



The interior of the Liverpool warehouse set to be turned into the Novas Contemporary Urban Centre

Liverpool warehouse to be renovated into ethnic theatre and music venue

A former warehouse in Liverpool is to be converted into a 450-seat theatre and music venue, providing opportunities

for black and minority ethnic artists and workers.

Novas Contemporary Urban Centre is due to open its doors

next to Albert Dock this September, in time for the city's Capital of Culture celebrations in 2008.

The £16 million renovation will also create two clubs hosting live gigs, an art gallery, two cinemas, wine bars, conference and training facilities and community office space. It is one of four new cultural and social enterprise projects currently being undertaken by Novas – a charity which traditionally specialises in running homeless hostels – in which half of all jobs will go to people from socially excluded groups.

At the end of next year, its Camden hostel, Arlington House, will undergo a £30 million revamp that includes the creation of a 300-seat theatre in its basement, providing work and training for homeless people.

Paul Everitt, Novas' head of artistic programmes, said 50% of the programme for both venues would consist of professional shows, including plays, musicals, comedy and variety.