

CREATIVE GROWTH

DEVELOPING EUROPEAN BUSINESSES FOR THE FUTURE



BETTING ON CREATIVITY

"Two boys arrived yesterday with a pebble they said was the head of a dog until I pointed out that it was really a typewriter." Pablo Picasso

Creative Growth Magazine's purpose is to share, experience and showcase inside stories from the creative sector. Mapping the creative sector has shown us that it is growing faster than the overall economy. It is an important sector with many employees, many small businesses and a significant turnover. We want to share our knowledge of some of the challenges ahead. We also want to highlight the potential of the creative sector. Its potential as a driver of economic growth, and its potential to bring new values and new perspectives to society and other business sectors by breaking established patterns and seeing things in a different way. The Creative Growth project aims to identify tools that can help generate an environment where cultural and creative businesses and ideas can flourish. Much can be done to increase the value of cultural and creative work and to encourage and support an entrepreneurial mindset amongst creatives.

So was it a dog's head or a typewriter? Who knows. What we do know is that the creative sector plays an important role in the development of our regions where integrating innovation and creativity is key. We hope the examples presented in this magazine will serve as inspiration at the local and regional level, and that they have an impact on future initiatives.

Happy reading!



Anna Jacobson
Project Coordinator, Creative Growth



CREATIVE GROWTH

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Fashion & design is by a clear margin the most significant creative sector in the Emilia-Romagna region. A third (34 percent) of all regional creative start ups in 2006 belonged to this category. Many of these businesses have a distinctive environmental profile, including "Esercizi di Stile": Giorgia Palmirani and Ludovica Benedetti's two-man company. The duo make their popular Saisei bags in an atmospheric little flat in the centre of town. The bags are sold across Italy and manufactured from nostalgic customers' old material and the business' entire concept is built around transforming gran's old rug or the remains of dad's old soldier's uniform into a personal and user-friendly bag. www.saisei.eu.

Photos Tine Hvolby

CREATIVE MINDS

The capital of the future

In today's world, growth takes place where creativity, knowledge and experience meet

They're known as CCI's. The small and large creative and cultural industries that currently account for just under five percent of European GDP and provide employment to just under four percent of the workforce. The sector is growing rapidly, as is its significance for the industrialised countries' commercial development.

Creative ideas, typically generated in innovative partnerships between technicians, artists and business people, are becoming the western world's growth engine.

Find them, spoil them and bring them together

Attracting and retaining CCIs and creative talent is the new political mantra at both the local and regional levels. And for several very good reasons, including:

- CCI employees and entrepreneurs earn, on average between a third and a quarter **more than average local wages**, thereby providing a positive contribution to the local economy through consumption and taxation
- They can **strengthen an area's cultural value and reputation generally** by, amongst other things, raising cultural awareness and providing a basis for a creative subculture to flourish
- They attract **like-minded professionals**. According to American professor and author Richard Florida, who coined the term "the creative class," creative and cultural workers and employees are likely to go their own way. They want to live in areas in which there are a high proportion of like-minded individuals

In general, the creative class is extremely mobile. They take their skills with them to wherever the best partners or business opportunities are. For business legislators the task is to strengthen creative magnetism by appealing to potential newcomers' curiosity and aesthetic sense. Plus, innovators need a framework in which to meet, and easy access to risk capital, knowledge and up-to-date infrastructure.

"Imagine what the world would be like without theatres, newspapers, magazines, concerts and not least the innovation and entrepreneurial spirit that creative residents foster. Without this we'd be poorer, more ignorant and unemployed. No-one would want to move here."

*Politician and President of Östern Regional Development Council,
Jan Owe-Larsson*

"The winning regions are those who will be able to spread creativity throughout "traditional" sectors, and foster innovation in creative companies."

Head of the Emilia-Romagna Region Economic Development Policies Unit Dr. Silvano Bertini

"They are typical risk-takers and pioneers and play a decisive role when it comes to finding new talents, developing new trends and designing new techniques... plus the cultural sector and CCI's generally are important contributors to our fight against significant challenges such as global warming..."

Quote from the European Commission's Green Paper: Unlocking the Potential of Cultural and Creative Industries, April 2010

"If Europe wants to achieve a competitive edge in a global marketplace undergoing rapid change there's a pressing need to create the optimal conditions for creativity and innovation to flourish and to foster a new entrepreneurial culture."

President of the European Commission José Manuel Barroso

FACTS

For many years the **European Commission** has increased its focus on the creative sector. The most recent working paper from March 2011, which builds on a survey titled *Unlocking the Potential of Cultural and Creative Industries* (which in turn builds on submissions from several hundred organisations and individuals both within and beyond the EU), makes the following recommendations regarding the regional development of new CCI magnets:

- Cities' **old industrial buildings** and infrastructure can often be profitably converted to new centres for creative communities
- Regions should stress their **unique features** in order to brand the area to CCIs and give local CCIs a platform on which they can brand themselves
- CCIs should be encouraged to **meet and work** with more production-oriented industrial companies in order to generate valuable synergies
- European clusters should be encouraged to **work together** across national boundaries

INFO

Spanish delegation learned from the Scots

Creative Growth partners have learnt a great deal from each other during the project's three years. A delegation from the CEEI business office in Asturias went on a fact-finding mission to Scotland to take a closer look at the Scots' ambitious business support systems, provided through the Cultural Enterprise Office www.culturalenterpriseoffice.co.uk. It has developed into a pilot project, where one Creative Growth partner looks at transferring a good practise from one region to another.



Mike Stevenson, managing director at Thinktastic

PASSION + RESPECT = CREATIVE GROWTH

The long term strategy for creative growth has paid off in Edinburgh. Mike Stevenson, managing director at Thinktastic, a local communications agency, reveals the secret behind more than a decade of growth in the creative industry

Why is Edinburgh such a magnet?

It's a vibrant city with a fantastic transport infrastructure, it's extremely rich in history with narrow streets as well as broad boulevards and it's dramatically beautiful with the castle at its heart.

The festivals attract our kind of people. Many want to settle here, and that expands an already rich pool of talent – important for any employer.

Which parameters were important to you when deciding to establish your business in Edinburgh?

Studio availability, choice and price; plus a business-empathetic council with a powerful economic vision and a generally positive environment for the creative sector. Transport links are also vital in and around the city – Edinburgh excels here.

How important is civic policy to creative industry growth?

It is vital. The city sees the creative sector as an economic driver and is putting its energy and money into supporting infrastructure and growth. Easy market entry for new start-ups is provided along with a range of support mechanisms, and that is great. But, even more critical is the city's commitment to helping the sector scale-up, increase its global market potential and create collaborative business models.

What's your advice to other regions wanting to attract creative industries and increase productivity and growth in this sector?

Follow Edinburgh's example. Create attractive infrastructure, show passion and respect for the industry and make it central to economic policy – that will attract and retain companies. But creative companies are often small and detached, so make sure you bring them together, find the leaders and shakers in the sector and encourage collaborative business models – that's what Edinburgh does and it's a great approach.

"We are proud of our artistic ensembles and creative artists and the city's cultural and sporting life. Outstanding talents are rewarded with scholarships and organisations that provide high-quality artistic activities are provided with operational support."

Dr. Ferenc KOVÁCS, Mayor of Nyíregyháza County Seat and Member of the Hungarian Parliament

"Creativity is a significant competitive parameter, and it plays an important economic role."

Zoltán Pajna, President of the Észak-Alföld regional development Council, Hungary

"Many micro-enterprises demonstrate a high level of creativity and entrepreneurial spirit, but are not large enough to take advantage of scaling opportunities such as: purchasing power, production efficiencies, effective marketing and bidding for major contracts. Through our creative cooperation project, we facilitate genuine growth in the creative sector,"

Cllr Tom Buchanan, Convenor of the Economic Development Committee City of Edinburgh Council

FACTS

Creativity is an Edinburgh gold mine

Edinburgh hosts over 250 different markets and festivals, making it a local magnet for the creative sector with all that entails. The city is referred to as the creative capital of Great Britain after London. Edinburgh also clearly demonstrates the advantages of following a strategy of appealing to the creative sector. The city boasts the UK's second-highest standard of living, second only to St. Albans. Despite its relatively modest size, Edinburgh is also the nation's fifth-largest source of new patents and was crowned the UK's most competitive city by the Centre for International Competitiveness.

The art of counting opportunities

Putting a figure on the creative sector and describing and predicting developments is a significant challenge, but it pays off

Fredrik Sunnergren from the Östsam Regional Development Council in Sweden is one of the driving forces behind the Creative Growth mapping project.

"There is a pressing need for a joint international definition to enhance opportunities for comparisons and benchmarking. International organisations often work with very loose definitions that give a very misleading picture of the sector at both the local and regional level," he says.

He describes a number of general features common to the creative sector which the figures reveal when a local area is considered in more detail:

- In several regions, the number of workplaces associated with the creative industry is growing at more than twice the average speed
- Creative companies are often one-man companies. They rarely proliferate like traditional industrial companies. It is in cooperation with other creative companies or companies outside the creative sector that new products and services are developed
- Creative companies are easily overlooked and are easily neglected. Amongst other things because their products are often intangible. That adds to the need to measure this growth sector and put it firmly on the political map

Statistics create attention

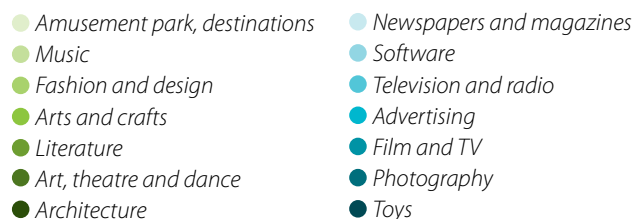
It takes figures to make politicians aware of the creative sector's potential for improving the general quality of life in a particular region. Something President of the Észak-Alföld Regional Development Council Zoltán Pajna knows only too well. He feels that **creativity is a significant competitive parameter – both at the international and the national level**, but prior to the mapping project he found difficulty in winning support for his point of view.

"The Creative Growth project has helped the region's policy makers to realize the importance of developing the creative industries," he says. And so does the Bulgarian Creative Growth partner.

"Thanks to the Creative Growth project local authorities in our region have improved their knowledge of how to develop and implement effective policies at the regional and local level affording full business support services and solutions for the creative sector. We now hope to be able to put some of the experiences gained into practice," says Mariela Petrova, Regional Association of Municipalities, Central Stara Planina, Bulgaria.

Every region has its own unique creative brand

Here are a couple of examples from the project's extensive mapping of the creative sector in 8 out of the 10 participating regions



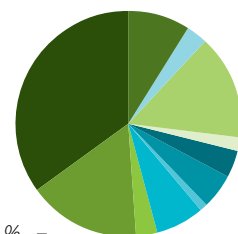
Creative industries as defined by Creative Growth

DISTRIBUTION OF COMPANIES BETWEEN SECTORS 2006

Asturias, Spain

Architecture 35% –

Literature 16% –



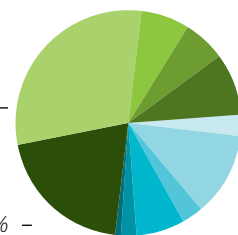
The region is home to large numbers of small companies that work in the areas of architecture and literature.

DISTRIBUTION OF NEW COMPANIES 2008

Észak-Alföld, Hungary

Fashion & design 30% –

Architecture 20% –



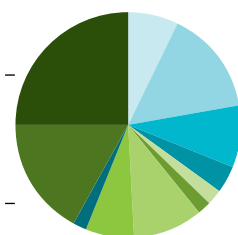
In this region almost a third of the 2006 crop of creative start ups worked within the areas of fashion and design.

DISTRIBUTION OF NEW COMPANIES 2006

Småland, Sweden

Architecture 25% –

art, theatre and dance 17% –



A large proportion of the start ups, at least when compared to the other regions, were within the areas of art, theatre and dance.

INVISIBLE ANGEL ANSWERS GROWTH COMPANY'S PRAYERS

The story of WWW-radio service Spreaker shows just how crucial timely financial support can be when a creative and innovative business success takes its very first steps

You don't get an immediate impression of innovation and creativity when you visit Bologna University Faculty of Agricultural Science. It's located in a new campus outside the town centre, where a number of creative start ups have taken over a floor at one of the faculty buildings.

Long white corridors simply decorated with an endless orange stripe. The pervasive silence only adds to our doubts. Have we got the wrong building? A sign bearing the word "Spreaker" has been set up next to one of the off-white doors. Behind the door there is the noise of busy keyboards and eager conversation. Hectic and concentrated. It takes at least a minute for all five smiling faces to welcome us inside. The two men and three women illustrate clearly how creativity is in fact a symptom of human energy.

A platform for DJ dreams

Spreaker is a unique web-based radio concept that allows anyone to create and hear music programmes completely free of charge. Extra features are available against payment, but the basic system costs nothing and is so simple to use that anyone who wants to can let their inner DJ loose, or listen to others do so.

The idea came to Managing Director Francesco Baschieri a couple of years ago.

"I was driving along listening to a really great podcast I'd downloaded off the net and couldn't help thinking how great it would be if the people behind it got the chance to send that sort of thing live," he says.

"We've built a platform, where people, if they're good enough, can actually kick-start a DJ career. It's a quick ticket to fame," explains Chairman Daniele Cremonini.

Both Daniele Cremonini and Francesco Baschieri are engineers and they have both founded companies previously. So when taking the opportunities offered by the incubation programme We Tech Off, they launched Spreaker in the autumn of 2010 in cooperation

with two designers. They knew all too well that it was do or die. Even the best new sites can be overlooked or quickly abandoned by the Internet's fickle users. If the project was to stand any chance of surviving beyond the very first stages a massive marketing campaign was required.

The problem was they didn't have the finances.

Flying start

"We really needed capital. All the funds we'd been able to raise had gone on designing and programming the solution," recalls Daniele Cremonini.

Today, he is thankful that his prayers were answered by Angels for Growth, www.italianangels.net the largest forum for business angels in Italy and winner of last year's European Business Networks Award.

A number of investors chose to put their funds into Spreaker and in next to no time the company had 300,000 Euros of growth capital. Money which went on three new staff members and various initiatives designed to raise the new net radio to prominence in no time.

"From day one we had to deliver a solid base of users and listeners. If we didn't have that advertisers wouldn't take a second look at us," explains Daniele Cremonini, whose primary responsibility is product marketing.

Half a year later when Creative Growth Magazine visit Spreaker for the first time, they have taken on two further staff and 100,000 enthusiastic users and 300,000 listeners in Italy alone. Interest in the self-service radio is spreading to USA and Spain and the next stage of the company's expansion is already on the drawing board with a brand new marketing and sales department just outside Los Angeles, California.

"Now all we have to do is deliver a fantastic return for our investors. They're expecting to see the value of their stake multiply several times before they sell it on in a few years time. And, of course, that's what we want too," Daniele Cremonini assures us.



EU FUNDS FINANCE ART MUSEUM REFURBISHMENT

Hungarians have a long and proud tradition of creative innovation. A tradition which, amongst other things, includes the airship, the telephone exchange, the ballpoint pen, the Rubiks Cube, a car that can drive on water and the concept of FLOW. The high-profile modern art museum called MODEM in Debrecen is one of the largest and probably the most up-to-date modern and contemporary art gallery in Hungary.

When the time had come to renovate and extend the tourist magnet in 2009 with a multimedia centre and a new museum park, local politicians couldn't come up with the necessary financing. In the wake of the global financial crisis it simply wasn't realistic. Instead, the museum received help in raising approximately 825,000 Euros from the Észak-Alföld Operational Programme, and in June 2011 the renovation was complete and ready to be celebrated and admired. www.modemart.hu

"The huge interest shown in the increasingly popular international programme "FolkedanceNet" indicates that the financial support we've received has been well given. Almost a thousand domestic and foreign participants prove this each and every year."

Sandor Kovács, president of Jász-Nagykun-Szolnok County Assembly, vicepresident of Észak-Alföld regional development Council



"From day one we had to deliver a solid base of users and listeners. If we didn't have that advertisers wouldn't take a second look at us."



Photos Tine Hvolby

*SPREAKERS, from left
Tonia Maffeo, Community Manager
Daniele Cremonini, Chairman
Francesco Baschieri, Chief Executive Officer
Laura Gramuglia, Radio Content Manager
Anna Piazza*

NEW FINANCING OPPORTUNITIES CAN SPROUT HERE

Growth in the creative sector is often very different to that in the industrial sector. Many creative micro-companies don't grow in the conventional fashion. They seldom employ new staff and may not even have any growth ambitions. However, development really takes off when a range of companies, perhaps even from a number of different sectors, come together to create new mindsets. The result is an innovative fusion of knowledge and experience. This means there's a need to look at start-up assistance and company development in a new perspective.

CEEI Asturias has led a working group, which has looked into the 10 participating regions' potential to access creative business finance. This process has resulted in a mosaic of good practices, the effects of which are already visible as new initiatives begin to take form. The need for synergies and a new approach becomes ever clearer:

Subsidies

Mgazrt in Hungary supports technical development projects

www.palyazatihirek.eu/vallalkozasok/18-vallalkozasok-fejlesztese/435-van-keret-a-gop-211a-palyazatokra-senki-nem-lesz-elutasitva-forrashiany-miatt

Venture capital

Risk capital investors are often highly selective about which projects they wish to inject funds into. These investors have yet to recognise the creative sector's potential. www.ceei.es/pgceei.asp?pg=108

EU-loans

A number of European financial institutions act as guarantors for start and development loans to small and medium-sized businesses www.access2finance.eu

Multiannual national programme

Stimulating the development of handicrafts protects trades that involve traditional cuisine, folk art and other handicrafts by promoting their products and services http://otimmctm.softclass.net/index.php?category_id=1000022

Micro credits

Small quick loans to help a good idea get off the ground fast. Normally limited to 30,000 Euros. Well-suited to small fast-growing companies with new ideas www.ceei.es/pgceei.asp?pg=35
www.almi.se/ALMI-in-English

State-guaranteed loans

www.vf.dk/For%20banker-realkredit/KIG-laen.aspx

Combined with incubators

Some institutions have chosen to combine a physical site with financial aid support services. CEEI Asturias & We Tech Off www.ceei.es
www.wetechoff.eu/en

New market support

CCIs receive market consultancy and export assistance at a reduced rate. <http://stoetguide.regionsyddanmark.dk/ordning.asp?id=78&sc=0&ide=2&sort=dato&itp=2>

Low cost knowledge

In Lithuania innovative SMEs are provided with research services from a university or college at a reduced rate (100%, 75% or 25%) www.mita.lt/lt/inovacijos/inovaciniai-cekiai/apie

The full report: "Access to Finance" is available from www.creative-growth.eu

Enrico Maria Pastorello sells his progressive designer furniture with support from Italian start-up programme We Tech Off www.wetechoff.eu. The easy chair pictured is called Ex(N) OVO and is made from egg boxes. www.callearchitettura.it
Photo Tine Hvolby



Business Angels

Investors put risk capital into creative companies with growth potential in return for a participating interest
www.asban.es/index.asp?lang=en,
www.iban.it, www.bban.eu

FACTS

HOW TO HELP CREATIVE ENTREPRENEURS GET ACCESS TO PROJECT FINANCE

CEEI Asturias Financia is an example of best practice. They use a methodology that is structured in several phases. From initial contact with entrepreneurs, including pre-feasibility analysis, to the checking and validation of business plans. The system involves agreeing on a task schedule, the assigning of a specialised tutor and frequent consultations until the business plan and technical report are validated. The process is results-oriented, and based on a formal quality system including support documents and established procedures. CEEI Asturias Financia provides the framework based on the entrepreneurs' requirements and the type of funding that interests them. The roles of the various entities that contribute to framework partnerships are coordinated and complementary, which is also an additional source of knowledge and added-value. Currently, CEEI Asturias is a formal validator for business projects that apply for micro credits, business angels, risk capital and NTBFs subsidies.

Managing Director of CEEI Asturias, Mrs. Eva Pando Iglesias, explains:

"The system can make access to funding easier. CClIs become investment-ready thanks to CEEI Financia and their role as intermediaries in establishing effective communication between SMEs and financial institutions or investors. Other key factors in accessing funding are CClIs' intangible assets, risk-guarantee mechanisms and their ability to minimise cash-flow issues." **www.ceei.es**



"Paradoxically, over-specialization is one of the greatest strengths and, at the same time, weaknesses of entrepreneurs in the field of cultural and creative industries. Without the support and advice from the CEEI Asturias staff it would have been impossible to focus on our job. Through their projects and activities we can achieve a key formation to make our entrepreneur plans come true. That is the reason that it's vital to have a platform like the CEEI capable to encourage and unleash the potential of the business model."

María Gómez Martín and Misael Arturo López Zapico, Archistec Consultoría Histórica S.L. www.archistec.es

The start-up that grew strong in an incubator

A fantastic place to meet new people and network, that's how a young designer describes the incubator where she kick-started her company

Two years ago 29-year-old Swedish designer Ibolya Vass took over a desk in an incubator for newly-established companies. Today her company is flourishing outside this protective environment, thanks, in no small part, to the network and business development tools that she acquired during her time in the incubator.

"In the Kronoberg incubator I got a cheap workplace amongst 15 other small companies. It turned out to be a fantastic place to meet new people and network," says Ibolya Vass.

Her company, Vass forms, specialises in designing logos, brochures, packaging, websites and products, including the designer's own jewellery collection: Memories of Sweden.

Incubator for promising start-ups

The Kronoberg Incubator (INK) in Småland, Sweden is a non-profit organisation that focuses on the most promising start-ups. The incubator screens entrepreneurial applicants before offering them a three-month stay in a pre-incubator where they are provided with business development support. After a subsequent quality assessment the companies with the greatest growth potential are welcomed into the incubator. For up to two years they receive financial advice and business development support, are invited to relevant workshops and included in the network.

Different types of companies

"At INK there were actually a lot of different types of companies, ranging right from graphic design and illustration to technol-

ogy and healthcare. The advantage was that I had the opportunity to acquire new skills and see things from a different point of view. There was only one other entrepreneur working within the area of product design. He'd had his company for a while and had a lot of customers. He was able to pass on work to me and he also gave me lots of help," recalls Ibolya Vass, who also found inspiration by observing the way the other companies operated.

My network is everything

Her time in INK gave the young designer the opportunity to extend her network, which, according to Ibolya Vass, is absolutely crucial to her company.




"My network is everything. When I'm developing new products I get tips and inspiration from my network, exchange ideas and share knowledge," says Ibolya Vass, who also finds partners for large scale projects from her network.

"I had planned to develop my company by taking on an employee, but it makes more sense to invite people from my network to help me solve specific tasks such as websites, copywriting and photography. I chose to run my own company because I wanted to go my own way and have the freedom to do what I'm best at. If I took on employees I'd have to find time to manage the staff, be in the office at particular times, and secure a pipeline of work to cover wages," points out the designer behind the one-woman company. www.vassform.com

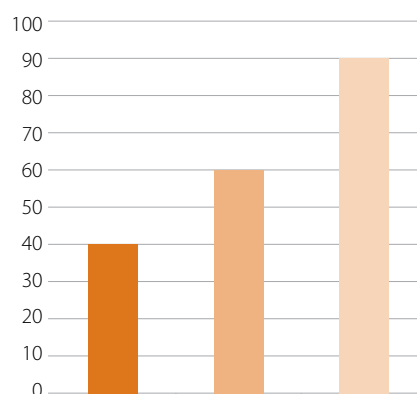


Photo: Tine Hvalby

Survival rate after 4 years

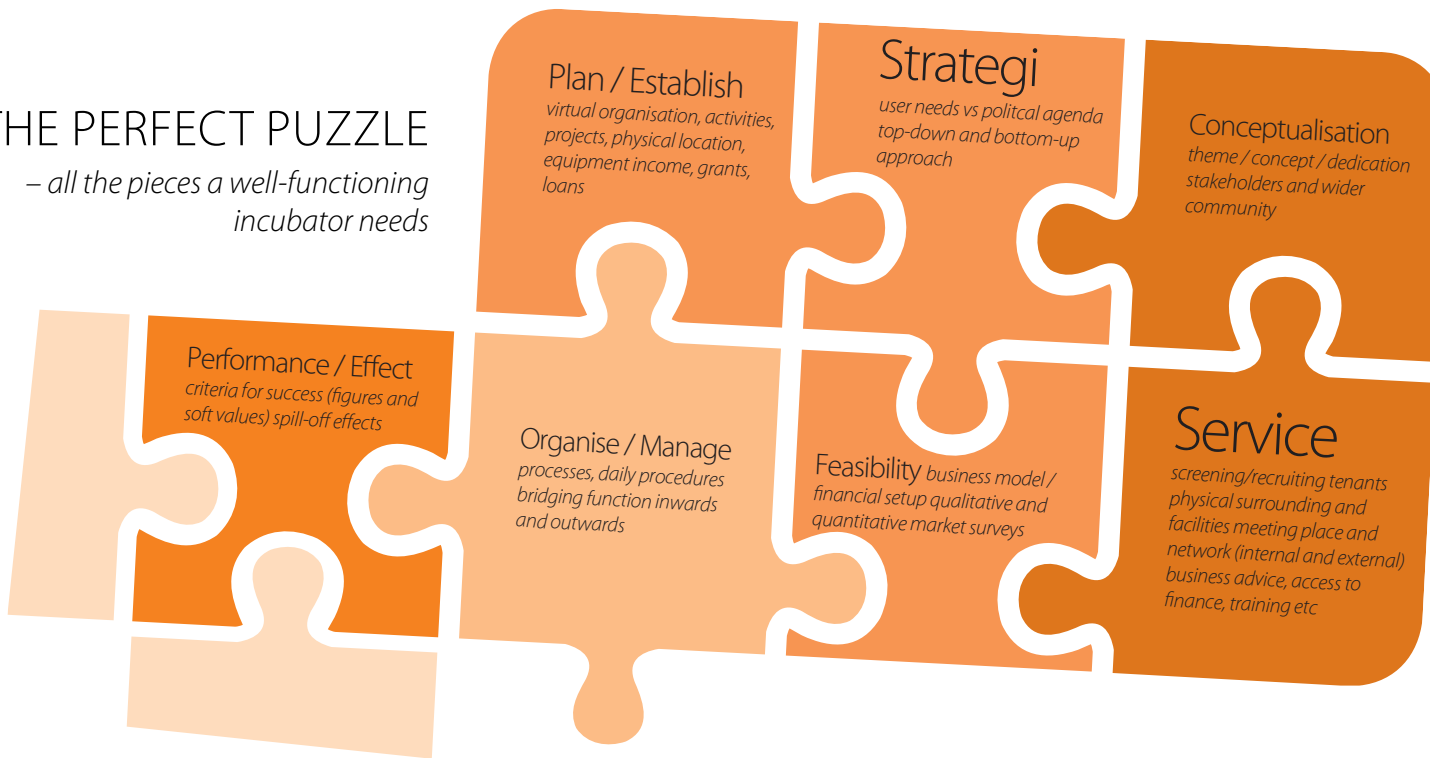
-  New companies that receive no advice and who don't stay in an incubator survive with 40% after 4 yrs
-  New companies that receive advice and who don't stay in an incubator survive with 60% after 4 yrs
-  New companies that receive advice and who stay in an incubator survive with 90% after 4 yrs

Source: <http://www.danskeudviklingsparker.dk>



THE PERFECT PUZZLE

– all the pieces a well-functioning incubator needs



facts



INCUBATION CENTRE FOR CREATIVE INDUSTRIES SCIENCE PARK – HUNGARY

Entrepreneurs and small IT companies benefit from the latest technology, a research environment and expert advice at The University of Debrecen. The centre brings the university into close contact with companies and promotes the use of academic knowledge in the commercial world, with significant knock-on effects for teaching and research. The centre is based in the University of Debrecen's Department for IT Research and Development. The expertise and contacts of the incubator and the university's IT faculty help companies find research partners as well as aiding their participation in European research programmes. www.dekiik.hu



KTC - LITHUANIA

KTC is a physical incubator located in Kaunas, Lithuania's second city. It's home to 64 companies that work in the fields of IT, mechatronics, publishing, marketing, technology and innovation. Amongst other things, the companies are provided with consultancy services, office space, secretarial assistance and conferences and workshops. KTC was founded by the Lithuanian Ministry of Economy and the Kaunas University of Technology. The incubator's mission is to stimulate the technological transference process from science to industry. www.ktc.lt



TIMISOARA SOFTWARE BUSINESS INCUBATOR - ROMANIA

Timișoara Software Business Incubator supports the development of sustainable and innovative business ideas and regional start-ups. As well as a physical site, the incubator provides a number of services including training sessions and promotional events (where a select team of companies represent the incubator in national and international fora) general entrepreneurial consultancy, legal and financial assistance and contact to educators, researchers and university students. www.it-incubator.biz



CEEI ASTURIA - SPAIN

CEEI is a Spanish technology and innovation incubator in the Asturias region that provides support for entrepreneurs. It provides start-ups with assistance from the earliest stages, through growth and consolidation including consultancy, training and access to finance such as the Asturian Business Angels Network- ASBAN.

From 2005 to 2010, CEEI Asturias has facilitated access to finance through the incubator to 130 business projects to a total value of 10,631,136.52 €. Innovation and technology-based projects received 75% of this funding. www.ceei.es



WE TECH OFF – ITALY

There are 52 companies attached to We Tech Off, an incubator whose objective is to strengthen and support innovation in the Italian region of Emilia-Romagna. We Tech Off is both a virtual incubator and a support programme with information antennas based at seven regional universities and research centres.

The centre provides finance, training, assistance in formulating business plans, fundraising services, business development assistance, hardware and software facilities and meeting rooms. We Tech Off works to a three stage model: pre-incubation, incubation and post-incubation. www.wetechoff.eu



OUT OF THE BLUE – SCOTLAND

Out of the Blue is a physical incubator for artists and creative companies in Edinburgh. Over 150 entrepreneurs in the incubator's two departments benefit from using studios of a range of different sizes, plus a meeting room, exhibition space and café. In addition, the incubator provides entrepreneurs with the opportunity to take part in workshops, receive consultancy and participate in a number of projects and art and culture events. Out of the Blue opens its doors on a daily basis in connection with youth employment projects, art classes (involving 5,500 participants annually), plays, festivals, art markets and exhibitions – and is thus thoroughly integrated in the local community. www.outoftheblue.org.uk

Two of Spinderihallerne's creative entrepreneurs meet up over lunch



1. Preparations for the exhibition "The Danish Design Award 2010/11". Spinderihallerne open their doors and invite interested parties inside to a number of exhibitions, events and conferences.

2. Jewelry, a collection in acrylic and print. Dea Simonsen, one of Spinderihallerne's creative entrepreneurs, has achieved considerable national and international success in high end designershops with her company "Umlaute Designbureau."

3. Small talk, professional consultancy and teamwork are all part of day-to-day life in studio G13, where Film Producer, Torsten Frøstrup (foreground) has his workplace. www.froestrups.dk

4. Headhunter Søren Bøge Sørensen, has chosen a workplace in the common room outside Spinderihallerne's studios.

Photos Tine Hvolby



ENTREPRENEURIAL INCUBATOR LIFTS THE CREATIVE SECTOR

In Spinderihallerne, a Danish incubator, entrepreneurial companies meet in a creative sector network. They meet around the lunch table, at workshops and as they work together on specific projects

The companies benefit from studios that are right next door to each other in the old factory building that for 100 years was home to a cotton mill, but now functions as an incubator for the creative industries. Behind the orange and green doors and in full view behind glass walls there are graphic designers, IT developers, product designers, journalists, animators and film producers – just a small selection of the 52 companies behind the desks in the 22 studios and open office environment.

Spinderihallerne, with its 13,000 sq. meters, is located in Vejle, a town of over 50,000 inhabitants in the south of Denmark. According to Manager of Spinderihallerne, Lene Lawaetz, it's a place where creative entrepreneurs can experiment and go new ways, and where knowledge institutions and public bodies can meet to drive business development.

Network and partner organisations

For a relatively low rent entrepreneurs get a workplace, colleagues to talk to, monthly entrepreneurial consultancy, mentoring, inspiration through talks and events, and, last but not least, access to a corporate and skills network.

"Originally, we planned Spinderihallerne as an environment for graphic designers, clothing designers, potters and industrial designers. But we now also house journalists and photographers, amongst others, and what characterises us today is the sheer variety of skills we have under one roof," says Lene Lawaetz. In her opinion, there's great strength in diversity.

"Something happens when you bring people with so many different backgrounds together in the same place. That diversity adds value to the individual company, and provides a network the company can draw on when tackling a project that requires a variety of skill sets. We're each other's network and partners," says Lene Lawaetz who feels that there's a need for small fast-moving creative companies that can rapidly adjust to new market conditions.

Bringing projects and companies together

Spinderihallerne not only aims to be a creative growth centre for new start-ups. It's also a place where start-ups can collaborate with established and conventional companies with a view to strengthening

competitiveness by focusing on design and creativity. Good design is increasingly the engine of both growth and innovation. The objective of Spinderihallerne is therefore also to create design-driven growth by linking creativity with traditional businesses and enhancing collaboration with other professions.

This is done through a variety of development projects. One of them is Designandelen (Designers' Cooperation) which sources development projects and matches them to companies that work together to carry out the job.

"We work constantly to bring the companies into play in a variety of ways. The local authority chose to place people here who's job it is to develop the sector and attract sizeable development projects which the companies can work on and tackle together," explains Lene Lawaetz.

Incubator and idea factory

Spinderihallerne is based in a municipality which has invested political capital in the cultural and creative industries. Lene Lawaetz is in no doubt that the decision by local politicians to establish an institution like Spinderihallerne attracts growth to the region.

"In time this place will become a major idea factory, and the creative ideas that come out of here will have a knock-on effect on local businesses. Traditional companies have to improve the way they develop their products. Some companies have closed down their product development departments as a consequence of the financial crisis. Other companies could just do with a breath of fresh air and some outside assistance. They can now tell their customers: 'My development department is the 52 companies in Spinderihallerne.' The fact that these companies have found a niche and can do business here shows that there's a need for creative companies that look at things in a different light and come up with innovative solutions," says Lene Lawaetz.

Creativity replaces machines

One of the driving forces behind Spinderihallerne, is Vejle's Head of Municipality Niels Ågesen. He's in no doubt that supporting the creative industry locally will pay dividends.

"Vejle is a town with a lot of history. It's an industrial town which has had a high proportion of manual workers. The transition from an industrial society to an information society and an experience-based economy where machines are replaced by creativity and ideas has meant that we've had to make a special effort to attract and support the creative class," he says, making the case for an entrepreneurial incubator for the creative sector.

"Our experience tells us that the people who run creative micro-companies want to achieve their professional goals whilst remaining small and flexible operators and working together in a network. If we can create the conditions to let that happen then that's fantastic," says Niels Ågesen.

Network – the key to success

Film Producer Torsten Frøstrup is just such an entrepreneur. He shares studio G13 with an architect, a graphic designer and a 3D visualisation designer. When the former advertising professional moved into Spinderihallerne just over a year ago he came from a permanent position and needed support and assistance to help him set up his own company. Since then, Torsten has expanded his customer base, and the incubator environment has played a significant role in helping him achieve that success:

"Spinderihallerne has made a huge difference and really helped me build a network in what for me is a new sector. We also benefit from each other's company in the studio. We exchange ideas and suggestions, both generally but also in relation to quite specific professional issues. Sometimes we can make use of each other's skill sets to tackle the projects we're working on. It's really fantastic having so many different types of companies working in one place. And it's in that crossover area between the different specialisations that new synergies really arise." www.spinderihallerne.dk

FACT *What is an incubator?*

Incubators provide business development programmes and services. Virtual business incubators provide these services off-site. A fully-fledged incubator, however, provides a physical focal point for networking and collaboration and covers a specific geographical area.

"Incubators for Creative Entrepreneurs – based on 27 case studies". Full report and study at www.creative-growth.eu.



A CREATIVE EUROPE

The creative sector has the potential to drive European growth if decision makers invest in incubators, entrepreneurial support and risk capital provision. That's the overall conclusion of three leading European creativity experts. In the following, they present their vision for a creative Europe.

Tobias Nielsen sees a future where Europe will continue to invest in museums, the performing arts and art to attract both the creative classes and tourists. A Europe in which creative companies will be part

of the process when major traditional industrial concerns develop new products that bring creativity and technology together.

Hasan Bakhshi's vision is of a Europe where technologies we can scarcely imagine will play an ever greater role in all aspects of our lives. And where Europe, with its strong cultural inheritance, has the opportunity to combine culture, aesthetics and technology. A process which in actual fact is already well under way. Just consider the artists who produce pictures on their iPads, and publish them free-floating both within and outside museums. Or the partially sighted who, at Tate Modern, can feel their way through an exhibition.



Anja Gram

According to Klaus Æ. Mogensen, open innovation in large online creative networks has a fantastic future. That's how the 3D printer was created, and that's how the innovative products and solutions of the future will be achieved across industries, research institutions, industrial companies, public sector organisations and boundaries.

Tobias Nielsen is the CEO of research-based consulting and publishing firm ONB Volante. He works with creative industry mapping, financial and management controls in creative SME's, the economic effects of live events and cultural and industrial policy.

Hasan Bakhshi is the Director of Creative Industries in NESTA's Policy & Research Unit. NESTA is the National Endowment for Science, Technology and the Arts in the UK. He is a leading creative industry policy researcher and also provides economic analysis support.

Klaus Æ. Mogensen is a futurist employed by the Copenhagen Institute for Future Studies. He is the editor and co-author of CIFS's book 'Creative Man' which deals with how and why creativity and innovation are becoming increasingly prevalent in all spheres of life.



FACT

Triple helix perspective

"Triple helix perspective," is the term for dialogue-based co-operation between society generally, research institutions and industry. The political contribution to such projects lies in providing direction, creating markets and starting programmes.

Research institutions contribute with research platforms and established joint projects. In turn, industry brings market-knowledge and co-financing to the table. A process is established in which one party's actions affect the behaviour and results of the other contributors. Design-Region Småland is just such a triple helix perspective project.

INTERNATIONAL COMPANY LOOKS FOR SMALL DESIGN COMPANY

“Kährs Design Studio is a design workshop and competition open to newly-established designers...”, read the invitation that the international wood flooring manufacturer issued from its headquarters in Småland, Sweden



A manufacturing company that last year generated a turnover of 143 million euros recently invited creative micro-companies to attend a design workshop that benefited both the young designers and the company. With 800 employees in 10 countries you'd think the company could come up with some ideas themselves. However, there are significant advantages to cooperating with small creative companies, as Assistant to the Managing Director in Kährs, Karin Lagerlöf, explains: “We wish to support young designers and design students in the region and to help maintain Småland's tradition for innovation and design.”

At the same time, Karin Lagerlöf is happy to acknowledge that the company also has a number of internal goals for the project. “The wood flooring industry is a highly traditional one. Kährs has existed since 1857, so it's a good opportunity for us to work with young people and to bring new knowledge and fresh ideas into the company. Plus, a project like this gives us a design network that can help us forge new contacts and make it easier for us to identify new business opportunities,” says Karin Lagerlöf.

The project may even result in the development of a whole new wood floor design.

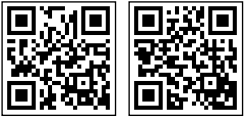
“We don't know what will come out of the project, but we're hoping that the young designers will develop new ideas for new wood flooring which we can turn into commercial products. Profitability isn't in itself a project goal but we are a company so of course we have to keep that in mind,” says Karin Lagerlöf.

Kährs Design Studio is part of a larger project in Design-Region Småland. According to Project Manager Anders Wisth, the project's goal is to strengthen Småland's position as a regional design centre.

“We are a regional design centre. We're a region with a lot of innovation; but it takes place in a variety of design areas. The project will help us promote cooperation between different design areas and between industry, young designers and universities, thereby consolidating Design-Region Småland,” he says.

The project's success criteria are: to make Design-Region Småland a recognised brand, to create a design network that spans companies, universities and participating local authorities, to establish 10 new regional design companies and to initiate 20 joint projects between companies during the project period.

For more information about Design-Region Småland see www.designregionsmaland.se



INNOVATION PROGRAMME BEHIND 100 NEW COMPANIES

More than 100 new high-knowledge companies have been founded in Emilié-Romagna in Italy since the Spinner programme took off in 2000.

The Spinner 2013 programme has been developed to promote the upgrading and qualification of people working in R&D, technology transfer and innovation and to create a community in which people are at the core of the innovation processes and the development of a new knowledge-based society.

The programme is dedicated to innovative business ideas, industrial research, technology transfer and organizational innovation activities in collaboration with universities, research centres and companies. It provides an integrated system of grants, opportunities and services. Through Spinner 2013, people with an innovative business idea, a technology transfer project or an organizational innovation project can completely dedicate themselves to the project over a defined period. This is possible because of the well-structured support path including financial support, budgets for specialized consultancy and project development guidance and assistance carried out on a day to day basis from the 11 Spinner Points, a network of information and assistance offices based in the main towns of the Emilia-Romagna region. Participants also benefit from the services of dedicated personnel.

And the programme has made a difference

Sustainable Design is an innovation project developed by a young designer and graduate of the School of Fine Arts in Bologna, Stefania Biagini, in cooperation with Grafiche dell'Artiere, an innovative typography company based in Bologna, Celery Design, an import design company based in Berkeley, USA and the Design Centre in Bologna. The Spinner 2013 programme has supported Stefania's project and her international travels, the goal of which were to transfer innovative design solutions to Grafiche dell'Artiere and produce new paper products using innovative and sustainable technologies. For more information see the report on "Education, Research and Industry Relations" at www.creative-growth.eu or www.spinner.it.



TRANSFERRING BUSINESS KNOWLEDGE TO INDUSTRY

The 2kt programme: Transferring Knowledge to Industry, has helped almost 170 Scottish SMEs increase their sales by around £1.5 million collectively since it was launched in 2007 at Edinburgh Napier and Queen Margaret University in Scotland.

2kt's main objectives are to help businesses in Scotland to fill their skills or knowledge gaps, access experts who can help take the business forward and find innovative solutions to help their business grow.

Through 2kt, businesses are offered a kick-off meeting with an SME/academic chaired by the 2kt team, a collaboration project definition, assistance in accessing collaboration project funding, application process assistance, contractual assistance and assistance during the start of their working relationship. In addition, 2kt provides access to the 2kt Innovation Fund which offers funding of up to £5000 to Scottish based SME's to support collaborative projects with 2kt academic partners and develop new products, processes or services that will benefit their businesses.

2kt receives funding support from the Scottish Government's Scottish Executive Expertise, Knowledge & Innovation Transfer programme (SEEKIT) the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and Scottish Enterprise (SE).

For more information see the report on "Education, Research and Industry Relations" at www.creative-growth.eu.



SPECIALISTS GET COMMERCIAL COMPETENCIES

Scientists and technology professionals get commercial and enterprise competencies through a successful programme at Escuela De Tecnólogos, a school of sales and commercial development, in the Asturias region of Spain.

The extensive training programme aims to improve the skills of technology professionals by focusing their activities on commercialisation, thereby helping technology professionals become more sales-oriented and creating a meeting point where students and business people can share experiences and propose and develop activities.

The programme responds to the needs of technology professionals. It provides assistance with sales and commercial activities relevant to technical products and services. It also helps provide local businesses with commercial consultants with a technical background.

Escuela De Tecnólogos shows how people with a specific professional profile such as scientists and technology professionals can be provided with commercial and enterprise competencies.

For more information see the report on "Education, Research and Industry Relations" at www.creative-growth.eu.

Using all your senses. A young designer takes his time studying and feeling the structure of the wood during a workshop at wooden floors manufacturer Kärhs.
Photo Tine Hvolby



Knowledge sharing can take you to the end of the rainbow

For Europe to achieve its innovation and growth ambitions decision makers must create further new opportunities for knowledge sharing between educational and research institutions and industry

The creative industry can innovate and generate European growth. Creative companies have the skills to provide solutions to significant energy, climate and welfare challenges. But these solutions don't and won't arise unaided. To unlock the creative industry's potential closer cooperation needs to be established between educational institutions, industrial companies and the creative industry. Knowledge and experience sharing can, for example, take place within the framework of development projects, programmes and networks. To deliver this, European decision makers must begin to take a long term approach to bringing educational and research institutions and industry closer together.

Management skills plus creativity

Creative entrepreneurs are experts in their fields. They may know everything there is to know about 3D-visualisation or furniture design but they don't know how to run a company. Small creative start-ups are normally one-man companies where the entrepreneur's interest is in generating sufficient

business to earn a decent monthly wage for themselves. They're looking to keep costs down rather than thinking of their activities from the standpoint of a growth company. That's why entrepreneurs don't invest capital or resources in training or management courses - or bother with interdisciplinary development projects. That's why Creative Growth's report: Education, Research and Industry Relations recommends, amongst other things, initiatives to encourage students in further education and creative industry professionals generally to develop their business and management skills.

Make industry part of higher education

Many creative sector training programmes don't prepare students sufficiently for a future as creative industry professionals, but instead promote old-fashioned myths such as: "you won't be able to make a living out of it." Higher education institutions need to learn to shake off these negative myths and to enter into closer dialogue with the creative industry. This could take the form, amongst other things, of employing creative industry professionals as educators or cooperating with companies on project tasks and apprenticeships.

Match researchers and creative entrepreneurs

Small creative companies often have limited research resources. However, if they have access, via programmes, development projects and networks to research institutions and research-based companies, research institutions and the creative sector can meet and develop new solutions together.

Mix creative and technological skills

Creative entrepreneurs have strong skill sets when it comes to identifying requirements and testing innovative new solutions and can therefore help companies develop new products and solutions that meet societal needs. However, only a few small creative companies also possess the technological skills required for product development. That's why it's important to help the creative industry and traditional industry meet to develop their skills via investments in development projects and programmes at both the regional and the EU level.

Invest political capital

The overall conclusion is thus that European decision makers need to recognise creativity as a source of innovation and development and to demonstrate readiness to support the development of the creative industry. Decision makers must target support programmes better so that they suit the needs of innovators in a sector dominated by one-man companies, micro-companies and freelancers. Further, investment is required in support networks that are designed with the needs of creative companies in mind. In addition, European decision makers are encouraged to work together to coordinate their efforts across different departments to the benefit of industry, culture and tourism. Because investing in rainbows pays off in the long term.

For more information see the report on "Education, Research and Industry Relations" at www.creative-growth.eu.

WE DON'T NEED TO BUY ADDITIONAL KNOWLEDGE

Instead of borrowing from the bank to fund the purchase of extra knowledge to develop a new institutional environment for 3-6 year-olds, creative entrepreneurs have contributed their ideas to a regional triple helix project where small creative companies, researchers and public bodies can share knowledge and exchange experiences

The 3-6 year-old children in southern Danish kindergarten, Den Sønderjyske Idrætsinstitution, now benefit from an even more inspiring play environment. In fact they've gained an entire experience room where they can hear some of the country's best storytellers, hide in a hidey-hole, play with play equipment or start the digital woodland backdrop and go for a walk. In fact, the children's imagination is almost the only limit when they're in modern playroom, MeeWeeRoom.

MeeWeeRoom was developed by creative company, Madsen'Hjernø, a company that specializes in bringing together storytelling, music and new digital media. In the triple helix project entitled Leg og Læring - Kids 'n' Tweens (Play and Learning - Kids 'n' Tweens) Madsen'Hjernø cooperated with an established play equipment manufacturer and regional research institution University College Lillebælt (UCL). The work, including the design and implementation of a prototype play room, was carried out at one of the university's own development laboratories.

And it's not just children who've benefited from the development project, at least not if you ask Jens Peter Madsen, one of the two project founders.

"By developing our original idea in cooperation with other project partners we gained additional knowledge and skills that help us understand children's motor development and play equipment safety without having to pay for it. That's a sig-

nificant advantage for a small company, especially in the current environment where banks are very reluctant to extend finance. Banks need security for almost anything, and when we're just at the idea stage we can't give them those sorts of guarantees. There's no way of knowing whether institutions will want to purchase our experience rooms before we've actually got one for them to look at. Now we actually have a prototype product we've come a big step further," says Jens Peter Madsen.

The region's growth council has provided the Leg og Læring - Kids 'n' Tweens project with support totalling 31 million DKK, and Regional Council Chairman Carl Holst firmly believes that their investment will bring dividends:

"Syddansk Vækstforum has invested in the project. By bringing a creative input into the process, companies and public bodies can add financial value." www.kidsntweens.dk.

Together we can make a difference

Cooperation and an interdisciplinary approach in formal networks are crucial if Europe is to gain full benefit from the creative sector

Networks for the town's artisans, the region's design companies and educational institutions or micro-companies in the media segment. Just three examples of formal networks which the creative sector needs, according to Creative Growth, in order to develop the industry with new products and new solutions to societal challenges.

A successful network is greater than the sum of its parts. When diverse creative minds are brought together in an environment that encourages mutual respect and active discourse thoughts can combine to produce ideas with enhanced strength and potential. Equally, the level-headed influence of informed network members can keep individuals' more esoteric ideas grounded and focused on commercial potential.

Networks need political support

In the creative industries networks are regarded as key tools for financial and developmental success. The revolution in communications technology and social networking has brought about dynamic changes in the way creative actors conduct their business, particularly in the areas of collaboration and marketing.

However, the spread of creative networks in the different regions varies from small local groups to large online communities whose members only know each other from cyberspace. In general, European decision makers are behind the curve when it comes to political and financial backing for network-creation in the creative sector. Networks don't just fund and run themselves, they have to be supported and assisted.

Creative industries' networks should, of course, inspire and encourage creativity. They are a catalyst for innovation in the art forms they represent. Equally importantly, they should promote enterprise.

How do networks work?

Surveys of various types of formalised creative industry networks and their effects are hard to come by. That's a problem if Europe is to increase its investments in the sector. The concept and practice of networking is well-established in other economic sectors. Although the aims may be the same, functions and processes are often different within the creative and cultural industries.

How do the many small companies in the creative industry affect networks' performance? Are physical or online networks best? What defines a well-functioning network? How does network participation affect the performance of creative companies? These and other related questions require thorough investigation so that that decision makers can make well-considered investments.

Networks need investment

In any event, an all-round policy that supports the creation of formalised networks within the creative industry is a must. Networks are often still run informally by industry associations whose focus is elsewhere without any form of centralised assistance.

But decision makers should recognise the value of networks as a creative industry growth tool and foster network formation in the creative sector.

By making funds, physical sites, IT development support, online network maintenance, best practice knowledge and activities available decision makers can play a crucial role.

It's time for governments to invest in high-quality broadband connections that can support larger and better functioning networks, and which, in time, will deliver significant financial and cultural benefits. It is to be hoped that policy makers recognise the social, economic and cultural value in the wide range of activities networking brings to the region.

For more information see the report on "Education, Research and Industry Relations" at www.creative-growth.eu.

"Networks don't just fund and run themselves, they have to be supported and assisted"





MORNING COFFEE IN AN ONLINE NETWORK

One of Scotland's significant online CCI networks, 38 Minutes was set up to bring together creative digital companies in Scotland and Northern Ireland and provide a platform for these companies to exchange ideas, advice, viewpoints and so on. It has become a successful method of showcasing and obtaining work for its 3000 members, mostly in Scotland and Northern Ireland. Members contribute blog posts and opinion columns covering the latest regional CCI developments. There are also job advertisements and vacancies, and information on training and workshop events. The network does not organise events, rather its strength lies in its role as a communication hub; many groups and subsets have formed after meeting on 38 Minutes. Of particular interest are the Glasgow and Edinburgh Coffee Mornings at which CCI participants meet up to discuss work opportunities, collaboration and so forth. These informal meetings have quickly become very popular, with around 150 members in each city. The coffee morning idea is a good one. It takes place when people are available before the working day begins and it's sociable and productive. As a result, these meetings have become one of the most important hubs for work opportunities and the exchange of ideas.

38minutes was created by UK broadcaster Channel 4 in 2009 to support its digital venture 4iP. 4iP was a ground-breaking £51m fund developed in partnership with regional development agencies to support digital projects in Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland and England.

38minutes is run by freelance writer and editor Nicola More. www.38minutes.co.uk



FROM SCOTLAND TO HUNGARY

The exchange of good networking practices at Creative Growth inspired a Hungarian company in the country's Észak-Alföld region to establish a Hungarian version of the Scottish network "38 minutes".

After hearing about the online network 38 minutes, marketing company Forensys Communication Ltd.'s Managing Director József Gonda, offered to create a network for entrepreneurs.

"We wanted to emphasize to other entrepreneurs that cooperation brings opportunities.

The concept was to develop a website with useful information regarding tenders, EU funds, development opportunities, creative sector trends and, of course, opportunities for cooperation. A site where small creative companies can introduce themselves and raise their profile. We want to build an effective network of local enterprises which can support each other in reaching their goals," says József Gonda.

And the Forensys Managing Director calls on policy makers to support networking in the creative sector:

"Lots of talented people and companies work in the region. They do their best in their respective fields, but to really succeed they need capital, information, space, administrative and management support, etc. A small company or a local community usually doesn't have all these resources. Policy makers should provide the creative sector with coordination and development assistance. In a competitive global marketplace no company can do it completely alone, not in Észak-Alföld nor in the rest of the world.

www.kreativregio.hu



MOTIVA

MOTIVA is a network in the Spanish region of Asturias run by the Advertising Graphics Department of the School of Art in Oviedo. The network promotes graphic design in Asturias across all sectors, including both public and private sector bodies.

Since 1997, MOTIVA has added value and gradually built a design culture in As-

turias, a region which did not previously have one. Today, 14 years later, Asturias has a prominent place on the Spanish design scene. Developments have been remarkable, whether you measure them in terms of the number of studios or the quality and quantity of the orders received. MOTIVA has been influential in design dissemination and in creating a market for design industries in Asturias and Spain. www.motiva2011.org



NETWORK CULTURAL FESTIVAL

Professional development, visibility and improved employment opportunities are the joint goals of the artists, artisans, institutions and organisations that make up Regionalt Kulturforum, a network in the town of Linköping in Östergötland, Sweden. The network, which is built on members' common interest in promoting local cultural initiatives, was the result of a ground-roots movement and was founded in 2007.

The network has generated a number of initiatives and events, however, one particularly visible highlight is the annual City Art Link Kulturfestival where volunteers, organisations and institutions exhibit local art and design to the public. Regionalt Kulturforum's aim in holding the festival is to boost cultural activities across the Östergötland region.

The network's members plan and prepare the festival in working groups. When City Art Link opens, art-and-crafts-interested members of the public of all ages can take the opportunity to experience exhibitions, trips, events and open workshops.

www.cityartlink.se



DEVELOPMENT AND VISIBILITY THROUGH ONLINE NETWORK PARTICIPATION

In Debrecen, Hungary, graphic arts professionals meet through the Ajtósi Dürer Graphic Artist Association network. It was founded in 2000, and has continued to grow ever since. The aim of the network is to maintain and sustain graphic arts standards locally in a region that already benefits from a strong graphic arts tradition. Festivals and exhibitions are organised on a regular basis showcasing members' work; in addition, the network has developed national and transnational partnerships reaching as far as Japan.

The network meets fortnightly to organise events and promote creative co-operation between members. Members also take part in seminars and deliver lectures to local university students. Furthermore, the network performs regular assessments of its activities through questionnaires and feedback, allowing network organisers to assess whether its aims are being achieved. The network is financed through public funds and fees from the 32 members.

Members recognise that the network has had an important impact on the development of graphic arts in the region through training, creative collaboration and awareness-raising. Marketing, artist exchanges and publicity have ensured that the region is recognised nationally and abroad. www.gade.hu



SPEED NETWORKING FOR COMPANIES

Create the Net, a speed networking event for established companies and start-ups within the creative sector, is just one of the activities promoted by CREATER, a support path specially dedicated to creative businesses from Italy's Emilia-Romagna region.

The support path provides a range of services including training, tutorship, specialised consultancy, the identification of strategic contacts and the organisation of networking events to 9 companies from the worlds of music, communication, film-making, fashion, design and architecture, amongst others.

CREATER's success can be ascribed to the networking activity that went into developing it. This took the form of collaboration with organisations dedicated to supporting creative businesses in other Creative Growth partner regions. Organisations from Emilia-Romagna have also collaborated both in the project's promotion and implementation phases, and selected creative companies have been able to network with other types of start-ups with complementary competences such as ICT companies and engineering companies. Creater is a Creative Growth pilot project. www.creative-growth.eu



MOVE YOUR OFFICE ACROSS EUROPE

International network Moving Offices is a pilot project within the Creative Growth project led by Spinderihallerne. Moving Offices allows entrepreneurs to swap offices with various different European incubators, providing them with access to international creative networks and environments. By moving office to a new location the creative entrepreneur has the opportunity to encounter new markets and learn new processes and methods from other like-minded entrepreneurs. Closer links between international incubators and the opportunity to share knowledge, experiences and skills are just some of the other benefits of the Moving Office programme. Creative Growth partners ensure that contact to national and regional incubators really puts them on the European map.

Graphic Designer Bo Virkelyst Jensen, who runs the one-man design studio add-Soul, recently moved his office for two weeks from the incubator Spinderihallerne in Denmark to a similar institution in Amsterdam.

"An international network can show you that the skills needed to address a specific problem may not be available just round the corner in your home country; you may have to look for help elsewhere. And, if you want to work with international clients the fact that you have an international network means that you can call a colleague in Amsterdam or Barcelona and hear about how they do things there," says Bo Virkelyst Jensen of his Moving Offices trial run.

www.creative-growth.eu



DESIGNERS CO-OPERATION

Designers' Cooperation is a network of almost 80 small design firms from across southern Denmark that works to strengthen the creative industries and increase the use of design. The aim is to help make design a part of Danish companies' business models and to generate competitive advantages. This is done by facilitating the use of design, connecting traditional firms with a wide range of regional design firms and showcasing the opportunities and advantages that companies gain from using design strategically.

The network provides members with matchmaking, business development, events and skills development, thereby ensuring that members stay ahead of design and innovation developments. www.designandelen.dk

CREATIVE GROWTH

PROJECT PARTNER PRESENTATIONS

SPINDERIHALLERNE CENTER FOR CULTURE AND BUSINESS, DENMARK

www.spinderihallerne.dk

Statement

As well as helping us reach an important international network of contacts. It has changed our policy focus and made us think more internationally in terms of the way we develop creative businesses and participate in regional and national debates. We've been inspired to further develop our Moving Office programme, to the benefit of our network of creative companies.

Activities

Mapping creative businesses in the region, holding a creative entrepreneur international conference, showcasing Spinderihallerne, developing communication materials and developing the Moving Office pilot project.

ÉSZAK-ALFÖLD REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT AGENCY, HUNGARY

www.eszakalfold.hu

Statement

Creative Growth mapping indicates that the Észak-Alföld Region is home to a large and growing number of creative industries. The project has helped us recognise the importance of the sector and its needs going forward.

Activities

We have mapped the creative sector in our region for the first time. We also worked closely with our partners in themed working groups and shared good practices. In addition, we have organised an inter-regional seminar in Debrecen at which we discussed clustering and cooperation in the creative sector.

ÖSTSAM REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL, SWEDEN

www.ostsam.se

Statement

Creative Growth has helped build our knowledge of possible next steps and actions that can strengthen the creative and cultural industries in our region – both at the strategic level and in terms of initiatives we can implement in the short term. Cooperating with a range of organisations from different regions has raised our awareness of the available options and inspired us.

Activities

The key activity we identified was exchanging experiences and good practise. Creative Growth provided a fantastic opportunity to learn from others and to get new perspectives on how to support and develop the creative sector.

TIMIS COUNTY COUNCIL, ROMANIA

www.cjtimis.ro

Statement

The project has confirmed Timis County Council's impression of the state of the local creative industries and allowed us to identify European solutions appropriate to the sector.

Activities

Our positive experiences with regional dissemination seminars in May 2010 and May 2011 have led us to make these a regular event. They will help us support creative activities locally and aid the dissemination of new initiatives.

CEEI ASTURIAS, SPAIN

www.ceei.es

Statement

Creative Growth has helped is to identify opportunities in a sector that has gained in visibility and to reinforce its potential for regional innovation-based economic development.

Activities

We have explored the pervasive influence of ICT in the sector and laid the foundations for a specific support programme based on the experiences of our international partners.

SOUTHERN SMÅLAND REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL, SWEDEN

www.rfss.se

Statement

The Creative Growth project has provided us with inspiration, excellent case studies and a European context. Plus, we've benefited from a number of contacts that have further developed our regional work and policies.

Activities:

We have participated in mapping, TWGs and an inter-regional seminar. All of which we've been able to combine with initiatives back in Sweden which we've financed by other means. One result of the TWG meetings is that our business support organization ALMI now works much more closely with the regional artist support organisation KC Syd.

RAM CENTRAL STARA PLANINA, BULGARIA

www.rso-csp.org

Statement

Creative Growth has helped add to our knowledge of the creative sector and the potential for European cooperation. We now have a great network to build on.

Activities

At Central Stara Planina we have learnt a lot from the Creative Growth project. We have benefited particularly from exchanging experiences with other regions, and have taken part in many interesting discussions.

SOUTH DENMARK EUROPEAN OFFICE, DENMARK

www.southdenmark.be

Statement

Creative Growth has provided us with an opportunity to showcase and promote South Denmark and project partner Spinderihallerne as a good practice case towards the European Commission and other regional offices in Brussels.

Activities

The South Denmark European Office has managed the successful implementation of Creative Growth dissemination activities, including liaising with similar projects and initiatives in Brussels.

KAUNAS REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT AGENCY, LITHUANIA

www.krda.lt

Statement

Mapping cultural industry activities in the Kaunas region has given us an excellent basis for understanding their current state. We have also used the recommendations we have received to help us formulate our current practice and future policy.

Activities

After mapping the sector, we considered the feasibility of developing creative industry clusters in the Kaunas region. We also formulated a regional activity plan aimed at boosting the creative and cultural sector.

ASTER S. CONS. P. A., ITALY

www.aster.it

Statement

Creative Growth has helped raise our awareness of the creative sector in our region. We've also benefited from the opportunity to hold a new high-visibility regional debate and create networking opportunities with key organisations.

Activities

Amongst other things, we have launched and effectively applied CREATER - Crescita cREATiva in Emilia-Romagna to a selection of companies; it's a specific support path for creative start-ups, defined with the support of both Creative Growth partners and local partners.

EDINBURGH NAPIER UNIVERSITY, SCOTLAND

www.napier.ac.uk

Statement

Creative Growth has helped us to identify opportunities in a sector that has gained in visibility and to reinforce its potential for regional innovation-based economic development.

Activities

We have explored the pervasive influence of ICT in the sector and laid the foundations for a specific support programme based on the experiences of our international partners.

IN A NUTSHELL

The Creative Sector is a key driver for economic development and growth. Strong support policies and business development mechanisms are a prerequisite for maximizing the business potential of the creative sector.

Creative Growth wants to support creative entrepreneurs in turning creativity into business.

Creative Growth provides decision-makers and implementers with evidence-based knowledge of the support policies and business support mechanisms that the creative sector needs to maximize its growth potential.

For more information about the Creative Growth project see: www.creative-growth.eu

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