b.creative

The global event for creative entrepreneurship

2 - 3 November 2016

Workshops reports

b.creative

b.creative - the global event for creative entrepreneurship - facilitates the convergence of various **artistic and creative competences, technical, scientific and entrepreneurial skills** in order to generate social and economic innovation. The event aims to influence policy makers and involve citizens to ensure that creative ideas permeate societal development.

b.creative addresses several issues:

- -The power of creativity in shaping tomorrow's social and economic innovation
- -The role of policies in enabling creative entrepreneurs to create wealth
- -The contribution of creative entrepreneurs to urban living and social cohesion
- -How to reconcile wealth creation with sustainability
- -The promotion of intercultural exchanges and cross-disciplinary activities

As part of b.creative, four workshops were organised to collectively discuss current challenges for entrepreneurs and develop policy recommendations. Those recommendations were presented the next day to representatives of the European Commission and of the Walloon region so they could take on board some ideas developed by the 200 international participants. This document sums up the main findings that were presented during b.creative.

The workshops focused on key topics for creative entrepreneurs, as identified in the initial needs assessment of the Creative Tracks project (click on workshop titles to read each specific section):

- o **Workshop 1: Stimulating cross-disciplinary innovation**
- o **Workshop 2: Making the most of international networking**
- o **Workshop 3: Branding and marketing**
- o **Workshop 4: Creative ecosystems**

1. Stimulating cross-disciplinary innovation

A. Introduction

Are problems more complex now, in the 21st Century? Or are we just more aware of the complexities due to new media and multi-faceted connectivity, or is it, as the Brexit vote proved, that people are increasingly mistrustful of the established sources of knowledge and power? Whatever the reason, we can acknowledge that solutions now rarely come from the traditional routes of experts and single expertise.
We call these "wicked" problems. This workshop looked at how we can design the optimum conditions to solve these wicked problems/complex issues.

At the heart of the workshop was the notion of the value of cross disciplinary working. However, it is not as simple as grasping a handful of people from different disciplines and putting them in a room.

The workshop focused on three key issues:

     1. Are problems more complex now in the 21st century?
     2. How do we solve "wicked issues?"
     3. How to best design cross disciplinary working?

The workshop was managed by **Rui Quinta** (Managing partner at **With Company)** and **Yvette Vaughan Jones** (CEO, **Visiting Arts**). It started with a Ninja imitation ice-breaker which set the right mood for open and participatory discussions.
The whole process was examined: "Designing the design process." 5 groups looked at 5 hypothetical complex problems and were asked to:

     1. Analyse the problem – what are the issues
     2. Look at what kind of space – how spaces define thinking processes
     3. Decide what should be the timeframe – optimum timescales for the process
     4. Outline the process - what needs to happen and in what order
     5. Create the team – and why we chose these people

The workshop then focused on two main questions:
     Why that team?
     Why will it work?

This process allowed people to explore in depth the problem-solving methods related to cross-disciplinary working, discovering what the methods are and how useful can be. The participants were then asked to propose recommendations to be applied in cross-disciplinary environments.

B. Main outcomes and recommendations

Why that team?

The exercise revealed that the cross-disciplinary method allows for the covering of a wide range of needs vital to problem-solving but also the clash of disciplines, the value of disruption and the vital need to move away from the comfort of familiarity.

The group identified that TEAM needs to have:
- Technical and service skills – need to know what and how things can be done
- Knowledge and expertise – need to have in depth local and general understanding of the issues – of the community as well as the specialist areas
- Diversity - age, culture, abilities – to cover different approaches and assumptions of the "user"
- Stakeholders – similar to the above but also to give voice to those with a stake in the project – citizens and various "representatives" – though this is problematic due to vested interests which may create biases.

In terms of people, the following profiles were identified:
- Researchers/academics – to provide the theoretical framework or create links with other good practice models
- Managerial/administrative/ facilities manager – ensuring the smooth running of the process
- Distributor – ensuring the process is linked into the bigger picture (debate about whether policy makers and funders should be there)
- Disrupter – artists and visionaries to tap into the emotional impacts and to create a different way of looking at things.
- Coach – facilitator for the team.

Small teams work better so there was a discussion about creating agile "living labs" or action research feeding into the core team.

Why will it work?

- Cross–fertilization – psychologist to work with engineers etc – learning from each other, recognising synergies and also stimulating creativity by stepping out of the comfort zone.
- Understanding the needs of people – the right space, the right support and the right time frame
- Care in the design of the process – Initial work on designing work process and subsequent iterations is instrumental to succeed.

2. Making the most of international networking for creative entrepreneurs

A. Introduction

International networking is a difficult process and aim for entrepreneurs as it requires complex tools. This workshop intended to explore this issue and, throughout its process, encourage participants to share their own experiences and perspectives.

This workshop also feeds directly into Creative Tracks main goal, which is to foster global cooperation between networks that support creative entrepreneurs.

Participants' profiles

Participants in the workshop came from diverse backgrounds and a general description of their profiles can be categorised as follows: Cluster; Cultural government; Choreography; Performing arts; Cultural network; Communication manager; Head of International Projects; ONG; Art Incubator; Art teacher; Visual artists; Creative Hubs manager; Music; Fashion; Photography.

Moderation and rapporteurs

The workshop was moderated by **Anne Gombault** (Professor of Organizational Behavior and Management and Head of the research cluster on Creative Industries, Culture, Sport at **Kedge Business School**).
The rapporteurs of the workshop were **Rui Monteiro** and **Ana Ribeiro** (Project Managers at **INOVA+** - Creative Tracks coordinator).

B. Methodology

The workshop followed the "World Café" methodology where participants were divided in small groups to answers simultaneously 3 questions each in a 30-minute round. The questions were the following:

1. Is sharing your experience on international networking useful to entrepreneurs? Yes/no? Why?
2. What services do creative entrepreneurs need from an international network?
3. How could public policies implement efficient international networks of creative entrepreneurs?

Approximately 30 participants took part.

C. Main points discussed and policy recommendations

Question 1 – Is sharing your experience on international networking useful to entrepreneurs? Yes/no? Why?

There were no negative responses. All participants said it was useful, in particular to improve:

- Diversity;
- Territorial promotion;
- Good practices;
- Finding new markets;
- International funding.

However a couple of challenges were pointed out:

- "Risk of no return": what do I get out of it?
- Increased complexity when going international;
- Involving all stakeholders, including artists: "not to leave anyone behind".

Question 2 – What services do creative entrepreneurs need from an international network?

The following service ideas were proposed:

- Access to funding (could be 3 levels: information, support to obtain funding and/or networks providing directly financial support);
- Important for networks to have dedicated facilitators (staff) to provide knowledgeable support to entrepreneurs;
- Provision of face-to-face events;
- Facilitation of resources (i.e. resource repository);
- Work/focus on specific themes / objectives / workgroups;

Participants also questioned whether there should be a different (specific) model for artistic international networking (as opposed to other sectors). There was no clear-cut answer, but participants understood that this merits proper reflection.

Question 3 – How could public policies implement efficient international networks of creative entrepreneurs?

The following policy recommendations could be extracted from this third and final question:

- **Sustainability:** to the importance of having a long-term strategy for cultural policy;
- **Bottom-up approach:** "policy makers should stop foreseeing the challenges that entrepreneurs are facing" (quoting one of the participants);
- **Evaluation:** the importance of encouraging increased accountability and transparency to decide on the projects that actually make an impact;
- **Operational level:** two other operational issues came up that require a European approach, namely
    i) visa support (i.e. regulations)
    ii) less complex applications for funding.

3. Branding and marketing

A. Introduction

This workshop focused on a very practical theme for creative entrepreneurs: Branding and Marketing. This is equally important for networks, non-profit organisations and individuals working in creative industries: branding and marketing are key to convey the messages and values of those different actors of the creative economy. The wide variety of participants and international representation at b.creative offers a particularly interesting ground to discuss these topics and cross perceptions from different backgrounds.

This workshop was articulated around a set of key practical questions for participants:

- how to target (and who)
- how to go about branding
- 360 degrees collaboration (holistic approach with user at the center)
- who are you?
- what do you do?
- defining 5 hashtags for your organisation

The relatively small group enabled a strongly participatory approach where each topic was discussed in smaller groups before sharing ideas and recommendations with all workshop participants. The workshop was led by **Georgia Taglietti** (head of marketing at **Sonar Festival**), with **Joana Fins Faria** (CEO of **ADDICT**, Portugal's agency for creative industries) supporting her as rapporteur.

B. Main outcomes

1. Who are you?

Branding and Marketing is first about identifying yourself, especially on digital services (digital ID of people and organisations).

This digitisation leads to a number of changes and key trends in how you define yourself for communication and marketing purposes:

- Widespread quantification and information available on your communication actions (number of likes, shares, etc.), including analytics software.
- New forms of communication through tags (anchors for communication & marketing) influence both corporate and personal communication. We are internalising tags and use them as part of our daily communication across all social media. Hashtags:
  - o Hyperlink content into values (keywords)
  - o New way to think and talk
  - o Sum up your values and digital identity

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- Pervasiveness of communication and marketing, including in private life due to digital ID and convergence of private/commercial communication channels: "Sell yourself and see if somebody buys it."

2. Key questions and tips

Given the practical nature of the workshop, it focused on advice and tips rather than policy recommendations. This workshop first sought to identify the biggest challenges facing participants, including:

- **Baseline:** do you already have a communication plan that you just need to follow?
- **Objective:** what do you want or expect in terms of business development?
- **Approach:** marketing and communication are more and more intermeshed. How to use marketing b2c b2b in this context?

This was the starting point to elaborate key communication messages through:

A) Defining what you do

- At individual level (brand persona): Ecosystem based on your personal social media presence. "If you are online you expect a reaction"
- At company level: creating a community around your company starts from the inside, so your staff should be involved in defining key communication messages: "create a community job, then you will create a community!" Doing a hashtag training session with your team can be a starting point for this.

B) Hashtags as a key towards successful communication

- A way to reorder your thinking and your organisation by concentrating on key messages
- The tags you choose describe your online identity
- Tags can be global, glocal, local, transnational, national depending on your target groups
- Geo tag is an option to associate city/place branding to your own communication
- The way you order tags is key and should reflect your priorities
- Learn from the digital world: feel the perception of the brand through trending tags
- Hashtags should not be too long
- e.g.: Sonar has 5 hashtags : #music #creativity #technology #business #barcelona

As a conclusion, participants were invited to define 5 Hashtags for the workshop (and much of this also applies to Creative Tracks): #sharing #knowledge #digital #communication #planning

4. Creative ecosystems

A. Introduction

This workshop gathered a diversity of participants (around 20 for each session):

- From all over Europe and from different continents, reflecting the worldwide dimension of b.creative.

- From all types of structures (people working in universities and other R&I structures, creative entrepreneurs, cities, creative hubs & clusters).

- Strong gender balance.

We sought to source key elements of creative ecosystems from this diversity and to answer some key questions such as: What defines a creative ecosystem? Why is a creative ecosystem desirable? What can be done to drive change in the place we live in?

This workshop took the form of an open discussion and exchange of views, moderated by **Sevdalina Voynova** (Director of programs at **Sofia Development Association**), with **Arthur Le Gall** (Senior consultant at **KEA**) as rapporteur.

B. Main outcomes

The discussions focused on the different elements constituting a creative ecosystem, stemming from participants' different backgrounds and local situations. Several components of a creative ecosystem were identified in the process:
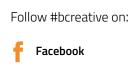
- People and more specifically creative talents are the cornerstone of any creative ecosystem. More importantly, they are nurtured locally through educational and lifelong learning structures.
- Places to experiment; to start your creative business; enable meetings and mingling of different communities; facilitate the free flow of ideas and bridge boundaries. Such places can be dedicated spaces such as creative hubs/districts, co-working spaces, etc., but also common public areas which mix people and skills.
- Strategies and policies that understand and value creativity. They are instrumental in fostering mutual understanding across all actors of the creative ecosystem.
- Openness and 'allowing to fail': embedding those values within the creative ecosystem to facilitate the emergence of new ideas and projects. This however raised the issue of a potential safety net: social inequalities can be a strong deterrent to risk-taking for some creative talents. Funds geared to prototype ideas, initiatives and projects could partly eliminate this hurdle.
- Connecting and networking to establish trust and develop partnerships, linking together the hotspots of creativity across the territory.
- Communicating creative ecosystems is essential both within the city to attract different

communities and people, but also internationally to promote and market your creative talents. In this regard, switching from competition to collaboration across ecosystems was stressed by several participants: connecting good examples and sharing initiatives should be encouraged as an alternative to cities competing between each other. A few EU projects such as Culture for cities and regions and the European Creative Hubs Network were flagged by participants as good examples, but international networking is more challenging.
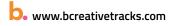
C. Policy recommendations

The workshop led to a set of recommendations for policy-makers, and more broadly for agents of change working towards a creative ecosystem. They touch upon different areas and levels of actions:

1. Stimulate creativity by streamlining interdisciplinary curricula across educational structures, including informal spaces such as creative hubs and lifelong learning schemes empowering students and co-curate programmes.

2. Enable risk-taking with targeted support for prototyping and experimental creative projects.

3. "Give a voice" to the creative sectors by promoting a middle ground to connect different layers of the ecosystem: from creative entrepreneurs to the policy level.

4. Facilitate the free-flow of ideas by supporting creative places (e.g: hubs, clusters, cultural centers).

5. Support bottom-up projects by acknowledging good initiatives stemming from your creative ecosystem: find and promote success stories.

6. Support connecting and networking across different sectors and skills.

7. Promote openness and mix different communities through mediators/brokers - people able to interact and mingle between different backgrounds and perspectives.

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