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Member of the  
UNESCO Creative Cities  
Network since 2010



**Mittuniversitetet**  
MID SWEDEN UNIVERSITY

# Valuing and Evaluating Creativity for Sustainable Regional Development

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## Preface

### **VEC - Valuing and Evaluating Creativity for Sustainable Regional Development**

The City of Östersund joined the UNESCO Creative Cities Network (UCCN) as a city of gastronomy in 2010. The network is designed to share best practices and lessons learned among member cities in using the creative sectors to enhance employment, economic growth, and ultimately, to achieve a more sustainable and shared future.

The UCCN has identified the need for an on-going scientific platform to support a growing set of research, evaluation, and knowledge needs for the network. Therefore, with encouragement from UNESCO and UCCN member cities, Mid Sweden University is offering this scientific conference in conjunction with the 10<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the UCCN. This scientific conference, which is titled *VEC - Valuing and Evaluating Creativity for Sustainable Regional Development*, seeks to advance dialogue and catalyze action towards establishing a long-term scientific platform as called for by the UCCN. To do so, the conference invites and challenges leading social scientists, policy-makers, and practitioners to directly engage in the follow issues:

- What is the value of cities of culture, and how can this be evaluated?
- What is, and what should be, the relationships between cities of culture and their surrounding regions?
- How can the scientific community help develop guiding strategies and advance best practices for the UCCN?

The timing of this conference is important and responds to two significant global trends. First, as evidenced by the rapid expansion of the UCCN (the network is only 10 years old and now consist of 116 designated cities), there is a clear and growing demand for utilizing culture and creativity as a resource for sustainable development. Communities worldwide are now experimenting with culture and creativity-based approaches to innovate solutions to persistent societal challenges in new and exciting ways.

Such experimentation underscores the second global trend; namely, a growing demand to understand, evaluate, and share knowledge and experience about “what works”. For example, 2015 was declared the International Year of Evaluation and this declaration was endorsed by a wide range of United Nations agencies and program areas including UN-Habitat, UNDP, UNEG, and UNCDF, in order to “to prepare for the implementation of the new sustainable development agenda 2016-2030”. The UCCN, and the cultural and creative sectors more generally, can be an important part of this agenda.

Within this context, the 10<sup>th</sup> Annual UCCN Meeting and the associated VEC conference are mutually reinforcing events. Together these events aim to connect research and practice from global to local levels and highlight the potential of cultural and creativity to be key resources in the pursuit for a more sustainable world.

We hope this book of abstracts will serve as inspiration as well as a knowledge resource, while also facilitating long lasting exchanges between academics and practitioners.

11-14 September 2016, Östersund, Sweden

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Additional support for VEC has been provided by the following organizations:



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**What Makes a City of Culture? Global Examples  
from the UNESCO Creative Cities Network**

## **Strategies Showing Promise for Enhancing the Economic, Social, Cultural, and Environmental Development of Creative Cities and Regions**

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### **Manufacturing and Creativity**

The first aspect is related to the analysis of potential factors enhancing the economic development of the territory, which is the result of the fusion between traditional manufacturing industries and the cultural and creative industries. It is well known that the Marche Region is one of the regions with the largest number of manufacturing companies in Europe. However, during the last few years market evolution has caused profound changes in the regional production network and new analyses of local economic development are now needed. The typical structural weaknesses of the manufacturing system of the Marche Region are also commonly accepted: a production network essentially made up of small and very small companies, which operate in "mature" sectors that are not really keen on investing in research and development. Moreover, the few business relations that these companies have with other actors in the production chain are mainly based on strict subcontracting agreements. Nevertheless, the companies that have overcome difficulties better than others in the market are those that have undergone a paradigm shift. Such shifts involve the activation of development paths based on their capability to innovate products, processes, and organisational structures. These companies are also focused on quality, innovation, and creativity while having close links with the region, promoting local knowledge and protecting the environment and the production sites.

Some of the region's companies have been able to understand and act on these factors better than their competitors. These factors collectively constitute the cultural capital of the region and some companies have been able to integrate them into their design content, into a strong and recognizable brand name, and into their capabilities to incorporate their products with values, lifestyles, history, and tradition. In other words, these companies have been able to re-appropriate all of these competitive factors associated with the "Made in Italy" brand, which is in demand in the markets of both developed and emerging countries. It is this particular intertwining of elements that ensures the survival of the sector and since this theme is one that is closely connected to the fundamental principles on which the UNESCO Creative City Network (UCCN) is based, it seems worthwhile to develop this subject further from a scientific point of view.

### **From an Industrial City to a Creative city**

It is a matter, then, of looking more closely at the elements that characterize the shift from the post-industrial city to the creative city. Fabriano is an important case study in Italy of this phenomenon, and the UCCN has been dedicating research to the topic of "Culture for Sustainable City" in preparation for the Habitat III 2016 conference. Much of this research is focused on how innovation affects new policies for sustainable urban development.

In particular, the aim of this paper is to define how the culture and the creative sectors of the cities act on new policies for sustainable urban development. We want to highlight how the contemporary city contains many interconnected elements – elements that refer to historical and identity factors, to the impulse to innovate, to the presence and organisation of culture, and to the propensity for creativity. These factors promote new urban policies aimed at sustainable development, strategy, bottom-up participatory processes, as well as the search for new horizons. This represents a momentous change compared to the urban development planning of the past, which restricted itself to repeating transformations that had already occurred.

Comparing the experiences of many creative cities which have already taken a generational leap from the first phase (which is generally aimed at attracting knowledge workers), to the second phase (in which the town generates creativity, economic development and new partnerships between the public and the private sector), highlights the conditions that allow the creative economy to be an active force for urban regeneration: it acts upon the vital factors of the city, on its identity and human capital, and on new manufacturing and training structures. These cities can be called "creative fab cities", "Creative City 3.0" based on the 3Cs: Culture, Communication and Cooperation.

On-going global crisis and changes in urban policies in the age of continuous transitions force us to design and manage new cities and new, more creative, life cycles. Such cycles must act as engines for new urban policies that make it possible to overcome our current urban crisis – something that many cities are undergoing. While this is undoubtedly the result of the global economic crisis, the latter is not the only cause. The cities' structural crisis depends essentially on the shift from a post-industrial dimension to a new dimension: one that is already codified and that today we call "creative city". Some examples of changes in urban policies might include cities that make creative use of renewable energy and means of transport, that change the way public spaces are used, that once again become manufacturing centres and not merely centres that provide services. Other examples might also include cities that encourage new alliances between digital and physical dimensions, between informed decision-makers and active citizens.

### **Economic Measures of Creative Cities**

The third field of investigation involves conducting a more in-depth analysis and evaluating the benefits to local communities following UNESCO designation and UCCN membership. Once precise economic and social parameters on which the research is based and the criteria and scientific methodology to adopt have been



identified and defined, a group of cities (one for each category) will be selected and work will begin, in all likelihood, given the importance of the subject, with the support and assistance of UNESCO.

Universities of the countries involved could also be invited to take part in this project and they in turn could also grant scholarships for the research. An international scientific committee made up of members of the Fondazione Aristide Merloni and UNESCO will oversee and supervise all these various steps.

#### **Private Investment in the Cultural Sector**

An additional research sector is aimed at studying a technical proposal to encourage greater investments, in terms of both finance and time, of individuals in the cultural sector.

For example, the Art Bonus scheme, which has been recently launched by the Italian MIBACT (the Italian Ministry of Cultural Heritage and Activities and Tourism, which in Italy deals with cultural heritage and the protection and promotion of Entertainment, the Cinema, Museums and Tourism), is a starting point but additional schemes have to be implemented and employed as models for the UCCN. On this point, it is necessary to conduct research in order to identify precise elements regarding regulatory feasibility and financial sustainability.

#### **Scientific web platform**

The objective of this project is the connection between the cities of the UCCN through a web platform which allows these cities to share and discuss documents, proposals and outcomes of the forums held every year within the UCCN, including the Annual Meetings. The web platform will be accessed only by the member cities thanks to a user-friendly interface designed to share audio and video files.

Fabriano Creative City, together with the UCCN Steering Group, will be in charge of the management of the web platform. In this case as well, for the selection of the operators, in partnership with local universities, specific grants will be created for students of the Economics of Culture and Cultural Heritage.

The operators will be in charge of uploading documents and encouraging discussion on the items in the agenda, starting with the results of the last Annual Meetings.

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