PLANNING YOUR SCHOOL MAKERSPACE FROM SCRATCH

A 7-Step Checklist

bit space
bitspacechicago.com

We know there's a lot of ground to cover when it comes to designing a makerspace *that works*, so we've distilled our usual advice into this 7-step checklist to make the planning process easier.

Take your time going through each step, jot down your ideas (**yes, those are fillable boxes**), and you should be on your way to defining a makerspace that:

✔️Meets your school's diverse needs, and
✔️Helps you avoid unnecessary expenses

We hope you'll find this guide helpful!
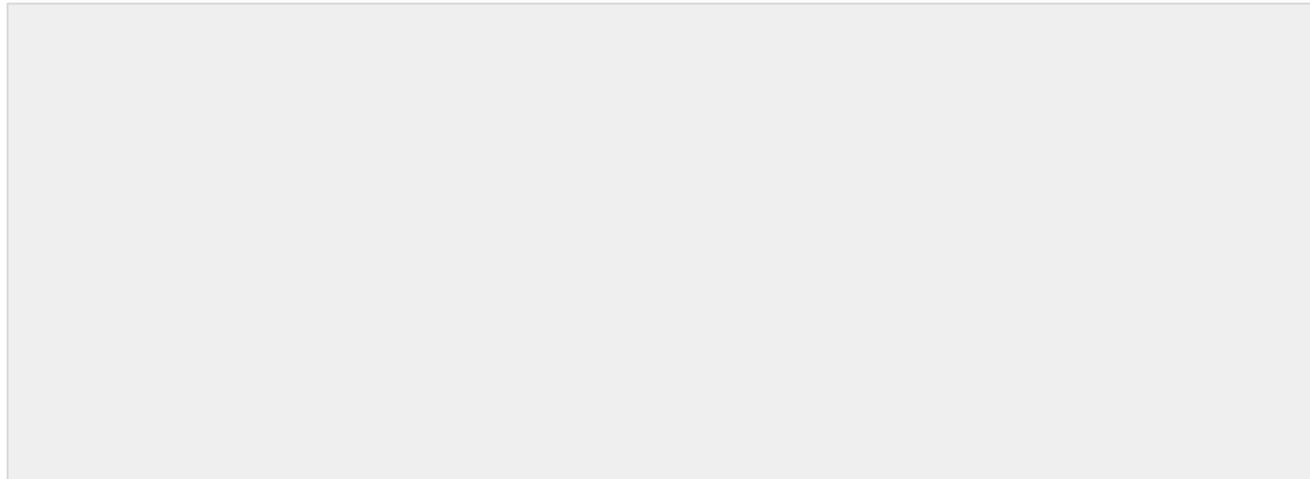
The BitSpace Team
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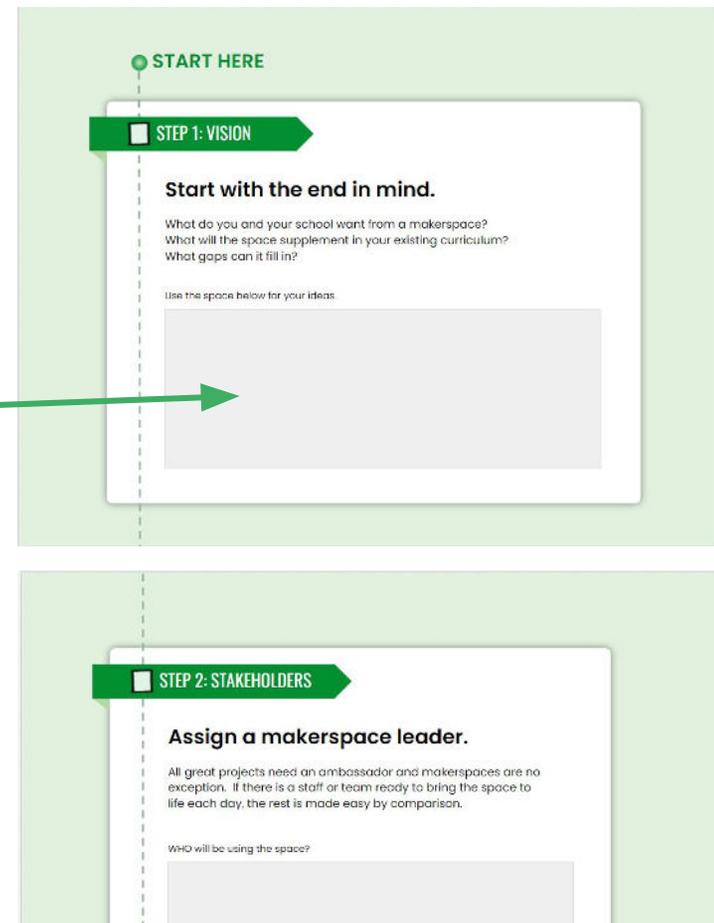
START HERE

STEP 1: VISION

Start with the end in mind.

What do you and your school want from a makerspace? What will the space supplement in your existing curriculum? What gaps can it fill in?

Use the space below for your ideas

STEP 2: STAKEHOLDERS

Assign a makerspace leader.

All great projects need an ambassador and makerspaces are no exception. If there is a staff or team ready to bring the space to life each day, the rest is made easy by comparison.

WHO will be using the space?

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WHO will be using the space?

And who will be staffing and managing it?

Define the range of activities and projects you plan to have with your students.

Innovation spaces should be able to interpret any lesson into a project-based learning moment, so plan for the stars!

Thinking big now will prepare the space to meet the fringes of creative applications now instead of later.

What projects and activities are you considering?

Some activities to help you brainstorm:

★ *Cardboard construction*
★ *Textiles and sewing*
★ *Woodworking*
★ *Electronics*
★ *Robotics*
★ *Digital fabrication*
★ *Prototyping*

WHERE will you set up your makerspace?

Tied closely with the scope of your vision, is the amount of space you have to implement it within.

Space of any size *should* work — from an extra broom closet to a gymnasium — with enough care and planning. This is where the interpretation of scope becomes paramount to decision making in the next steps.

Which area in your campus are you planning to transform into a makerspace?

Also consider:

- ❏ Access to plumbing and electricity
- ❏ Visibility and accessibility to students
- ❏ Possibility of expanding in the future

What tools and materials are *most* needed?

We know what we want, we know where it will happen and now comes the most intimidating part for most schools... *How?*

From the latest technology in rapid prototyping to the essentials of time honored trades and techniques, a makerspace can be capable of making nearly anything in this day and age.

Don't take this journey alone!

Lean on everyone you can for their advice and insights and weigh their experiences with different tools, technology and materials against your vision.

Based on your SCOPE on Step 3, list down ALL the items you might need, from the MOST important to the least.

Contrary to popular belief, a makerspace is NOT defined by the bits and bobs they have on hand, but by HOW they are used to meet the needs of students and teachers!

☑ STEP 6: BUDGET

Determine your budget range.

If you have an operating budget in mind already, lead with that in any conversations you embark on.

Many industries in the makerspace world want the best for you and your space, but leading with an expectation of costs will help you get to the right fit for your project right away.

Of equal importance is the budget of TIME.

If a particular tool is a must-have for your scope and vision then get it now and plan for other things in the months or years to come.

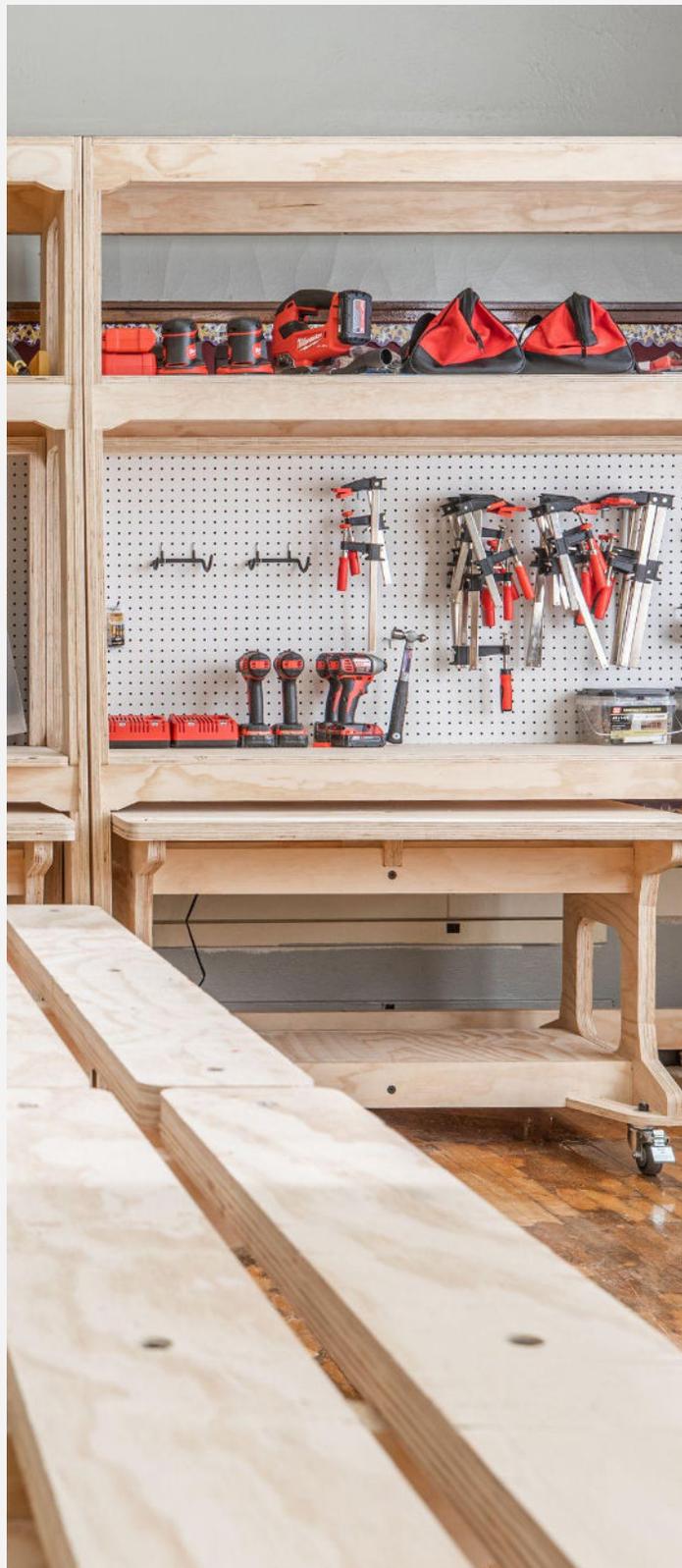What budget are you working with?
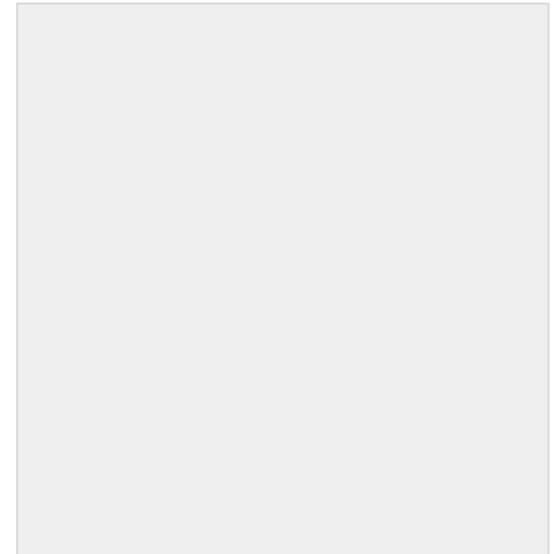
☑ STEP 7: REPEAT

Review everything on this list!

Go back through this list at least one time to refine your ideals and expectations and then get to the good part of making your vision a reality!

● **END**

If you find yourself stuck at any step, please scroll down to the next page.

Defining a makerspace that covers all the bases while staying within budget can be challenging.

We've been there, and we've seen how the best of ideas only come up in hindsight — *and* at a cost.

This is why we help schools anticipate their future needs before taking the next big step. We share with them insights gained from 7+ years of maker experience to dodge potential pitfalls.

Who We Are:
We're BitSpace, and we've successfully supported over 17 schools in ramping up their STEAM programming — from building their makerspaces to offering a comprehensive curriculum that they can seamlessly integrate with their own.

If you'd like some expert insights into making the most of your makerspace from Day One, click below to book a quick chat with Kevin Smith, our Makerspace Specialist.

Schedule a Strategy Session

This is a no-cost session, but spots are limited each month depending on Kevin's availability.