

Creative SpIN

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Creative SpIN – A creative way to support economic and social innovation (Issue 2)

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From creative cities to “la ville des possibles” – the contribution of culture and creative industries

A City of the Possible describes the next generation of creative cities which are able to set up an environment conducive to the emergence of new industries by fostering experimentation and cross-fertilisation between technical, commercial and creative competences.

Creative people are often brokers across disciplines whose skills and attitudes are conducive to creativity because of their ability to think laterally, and to express abstraction and symbolism. They are polymaths or interlopers.

Given the importance of technology in enabling expression in a digital world, artists and

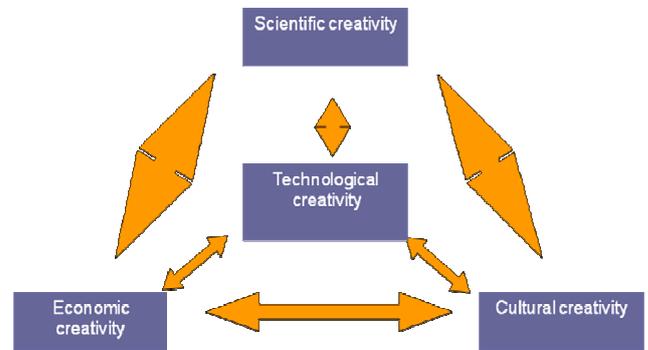
creative people are turning into polymaths, a person with varied knowledge and skills. Today, man’s capacity to mix technical and creative knowledge is an important skill. Art is increasingly conceived in conditions similar to a laboratory; contemporary creation is making use of new technologies (in fashion, performing arts, cinema, music, videogames, architecture, design). Computer animation requires both artistic and technical skills.

It requires knowledge in art, design and computer science. The frontiers between culture, business and technology are even more blurred. Designers work at the intersection of industry and culture. Technology is a tool for creative expression, for the representation of the symbolic, from the making of works of art to the sharing of creative expressions on the Internet.

Jak Ma the Alibaba Chairman says “Innovation of this industry is always from other industries. Stones from other mountains may serve to polish the jade of this one”.

Steve Jobs felt that the main challenge of the 21st Century was to marry creativity and technological innovation. In Apple’ genetics it is written that technology on its own is not sufficient and that the company’s strength lays in combining technology with human and artistic elements. Hence the Ipod and then the Ipad revolutionized access to music, films and publishing. The design was given precedent over engineering with aesthetic inspired by Eastern minimalism and calligraphy. The founder of Apple said: “I think that artists and engineers are alike: both of them have the desire to express themselves. Incredible artists such as Leonardo da Vinci or Michelangelo were also great scientists”.

Society increasingly recognises that creativity mixes elements of “artistic creativity”, “economic innovation” as well as “technological innovation”. Creativity is a process of interactions and spill-over effects between different innovative processes. Innovation cannot be encouraged without acknowledging the importance of culture-based creativity in the overall process.



La “Ville des Possibles” is characterized by:

- “Design thinking” in city planning and management to foster innovation.
- Support given to experimentation across disciplines and businesses to end the silo approach and enable cross-fertilisation between artistic, creative, technical and financial competences. It is about inter-clustering creative and technology or health parks to encourage spillovers.
- Entrusting artistic intervention in urban regeneration and planning.
- Mainstreaming culture policy in other policy fields (economy, innovation, education, urban planning).

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Creative SpIN is a network of 9 Cities, including Birmingham (Lead Partner) Rotterdam, Essen, Bologna, Tallinn, Mons, Kosice, Kortrijk and Obidos. The Cities will test how creative skills and competence can spillover to drive innovation in other key economic sectors. See: <http://urbact.eu/fr/projects/innovation-creativity/creativespin/homepage/>

URBACT is a European exchange and learning programme promoting sustainable urban development.

It enables cities to work together to develop solutions to major urban challenges, reaffirming the key role they play in facing increasingly complex societal challenges. It helps them to develop pragmatic solutions that are new and sustainable, and that integrate economic, social and environmental dimensions. It enables cities to share good practices and lessons learned with all professionals involved in urban policy throughout Europe. URBACT is 181 cities, 29 countries, and 5,000 active participants.

www.urbact.eu/project