



VOICES OF CULTURE

Structured Dialogue between the European Commission and the cultural sector

DEVELOPING THE ENTREPRENEURIAL AND INNOVATION POTENTIAL OF THE CULTURAL AND CREATIVE SECTORS



Introduction

On 25/26 February 2016 a group of about 35 participants representing the creative and cultural sectors from the EU Member States gathered in Berlin to discuss “developing the entrepreneurial and innovation potential of the cultural and creative sectors”. The process formed part of a Structured Dialogue between the European Commission and the cultural sector under the banner ‘Voices of Culture’. The group then came together again in Brussels on 26 April to present the outcomes of this discussion to representatives of the European Commission.

This ‘Voices of Culture’ process was established to provide a framework for discussions between EU civil society stakeholders and the European Commission with regard to culture. Its main objective was to provide a channel for expert voices from the cultural and creative sectors in Europe to be heard by EU policy-makers. In addition, it aimed to strengthen the advocacy capacity of the cultural and creative sectors in policy debates at a European level, while encouraging it to work in a more collaborative way.

This document aims to capture the essence of this conversation and to set out the recommendations of the group. The expert group is keen point out that this document reflects the inputs of individuals and is by no means representative for the whole sector or even stands for a representational / elected body from the whole sector. The full list of the participants is contained at the end of the document.

Structure of the conversation

The initial conversation used a 'world café' model in which participants engaged in an open dialogue designed to define themes for further, more detailed, investigation. The group then broke into 5 themes based round the topics listed below. Participants were free to move between the groups, developing the discourse and bringing focus and challenge to the emergent ideas.

PART 1: DATA, EVALUATION AND STORYTELLING

PART 2: ENTREPRENEURSHIP: RAISON D'ÊTRE AND INNOVATION

PART 3: THE DIGITAL SHIFT: CONTENT AND INTERACTION

PART 4: SUPPORTING AND VALIDATING INDIVIDUALS, MICRO AND SMALL BUSINESSES

PART 5: FRAMEWORKS, HOLISTIC IMPLEMENTATION AND OPEN GOVERNANCE

Each theme group nominated individuals to provide a report back to the wider group. These reports were discussed further before being used as the basis for a written report that was pulled together by a nominated editorial group in advance of the second meeting in Brussels.

Structure of the following document

Following the presentation and debate with policy makers in Brussels the group decided to condense the full brain storming report to a short guide to address upcoming challenges, innovative topics and future governance in policies for CCS.

The document includes proposals for new analysis and new actions.

What did we find?

The story of growth misses the full value of CCS and contribution to society, especially in Europe with mass youth unemployment. We believe that CCS is a **corner stone for a new narrative of Europe**, which does not neglect growth, but is not limited to growth either. We need to ensure alternative stories of the (non-economic or not only economic) *value of cultural* and creative sectors are told and heard.

We believe that **businesses in the CCS have specific characteristics** that set them apart from other sectors; even within CCS sectors underlie diverse frameworks which also change from country to country. This needs to be tested and understood better. Only then policies will be appropriate for CCS, especially in supporting sustainability and resilience.

The **awareness of stakeholders** at an EU level has not developed as much as the awareness of the sectors themselves regarding the value they create and where this value accrues.

A major challenge for the whole sector is how to avoid generating more and more recommendations for policy instruments, when what is required is **new governance frameworks and new economic mindsets** to increase the entrepreneurial and innovation potentials of CCS.

Research and evaluation of culture and creative sectors (CCS) is regularly trapped in a self-fulfilling triangle of *data, stories* and *policies*. There is a recognition that each point on this triangle needs further analysis – the data is weak, the stories are out of date and the policies lack sophistication. We need to find the *appropriate indicators* and metrics for measuring cultural and social capital.

We need to fill in the *gap of qualitative methods* in research and end the methodological misbalance towards quantitative methods as a result of current ideology of growth.

If the CCS is considered as important as other economic sectors, this is not reflected in the allocation of research funding with the European Union and its Joint Research Centre.

To recommend policies for the future, it is necessary to diversify the current standard analysis and its assumptions used to explain the mindset and approach of this sector. The experts propose the **development of alternative premises to invent holistic, cross-sectorial and cross-national policies** to unleash the multi-dimensional potentials of cultural and creative private businesses and public institutions as well as individuals and networks.

The 4 new mindsets and standard stories.

- The Rapids of Cultural and Creative Data and Stories

„CCS support growth and innovation.“ This story generates political acceptance as it fits the baseline assumption of our time that growth is the fundament for social and cultural life. Subsequently data about growth and economic success is dominating the standard research as well. However the growth-only-story has been proven historically wrong; the pure focus on growth data seems more of an ideology to fit the story than reality. The experts embrace analysis based on an even-eye-level ecology of social, cultural and economic values and propose a new standard story of multi-dimensional development, including growth, but not limiting CCS potentials to growth. For this new standard mindset alternative, qualitative methods of evaluation and research must be implemented to make the holistic contribution of CCS to society as a whole visible - and testable!

- The Dynamic Cycles of Cultural and Creative Entrepreneurs

The cultural and creative entrepreneurs are acting in different economic spheres traditionally understood as the artistic & non business domain versus the less-artistic & enterprising domain. The traditional story assumes first a dichotomy between artistic thinking and industrial thinking and secondly that entrepreneurs are counted to one of these domains. The experts propose a new mindset: the entrepreneurship cycle in which the majority of CCS businesses are in a floating and dynamic relationship between artistic, non-business experimentation and the commercial market places. A one-person-company might cycle these domains back and forth many times in its business life, while a global player like Bertelsmann incorporates this domains in different departments simultaneously.

- The Culture Content Fountain of Digital Shifts

For the cultural and creative sectors it is the story of our times that new digital tools leads to new audiences and better performance. The experts advise to go beyond the instrumental use of digital tools, but to embrace the essence of the digital today: an enhanced transcultural and transnational interactivity for the whole of society. Interactivity is not new in history, but in former times it was limited by large investments necessary to over come national and cultural borders. Today interactivity is mainstream at almost zero costs accessible for all sectors of society. The experts propose as new standard story a concept beyond chronocentricity of digital technologies. This is a risk averse model to avoid the failures which lead to the ruin of big companies and economies.

- The Holistic Helicopter of CC Policy Frameworks

The traditional dichotomy between autonomy of culture and creativity and culture markets leads to the current standard model of policy making: the arts and culture being funded by culture ministries and the cultural markets being governed by economic ministries: silo identities of culture lead to silo policies for CCS. Finally these sector focused policies have not been without success either and thus have a simple and forceful legitimation – by success so far. At the verge of cultural and creative markets turning from nationally closed to globally open markets, only holistic policies can ensure future success. The expert thus recommend a new standard story for frameworks that envision the implementation of cross-polices, that is cross-sectorial as much as cross-national governance for holistic policies, and take in to account the needs of creatives beyond simple finance or funding.

What do we recommend?

Research

Strive to capture all the effects of CCS – economic, social and cultural impacts and their critical inter-dependencies.

Focus and support storytelling, deep interviews and witnesses becoming mainstream for evaluation – e.g. evaluating EU funded projects in CCS and the co-creation of data from within the sector.

Develop an appropriate *monitoring system for CCS* at the Joint Research Centre that goes beyond the focus of economic growth.

Establish agreed primary quantitative data about the CCS must be generated to establish a holistic research agenda for the CCS.

Invest in a better understanding of the use of open source/data/creative commons and its role in growing the CCS.

Link the experience to the analysis by incentivising exchange of knowledge and best practices within the CC sector.

Examine other sectors, such as the environmental sector, to compare policy and funding mechanisms.

Establish the ways in which culture and CCS can be incorporated into the widely used OECD's index on 'better life'.

Explore how to adopt an Erasmus+ funding model for Creative Europe.

Economy

Ensure support systems are in place to enable diversity of business size across the sector by focusing scaling up and start up strategies alike.

Continue to support the development of networks and hubs of activity and to analyse the value they generate and how they do it.

Encourage innovative methods of engagement of business with audiences and market in co-creation activities.

Support new business opportunities rising from digitisation for CCS and from digital innovations of CCS

Support and broker spillover effects of CCS to industry and society.

Support the development of holistic actions, tools and programs to support the CCS resilience in the above recommended new framework of the dynamic cycles entrepreneurship, including training and support networks.

Examine and develop methods to reduce the administrative work for micro and small organisations and free-lancers at regional, national and European levels.

Ensure labour legislation is not unfairly biased against women in a sector composed largely of freelancers; investigate what support may be needed for women to build and grow their business.

Encourage critical analysis of digitalisation.

Improve access to digital content in the creative industries; highlight the role of digitisation for historically marginalized groups.

Work to review and harmonise national issues regarding CCS measures in VAT, IP, employment.

Attract more venture capitalists for the cultural and creative sectors based on the tripple bottom line values of culture.

Support investment readiness of CCS and bridge investment gaps for cultural and creative businesses through new appropriate financial mechanisms (social enterprise models).

Re-focus all EU program desks, especially Creative Europe Desks to work with the principles of this document.

Education and Training

Enabling educators to help young people respond to professional as well as artistic challenges.

Challenge qualifications and assessment protocols that only assess individual production/performance through exploring group-based learning processes and accreditation – potentially on a trans-national level.

Encourage greater exchange between educators and creative professionals within and outside Europe.

Explore professional, not precarious models of apprenticeships and mentoring programs and support sharing best practice.

Support management and entrepreneurship skills for the cultural and creative sectors by methods fitting the specific cultural and creative values.

Supporting business development motivations at an early stage of cultural and creative education and/or career.

Improve cultural education at school under the digital premises.

Higher education needs to drive educational reform in CCS, industries and other parts of societies - especially by digital means.

Commission must encourage, promote and support more cross sector dialogue, increase engagement from people who are skilled in CCS and 'the digital'.

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

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