

Chapter 6

MADE Makerspace Barcelona

ABSTRACT

The MADE Makerspace in Barcelona, Spain is a small community-based, all-volunteer makerspace in the heart of the city center. Located in an old factory building occupying about 187 square meters (2,013 ft²), the space is a little crowded, and the building in need of a refresh. Inside the space there is a woodshop, digital fabrication studio, and electronics area. MADE Makerspace uses three different technology “channels” to keep their members aware of happenings in the space. Even more impressive, the space is using an electronic channel to provide an update on members’ projects, including those that are under consideration and not started yet. From this channel, new members and existing members can find experts in project areas that match their interests. MADE does not have an abundance of curriculum but does follow a hands-on, problem-based learning approach to teach members about making. This chapter explores MADE Makerspace Barcelona.

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I tell everyone who comes in here that our community is about sharing and teaching. If you don't know how to use something, you ask someone a directed question like, "Could you show me how to use this for my project?" instead of "Teach me how to program". Instead you say, "Could you teach me how to program to make this LED blink?" If you ask these really open-ended question it's more likely someone will tell you no. — Will Blevins

ORGANIZATION BACKGROUND

At the time of the author's visit, MADE Makerspace was located in the second floor of the repurposed Lehmann Factory building in the central L'Eixample neighborhood in Barcelona, Spain. The space occupied 187 square meters (2,013 ft²) in a multi-use building that showed preliminary signs of dilapidation, with crumbling walls and floors in need of repair. Approaching the space from the street there is a tunnel running under the building leading into an open plaza surrounded by a block of mixed two and three-story buildings. A tall smokestack on one side of the courtyard provides a peek into the industrial past of the site. As shown in Figure 1, the front of the space was a simple door with MADE across the top and a radio frequency identification (RFID) reader and no windows. Since the visit to MADE in February of 2017, MADE Makerspace has moved to a new bigger location in the Sants district of Barcelona. Will Blevins, a scientist and maker from Rochester, New York, provided a tour and spoke about the space. Blevins is a current doctoral student in evolutionary genomics at the Universitat Pompeu Fabra in Barcelona. Blevins has been a member of the space for many years; he freely admits he has many (up to 12) on-going projects in the space. Blevins noted that at the time of the visit, MADE was looking for a new space because the current landlord had significantly raised the rent — the membership felt it was too steep of an increase to stay.

Entering from the main door there is a larger space occupied by desks and shelves, with all manner of electronics and computer parts occupying the nooks and crannies. In the main hallway members have created a touchscreen arcade/greeting kiosk. This kiosk allows members and visitors to look up current projects and members of the space. Just about every inch of wall in the MADE Makerspace is occupied either by a maker project or piece of equipment as shown in Figure 2.

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