

Edinburgh is a city with a rich cultural heritage that plays host to the world's largest performing arts festival every year. The Dunard Centre will address the long-identified need for a purpose-built, medium-sized performance venue in the city, serving as an Edinburgh base for the Scottish Chamber Orchestra and providing a new space for a range of musical performances – both acoustic and amplified – as well as events. The venue will contain a 1,000-seat auditorium, a café, bar and multifunctional spaces for a variety of events as well as an educational outreach programme. Upon completion it will be Edinburgh's first dedicated new space for music and the performing arts in 100 years.

The new venue is located within Edinburgh's UNESCO World Heritage Site at the eastern end of its Georgian New Town at a point where the formal qualities of the New Town meet the more intimate atmosphere of lanes around Register House. It is located behind, and connected to, the Grade-A listed Dundas House (1771) on St Andrew Square which can serve as a formal entrance for special events. On an urban level the project seeks to provide a fitting terminus at the end of George Street, the New Town's principal axis, in a position where a grand public building was originally intended to be built. It also resolves the immediate urban conditions of the site, which is relatively concealed. The venue connects the surrounding distinct neighbourhoods through several approach routes and entrances, as well as a newly landscaped public realm.

The building's functions are distributed within three refined yet compact and intersecting volumes. The concert hall sits in the centre within a pure elliptical form; its shape and scale dictated by the acoustic requirements and its position on the site. The hall volume rises above the neighbouring buildings as an urban gesture which terminates the axial view east along George Street, with Dundas House prominently in the foreground. The venue's overlapping lower volumes are orthogonal in form and house its ancillary and public functions. These help to reduce the overall mass of the building and anchor it within the scale, geometry and atmosphere of the surrounding lanes, pocket gardens, and neighbouring buildings.

The façades of the new venue relate to the architecture of the New Town in both their order and materiality. The expression of a base, middle and top, found on other neoclassical buildings, is picked up by the composition of the venue's massing while the texture and tone of its concrete references the various sandstones found in the New Town. The character of the public realm is set by the architecture of the building and borrows from the scenography of the context creating a series of varied, interconnected spaces between the venue and its different approaches.



Project start	2020
Completion due	2025
Gross floor area	7,625m ²
Client	IMPACT Scotland
Architect	David Chipperfield Architects London in collaboration with Reiach and Hall Architects
Directors	Benito Blanco, David Chipperfield, Alasdair Graham, Billy Prendergast
Project architect	Julia Loughnane
Team	Eleanor Catlin, Stefan Costache, Patricia Fredborg, Sabrah Islam, Craig Johnston, Charles Proctor, Daniela Puga, Juliette Sainlez, Nanami Sakimura, Lee Steedman, David Stirling, Carlo Vincelli
Landscape Architect	GROSS. MAX.
Acoustic Consultant	Nagata Acoustics (hall and studio), Sandy Brown (venue)
Structural Engineer	Whitby Wood Engineers
MEP Engineer	Atelier Ten
Lighting	Atelier Ten
Transport Engineer	Arup
Theatre Consultant	Theatre Projects
Façade Engineer	Thornton Tomasetti
Fire Engineer	Atelier Ten
Sustainability	Atelier Ten
Planning Consultant	Ryden LLP
Heritage Consultant	Turley
Cost Consultant	Thomson Gray
Project Manager	Turner & Townsend
CDM	Alliance CDM
Accessibility	Reiach and Hall Architects

Dunard Centre



Dunard Centre