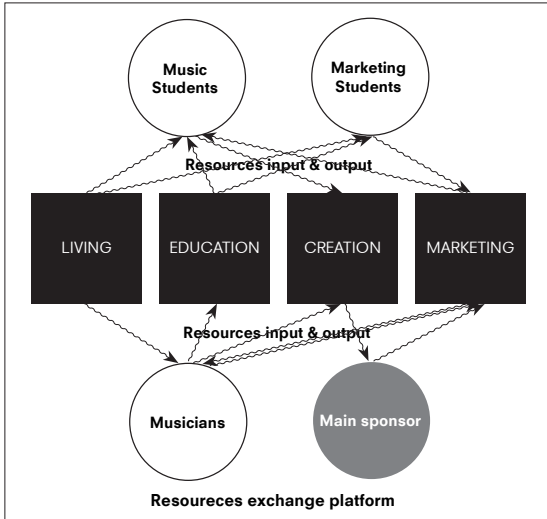


Program case study - proportion



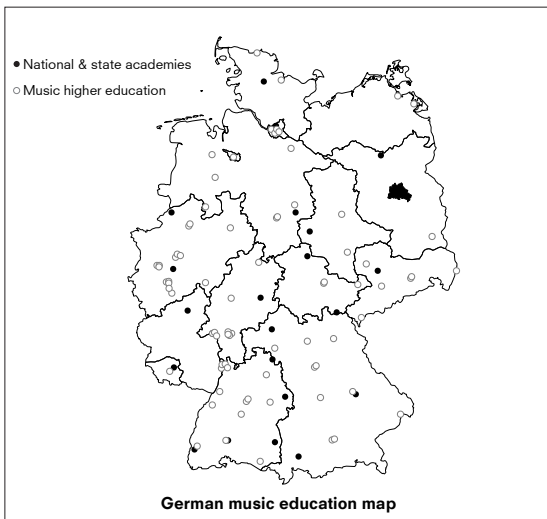
Program case study - area

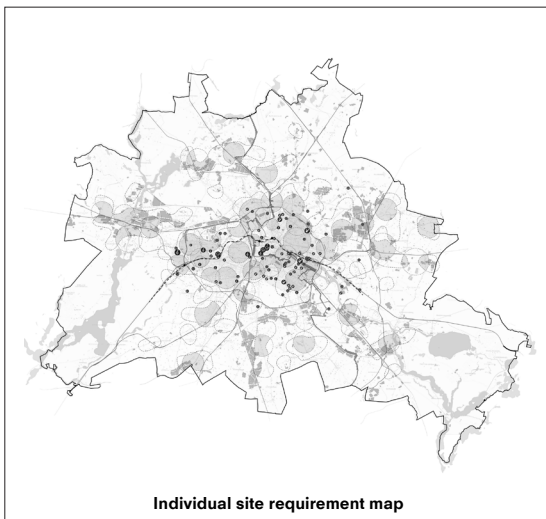
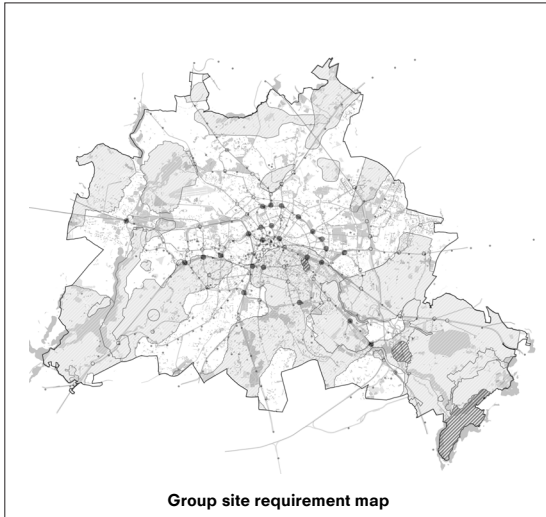




Client

First, the German reports on the music industry and future policies on music education will be reviewed to get an overall picture of the development of the music industry. Second, case studies will be conducted, focusing on the comparison between the ownership structure of private and public music institutions. In addition, the financial reports and sponsorship of various music institutions will be investigated to make the project financially feasible. Based on the above information, a resource exchange model will be applied and some requirements will be set for finding the company or organization that can provide and obtain the appropriate resources that can fix into the whole picture.

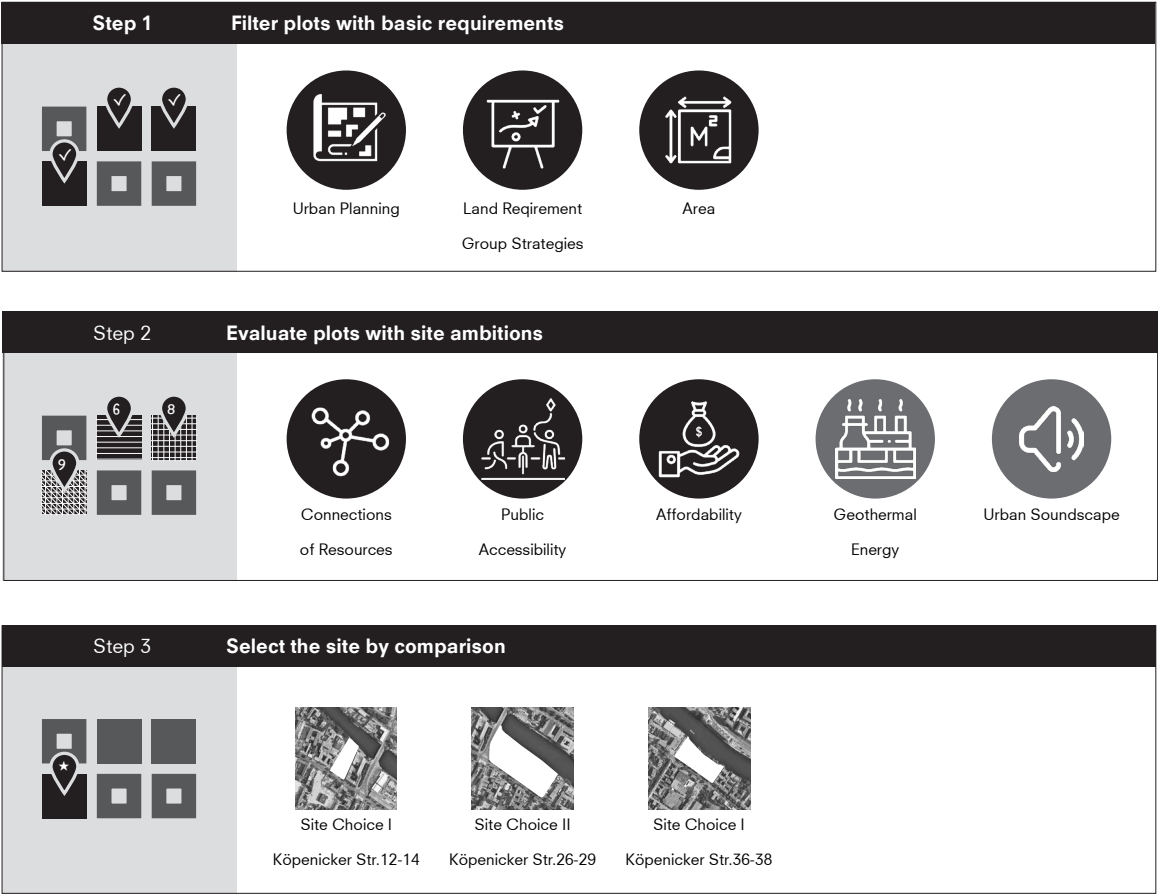




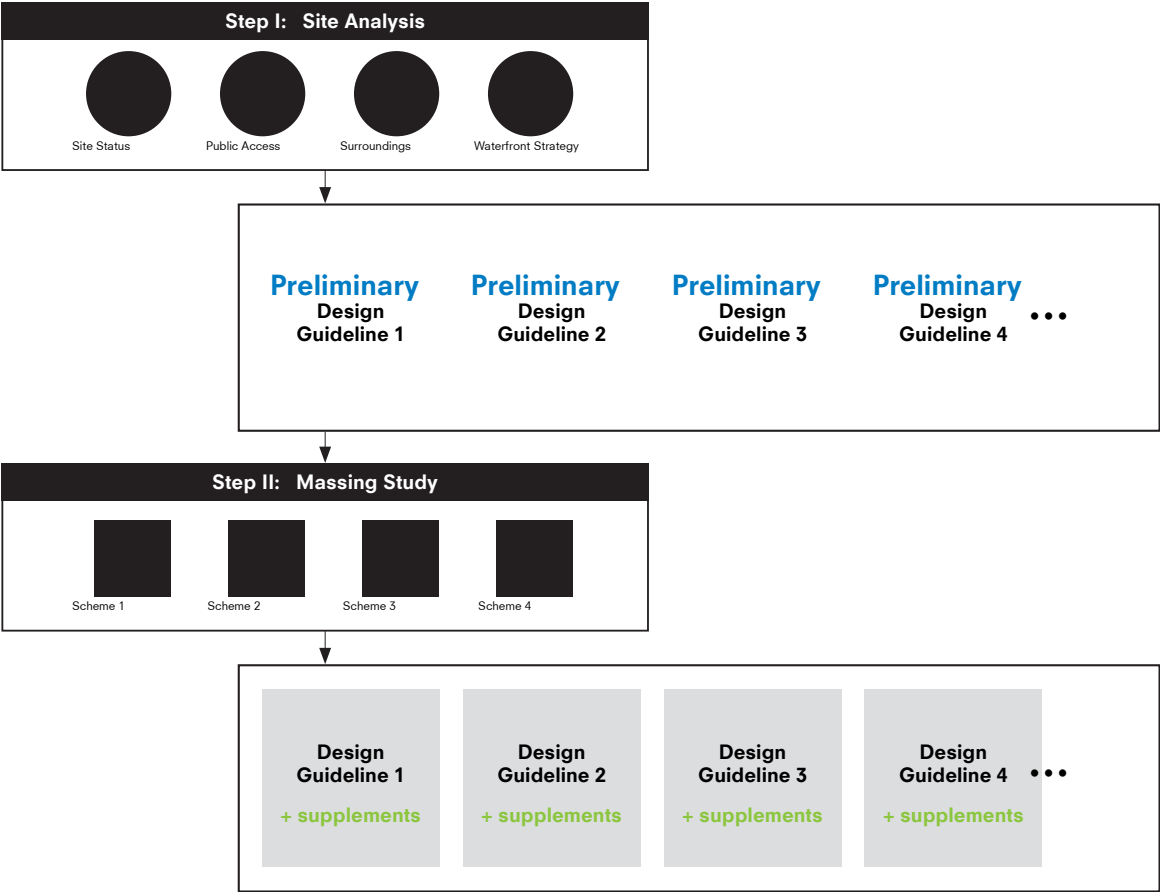
Site

The site selection methods are divided into phases: understanding the city of Berlin, defining site requirements, and comparing potential sites. Methods such as case studies, mapping, literature review, and fieldwork will be used in different phases. Based on the readings to get a basic understanding of the morphological, historical and cultural features of Berlin, some site requirements are defined according to the research questions as well as the group vision of making Berlin the self-efficient energy neutral capital of Germany. Based on the mappings that represent the site requirements of musicscape, energy vision and vibrancy distribution, only a few sites are available. These sites will be further compared based on the results of the site visit. Finally, the most appropriate site will be selected that is financially feasible, fulfills the energy vision, reflects the research questions, and can make a real difference in improving the urban space.

Site selection method

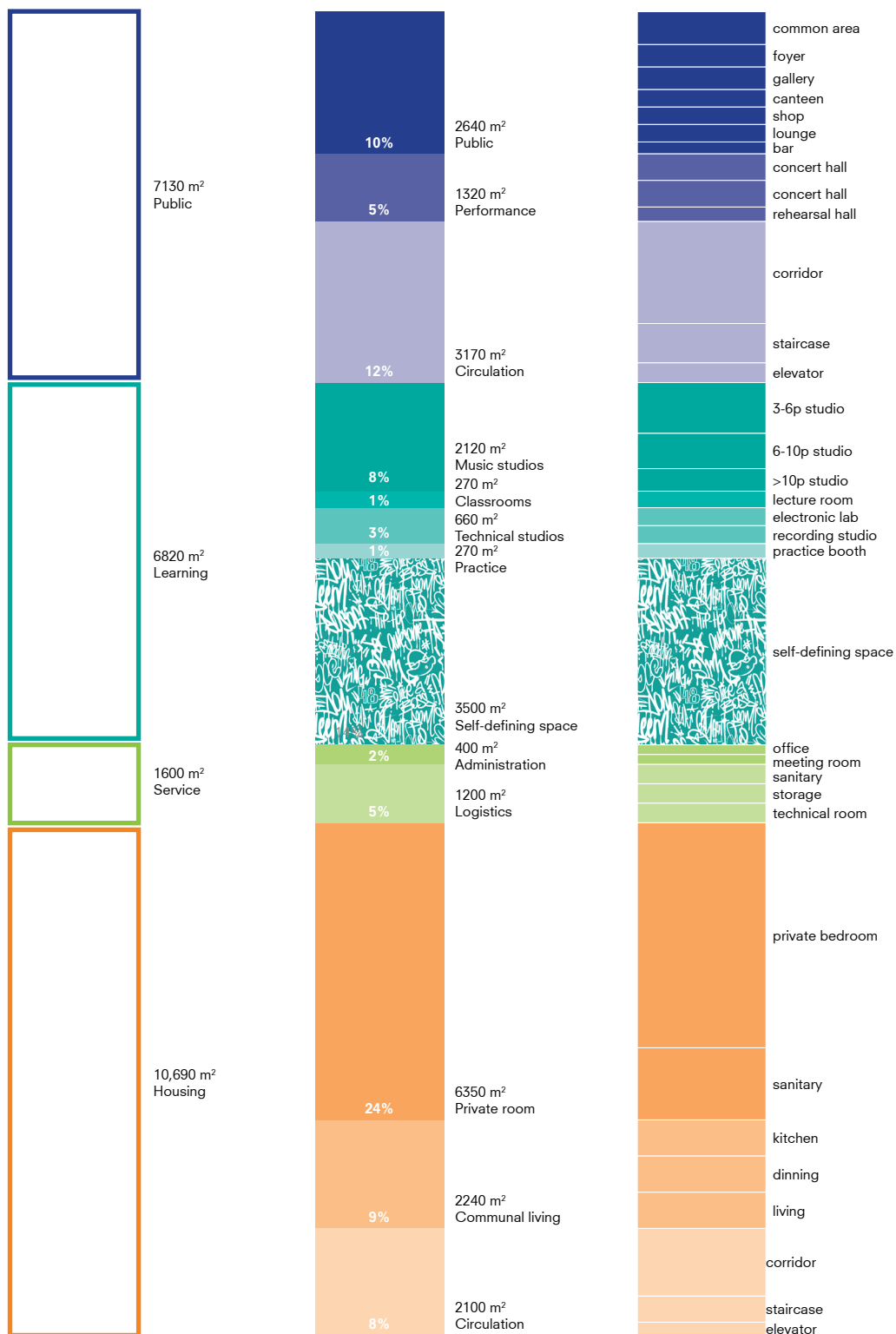


Site analysis method



DESIGN BRIEF

04



Program bar

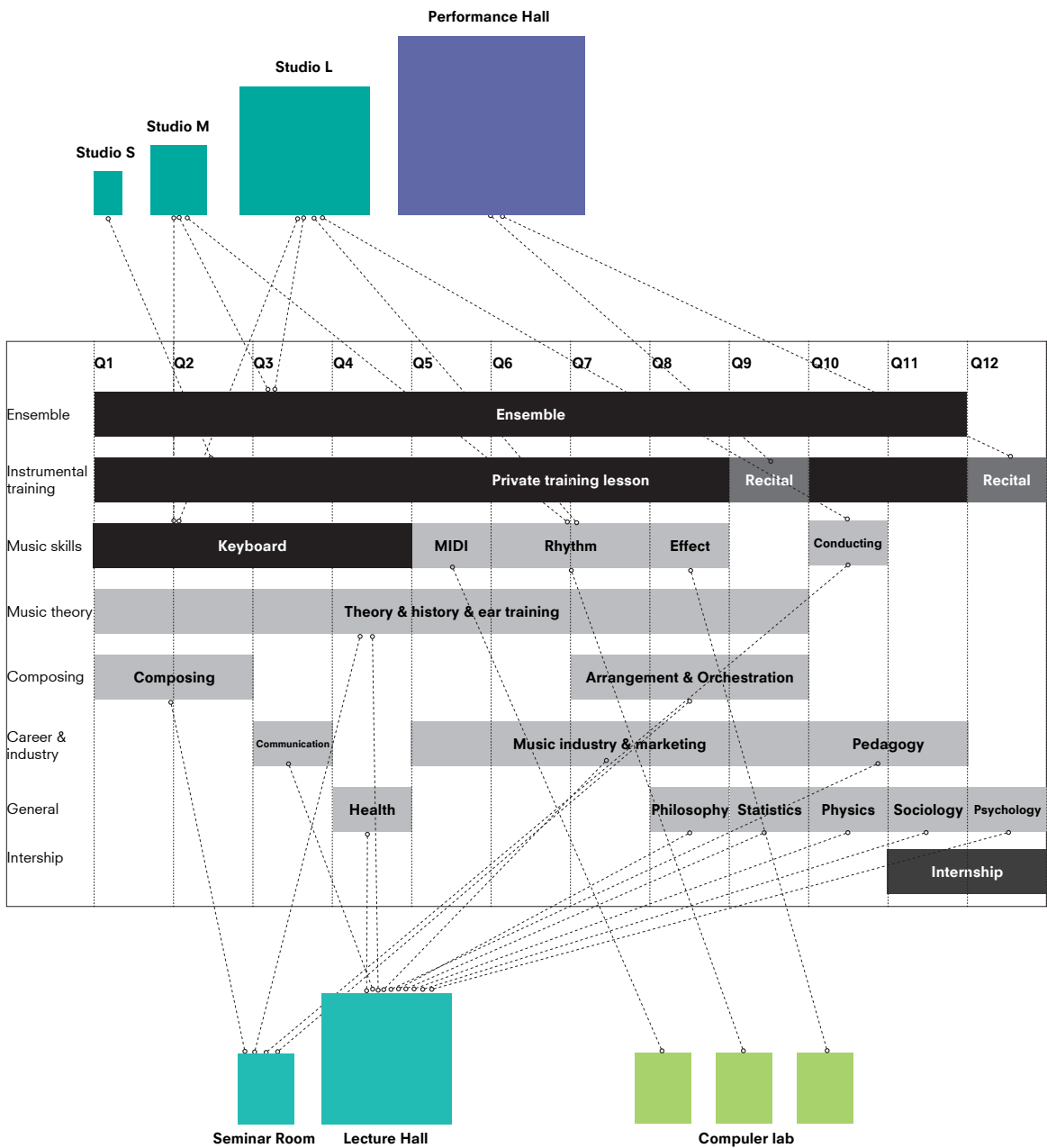
Introduction

The design brief is a document which is developed before P2. The document provides relevant project information and set boundaries for designing a new academy of alternative music in Berlin. Through analysis of music school typology and other educational building typologies, a comprehensive design brief is concluded to be the guidelines to achieve the design ambitions in architectural languages. The guidelines can be shown in three categories, namely client, program, and site.

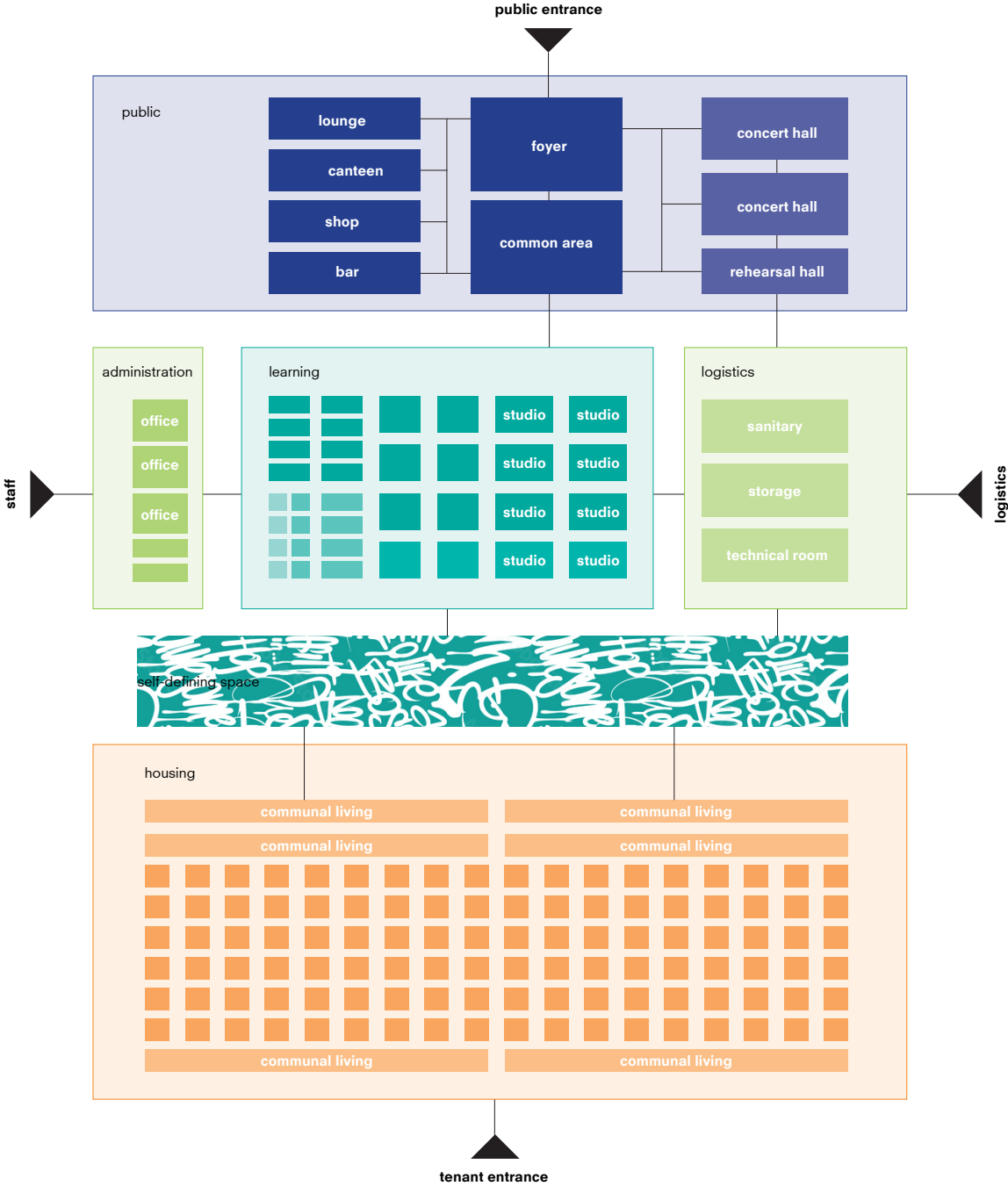
Program

With 600 students and 350 faculty staff, the project consists of an academy of 13,000 sqm and a collective residence of 12,000 sqm. Based on the case studies of musicians' spontaneous adaptations of space, some intriguing spatial inventions are concluded, forming the asset for spatial innovation.

- Overall program distribution: 7,130 sqm of public space, 6,820 sqm of learning area, 1,600 sqm of service space, 10,690 of the housing sector. The numbers can be adjusted following the principle of the hybrid of programs. The programs are arranged according to their acoustic publicness requirements, resulting in some prohibitions of spatial arrangement.
- Housing section: consists of affordable housing for 350 students and potential personalized living-producing studios for 30 musicians.



Program & curriculum analysis



Relation scheme

Client

The main client of the popular music institution is the Red Bull Music Academy, a worldwide series of music workshops and festivals founded by Red Bull GmbH in 1998. It was established in Berlin, and the idea of this project is to make the so-called academy a real academy. In addition to this main client, there will be some collaborators involved in the project, such as other universities, music producers and streaming media.

In addition, The project employs a financial strategy of cross-subsidization. There are three parties of clients, respectively the Federal State, the sponsor, and private patrons. The Federal State requires the project to accommodate cultural events which will bring tourism economy and the public life of surrounding neighbourhoods. Second, as the main sponsor, Red Bull Music requires a digital and physical showcase of its brand spirit of adventure. Third, the private patrons, who are reputed and commercially successful musicians, require highly personalized studios and flexible spaces for interactions with their students.

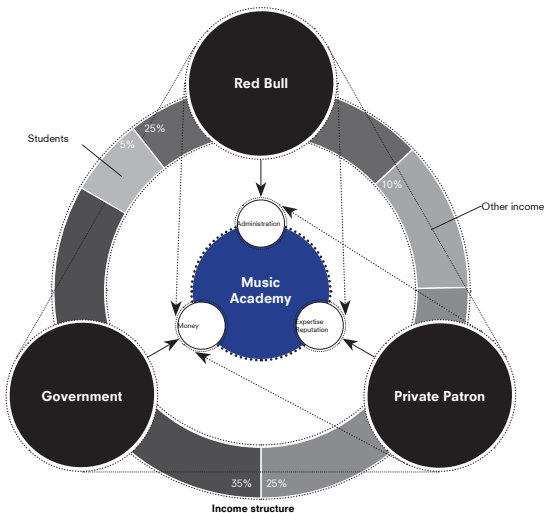


Diagram of cross-subsidization



Federal State

Senate Department of Culture

Ultimate Objective

Culture Sustainability

City Branding



Main Administrator

Red Bull Music Academy

Ultimate Objective

**Continuous influence in
music industry**



Private Patronage

Music Industry Professionals

Ultimate Objective

**Cultivation of next
generation**

Self Promotion

Project Vision

- provide affordable space for musician residency
- attract tourists
- relieve the territory contradiction with the neighbourhood

Project Vision

- make it financially feasible
- build a mutual learning community among musicians
- accommodate global music events

Project Vision

- create an environment that stimulates collaboration and communication
- cater to various music genres and instruments

Client visions





Site analysis - XL



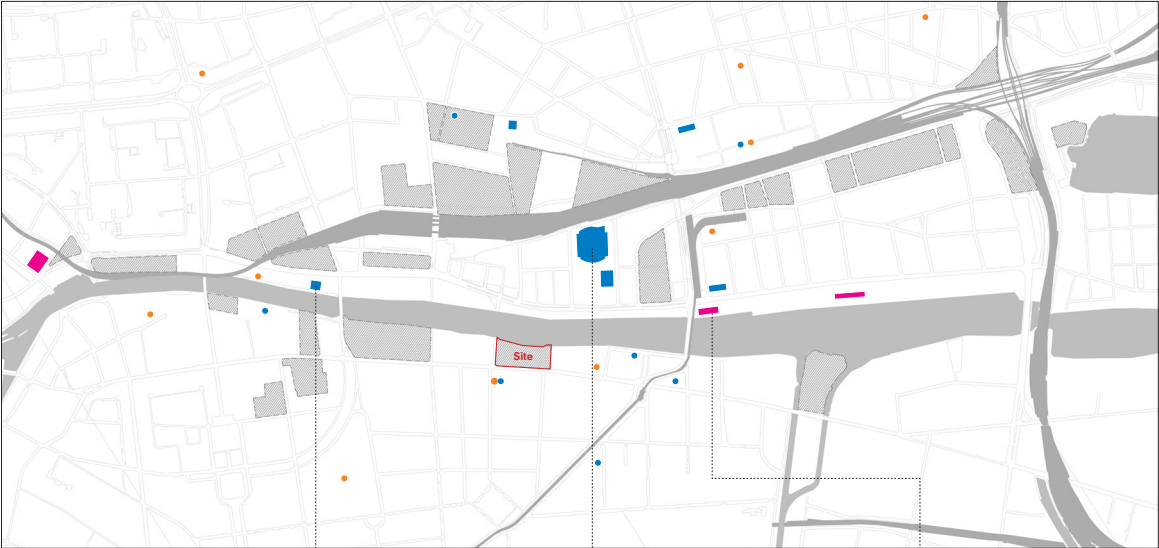
Map of music venue density in Berlin

Site

According to the requirements of the group and individual needs, the choices of location are mainly along the Spree River, where is rich in both street and decent music resources. The site is located at Köpenicker Straße No. 14, Berlin. The site covers an area of 20,250 sqm. It is on the waterfront of the Spree River, adjoining the remnant of an old bridge, Brommybrücke.

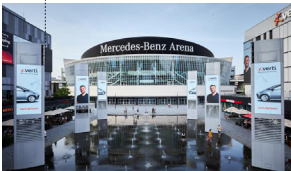
- From a regional scale, reflecting on the success and problems of the former Mediaspree development, the site should address resource connectivity, public accessibility, and affordability respectively at the city, the district, and the property level.
- From the site scale, the project should include the reconstruction of a cycling and pedestrian bridge. The existing industrial building on the site should be reused.
- The entrance orientation, building height, waterfront setback, and continuity of street façade are explored through massing studies.

Site analysis - L



Music resources

- Performance hall
- Music company
- Institute / school



Music resources

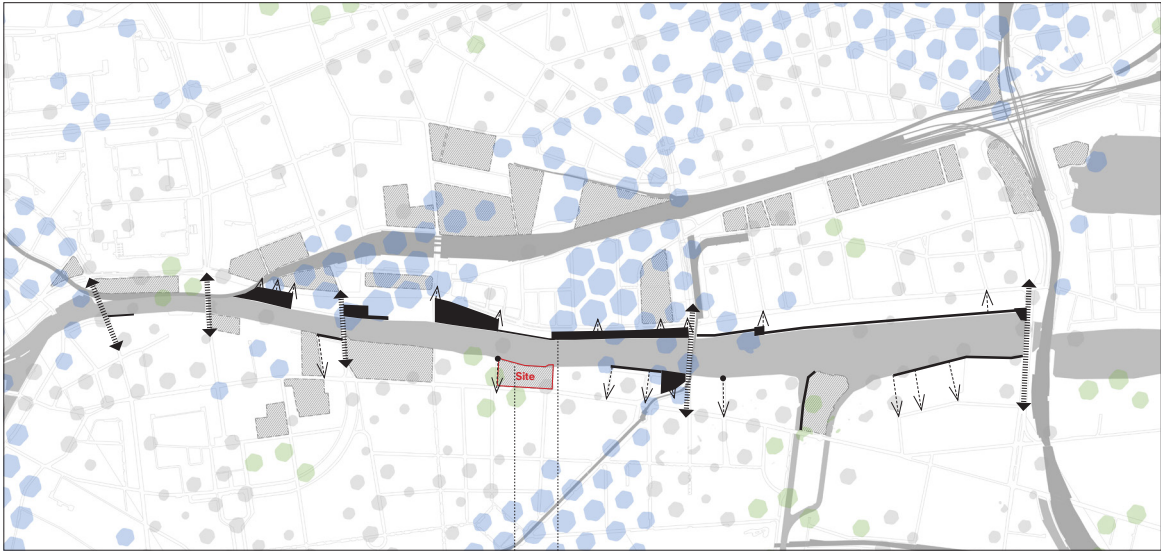
- Music studio
- Bar / Club
- Event / Festival





- S-Bahn
- U-Bahn
- Tram
- Bus

Public transportation



- Accessible riverbank paths
- High footfall value
- Low footfall value

Public accessibility



The south-west bank



The north-west bank

Site analysis - L

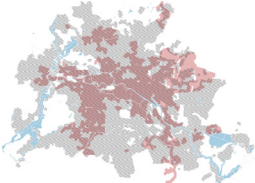


Land price



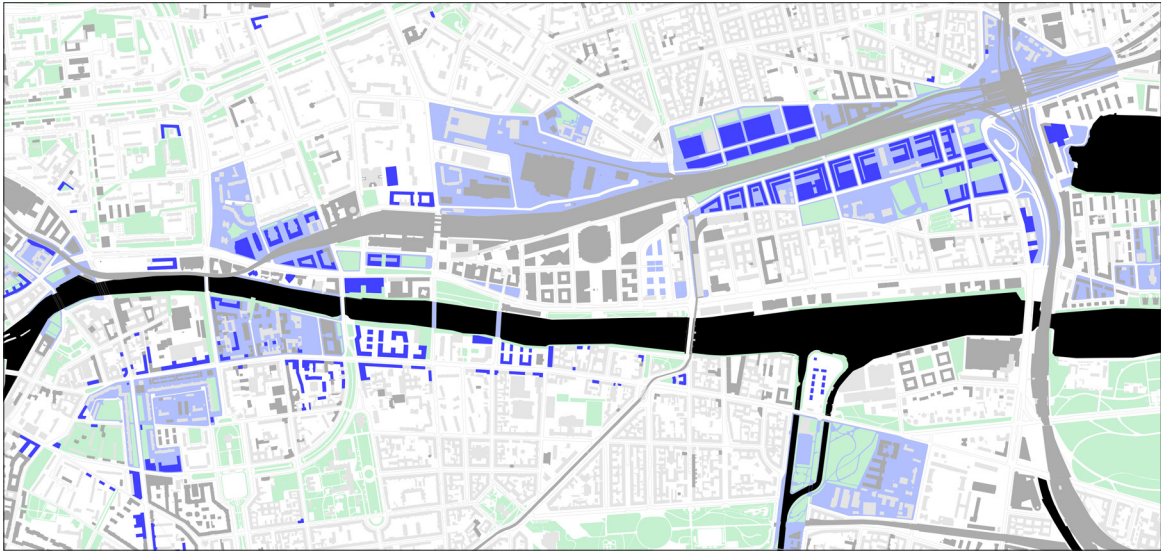
Heating map

- Geothermal energy usage not allowed
- High geothermal potential
- Drillings used





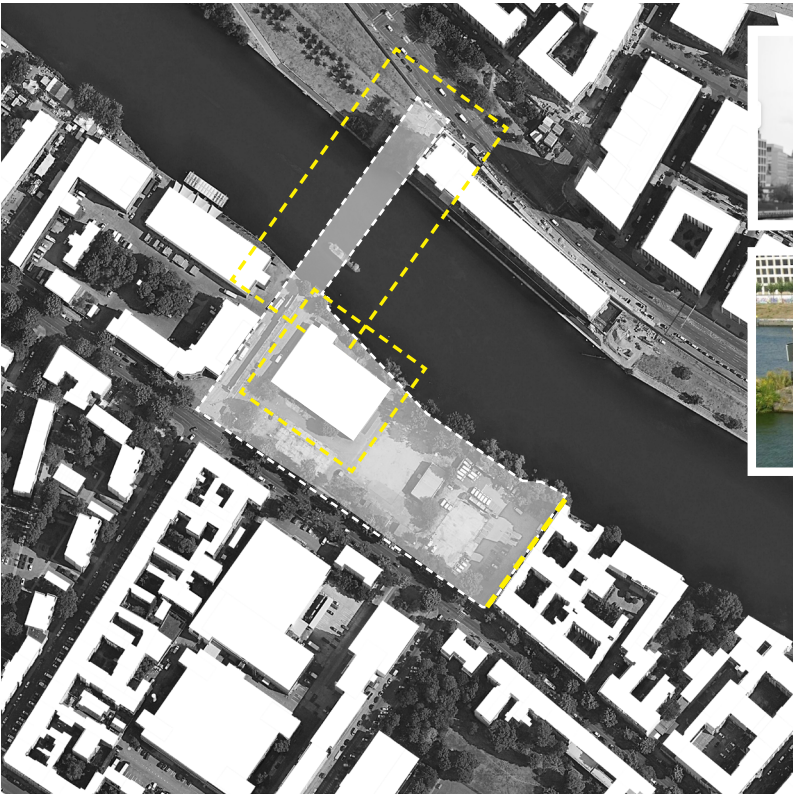
Noise map



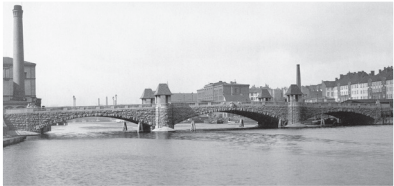
Urban planning

- Buildings after 1990
- Buildings before 1990
- Buildings planned
- greenland
- blocks planned

Site analysis - S



Site history



1900s



2010s



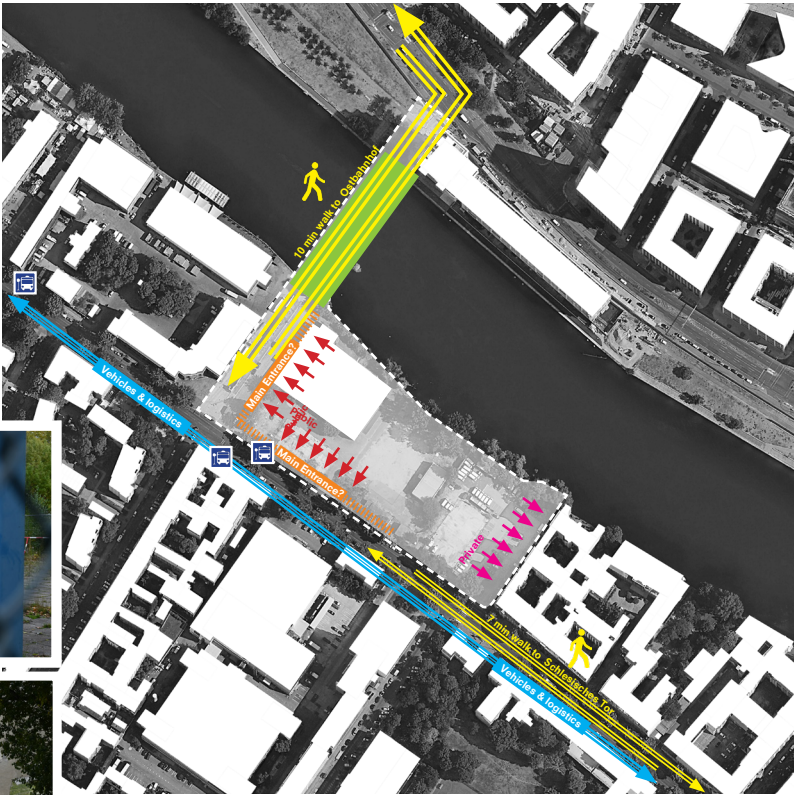
2020s

Design guideline

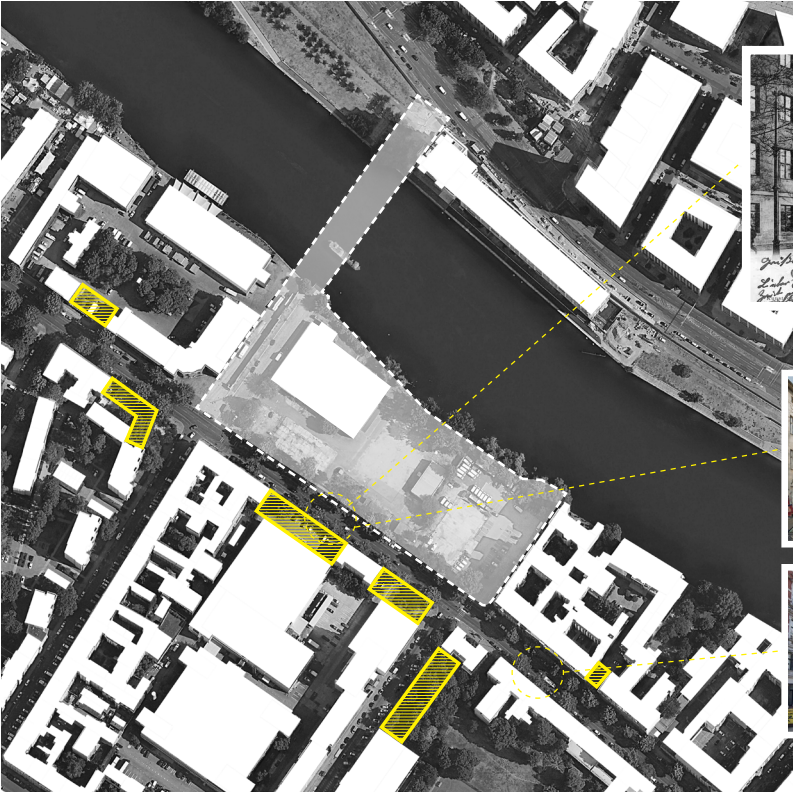
Rebuild the bridge

Design guideline

Preserve & reuse
the existing building



Public access



Urban tissue



1914



2023



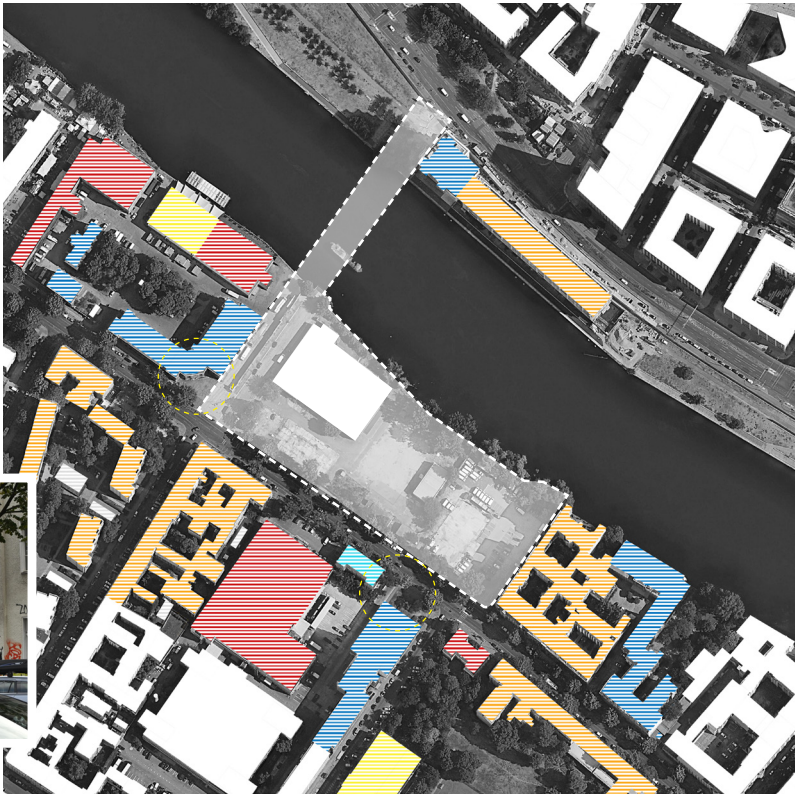
2023

Design guideline

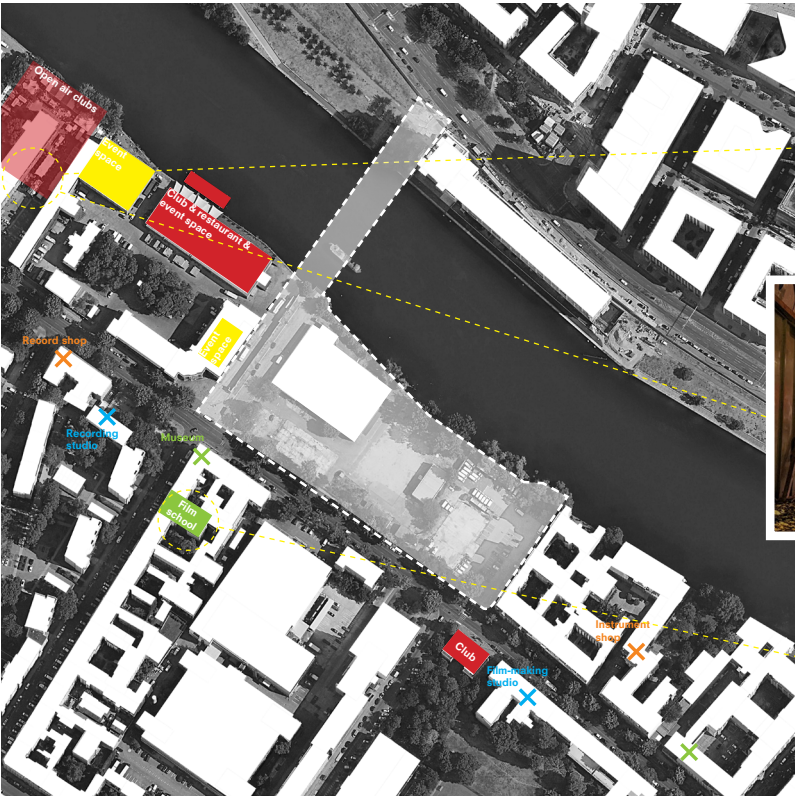
pay attention to the attitude
towards the urban tissue



- Public
- Commercial
- Office
- Residential
- Not in use

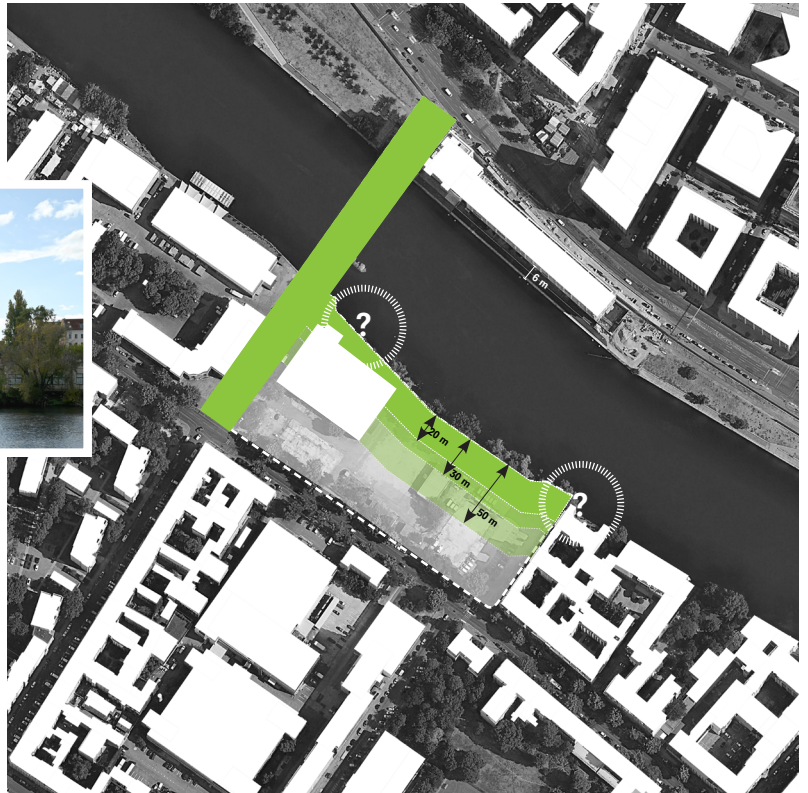


Surrounding building usage



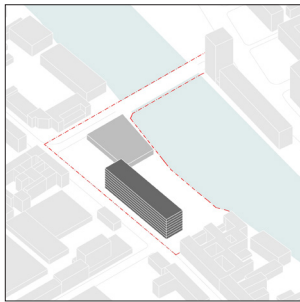
Surrounding cultural places

- Club & bar & restaurant
- Event space
- Shop
- School & institute
- Studio

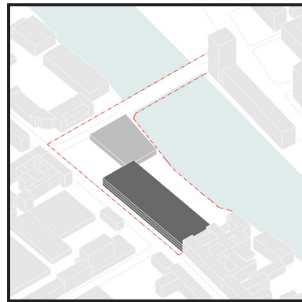


Waterfront access

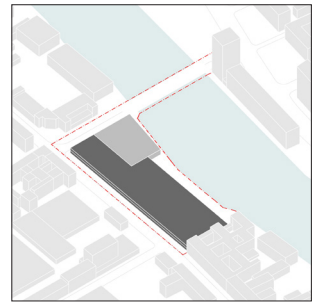
Massing study



Coverage = 2,750 m²
BCR = 23% Height = 32 m

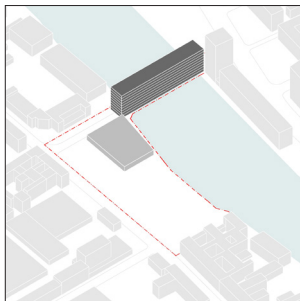


Coverage = 10,300 m²
BCR = 39% Height = 12 m

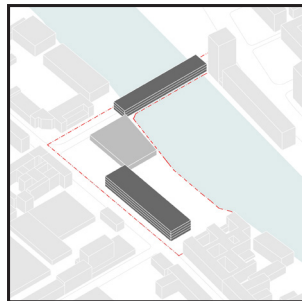


Coverage = 14,600 m²
BCR = 55% Height = 8 m

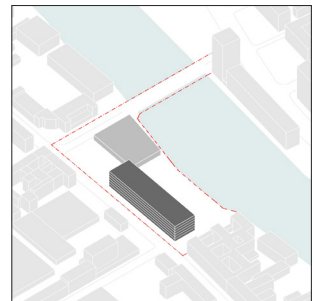
POOR	affordability	+ +	+ + + +	+ + + + +
BUT	connection	+ + + +	+ + +	+ +
	publicness	+ +	+ + + +	+ + +
SEXY	adaptability	+ + +	+ + + + +	+ + + + +



Coverage = 5,850 m²
BCR = 22% Height = 36 m



Coverage = 9,450 m²
BCR = 36% Height = 16 m

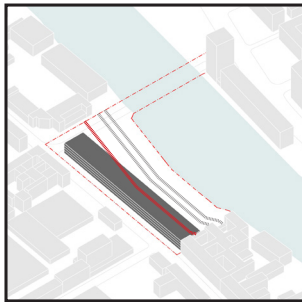


Coverage = 6,980 m²
BCR = 26% Height = 24 m

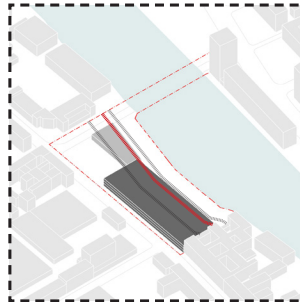
POOR	affordability	+	+	+	+	+	+
BUT	connection	+	+	+	+	+	+
	publicness	+	+	+	+	+	+
SEXY	adaptability	+	+	+	+	+	+

Massing study conclusion - design guidelines

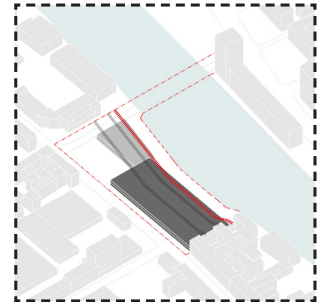
- Building coverage ratio: 25% - 50%
- Building height on bridge ≤ 16 m
- Floor area on bridge 1000 m² - 6000 m²
- Waterfront setback 20 m - 50 m
- Indoor spaces on the ground floor within 50m of the river should be open to the public.
- Open space coverage $\geq 40\%$
- Open space should be continuous.



Coverage = 6,080 m²
BCR = 23% Setback = 50 m

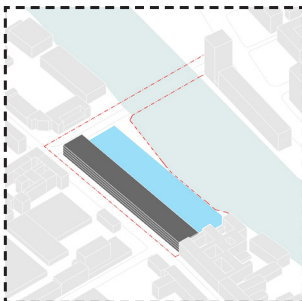


Coverage = 9,260 m²
BCR = 35% Setback = 30 m

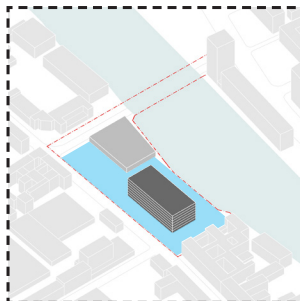


Coverage = 11,100 m²
BCR = 42% Setback = 20 m

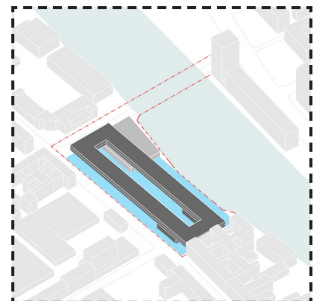
POOR	affordability	+ +	+ + +	+ + + +
BUT	connection	+ + + +	+ +	+ + +
	publicness	+ + + +	+ + +	+ +
SEXY	adaptability	+ + +	+ + + +	+ + + +



Coverage = 6,080 m²
BCR = 23% Open space coverage = 40%



Coverage = 9,450 m²
BCR = 36% Open space coverage = 47%



Coverage = 6,980 m²
BCR = 26% Open space coverage = 47%

POOR	affordability	+ +	+ + +	+
BUT	connection	+ + + +	+ + +	+ + + +
	publicness	+ + + +	+ + + + +	+ + + + +
SEXY	adaptability	+ + +	+ + +	+ + + +

BIBLIOGRAPHY

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Figures

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