

Strategies for Creative Spaces and Cities: Lessons Learned

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Research Team:

Cities Institute, London Metropolitan University
Graeme Evans
Jo Foord

Munk Centre for International Studies, University of Toronto
Meric S Gertler
Lori Tesolin
Sarah Weinstock

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1. INTRODUCTION

We are now in the creative age – a time when the generation of economic value in a growing number of sectors depends directly on the ability of firms to embed creativity and cultural content within the goods and services they produce.

Familiar goods such as clothing, furniture, and food products depend on creative and cultural content for their competitive success, and consumers are willing to pay higher prices for products that are well designed and culturally distinctive. Knowledge-intensive products such as computers, mobile communication devices, and biomedical technologies are born of the innovative spark of well educated, creative workers. They also exploit appealing and ingenious design to enhance their success in the marketplace. Furthermore, a set of creative industries producing ‘cultural goods’ – including film and television production, new media, electronic games, publishing, advertising, design, music, and the visual and performing arts – now generate a large and steadily increasing share of our international trade, employment, and gross domestic product, locally, regionally, and nationally.

Not only does the generation of economic value flow from this creative economy, but the people who work in creative occupations and industries are themselves drawn to places that offer a critical mass of creative and cultural activity, broadly defined. These are places where the arts flourish, with vibrant and lively local scenes in music, literature, theatre, and visual arts. They are cities that host cultural traditions from around the world. They welcome newcomers from a variety of ethnic, racial, religious, and national origins, and provide opportunities for their easy social and economic integration. They are also places that enshrine freedom of cultural expression, places that nurture the creative act.

These developments present London and Toronto with an enormous opportunity – an opportunity to nurture and use their impressive creative assets, securing their place among the world’s great creative cities.

Many cities around the globe have come to recognize the economic and social benefits that flow from the creative economy, and are now implementing aggressive policies to nurture and promote creative and cultural activity. In world cities like New York, Berlin, and Barcelona, and in smaller centres like Austin, Texas and Newcastle, UK, the development of the creative economy has become a strategic priority, and not only for generating wealth and employment opportunity. Creative and cultural activity enhances a city’s quality of place, helps to reclaim and revitalize neighbourhoods, enables more innovative thinking and problem-solving across all sectors of the economy, and shapes a city’s identity in the face of increasing competition for talent, investment, and recognition. Creative and cultural activity is also a powerful vehicle for community development and engagement, providing opportunities for economically disadvantaged neighbourhoods and social groups.

London has been at the forefront of creative city strategy development for the past several years. It has already undertaken an extensive planning exercise, based on broad consultation by the Mayor’s Commission on the Creative Industries that led to the production of a strategy document in 2003¹. This led to the creation of a new office within the London Development Agency, Creative London, to oversee the further refinement and implementation of a creative economy strategy for London. Its strategy recognizes the prominent role that creative industries and related activity play

¹ London Development Agency. 2003. *Creative London*. [Available at: www.creativelondon.org.uk/upload/pdf/Creative_Industries_Commission_Report.PDF]

in driving the London – and indeed, the entire UK – economy. It acknowledges the importance of London’s stock of talented, creative people working in a variety of knowledge-intensive and culturally based industries. It highlights London’s remarkable social diversity, which continues to expand thanks to the steady influx of talented people from across Europe and around the world. The London study also identified a number of key bottlenecks limiting the growth of its creative industries, including access to property on reasonable terms and negotiating those terms; access to markets, people, and industry information; lack of showcasing and international promotional opportunities; lack of start-up and Intellectual Property advice; and lack of seed capital and mentoring to guide businesses and help them become investment ready.

In the three years since the study was published, Creative London has led the process of promoting London’s creative industries. A major component of the strategy has been the establishment of ten ‘creative hubs’, network- and partnership-building organizations in areas of London that are home to major concentrations of the city’s creative businesses. Despite London’s many strengths, it continues to face a number of enduring challenges. While the creative economy has provided opportunity for many talented individuals, obstacles to full participation by all communities, no matter their social or economic characteristics, remain difficult to overcome. In one of the most expensive cities in Europe, income polarization and chronic social exclusion present major challenges for creative economy strategies. If London’s creative economy is to reach its full potential, it will need to find a way to employ these latent creative assets more fully.

Similarly, Toronto already has many of the critical ingredients required of a dynamic and globally successful creative city. Its unique assets include an enviable base of talented and creative workers, a level of cultural diversity unsurpassed by any other city in the world, and a strong reputation as a safe, socially harmonious city of liveable neighbourhoods. Its regional economy boasts a wide array of creative sectors that form the foundations of its economic base. Science-based creative sectors like biotechnology and biomedical technologies have taken root and, thanks to major new investments such as the MaRS Centre, are poised to play increasingly important roles as economic engines for the Toronto region. Recent investments in the city’s major cultural venues and institutions and a thriving grassroots arts and music scene are combining to create a ‘buzz’ about this region nationally and around the world.²

Despite these many enviable strengths, Toronto’s creative economy is now at a critical juncture in its evolution. Competition from other major cities around the world continues to escalate, as they take strategic steps to position themselves as creative economy leaders. Meanwhile, at home, cultural activity still struggles to attract the continuing financial and program support it requires to thrive. And while there is abundant evidence of innovation in many corners of the creative economy, the city lacks a region-wide, strategic approach to recognize, nurture, and scale up home-grown successes, while also building on best practices identified abroad.

The study from which this report emerges is a joint initiative between Toronto and London to:

- (i) identify international best practice in establishing and preserving creative spaces and stimulating the creative industries
- (ii) improve the delivery of creative economy strategies on a city-wide basis
- (iii) maximize the role of the creative economy in the competitiveness of both cities

London and Toronto share a number of common characteristics. Both cities have similar governance structures and grew their economies as centres of trade, later becoming major manufacturing and industrial centres. Today, both cities are successful centres for finance, media and creative industries, and specialised business services. The transformation of these economies

² See Quart, A. February 26, 2006. “Guided by (many, many) voices.” *New York Times Magazine*.

has also left behind underutilized, former industrial lands. As noted above, London and Toronto share levels of openness and social diversity that are extraordinarily high by world standards – a characteristic that presents both opportunities and challenges. Both cities have also engaged in major development projects and have prioritized creative industries as a focus for both local and regional development.

This report aims to distill the lessons learned from our joint study of strategies for building creative spaces and cities. It does so by presenting twelve key lessons common to many of the individual cases studied. Prior to enumerating these lessons, the following section briefly summarizes the methodology employed in our analysis.

2. METHODOLOGY

The Strategies for Creative Spaces and Cities Project, launched in December of 2004, was a collaborative undertaking between London and Toronto. The Toronto-based research was funded by the Ontario Ministries of Economic Development and Trade (now the Ministry of Research and Innovation), and Culture, as well as the Economic Development and Culture Sections of the City of Toronto. The London-based research for the project was funded by the London Development Agency. The cooperating research teams were led by Graeme Evans, Director of the Cities Institute, London Metropolitan University, and Meric Gertler, Co-Director of the Program on Globalization and Regional Innovation Systems in the Munk Centre for International Studies, University of Toronto.

The project has proceeded in three phases:

Phase I: Our goal here was to identify and evaluate the key levers used in cities around the world to nurture creative activity for economic and social benefits in cities. We gathered information based primarily on library and web research, and telephone interviews.³

Phase II: Here, we focused much more intensively on a small number of in-depth case studies. Our object was to analyze and evaluate the strategies pursued by six cities (London, Berlin, and Barcelona in Europe, Toronto, New York, and San Francisco in North America), to learn more about how these cities have grown their creative economies. We carried out site visits to five of these cities⁴, during which we conducted interviews with a wide range of policy makers, non-profit and community-based partnerships and organizations supporting creative industries, and cultural economy leaders.⁵

Phase III: The final phase of this project has focused on strategy development. In Toronto, the primary goal has been to develop the city's first comprehensive strategy to stimulate and support creative activity in Toronto and thus improve the city both economically and socially.⁶ In London, the emphasis has been on refining the existing strategy, and developing new initiatives to extend the implementation of the strategy in unexplored areas.

A novel feature of this project from a methodological point of view has been the central role played by London and Toronto Leadership Teams: groups of creative industry leaders drawn from the arts, education, non-profit, community-based, and business organizations in creative industries and the

³ The Phase I report is available at www.creativelondon.org.uk/server.php?show=nav.009004005.

⁴ Information for the San Francisco case study was gathered through library and web research, extensive telephone interviews with creative industry policy makers, and personal interviews with key creative economy leaders conducted at the Creative Places + Spaces II Conference in Toronto, October 2005.

⁵ The six case study reports are available at: www.utoronto.ca/progris/web_files/creativecities.

⁶ Gertler, M.S. et al. 2006. *Imagine a Toronto... Strategies for a Creative City*. Munk Centre for International Studies, University of Toronto [Available at www.utoronto.ca/progris/web_files/creativecities]

cultural economy. This team played a triple role as advisors, participants in the research discovery process, and collaborators in strategy development.

3. LESSONS LEARNED

3.1 PEOPLE

Lesson 1: Creativity-enhancing instruction and cultural activity in the public education system are vital to supporting the creative economy.

Providing school age children at all levels in the public education system with instruction in creative disciplines and exposure to cultural content serves a number of purposes:

- Trains future artists
- Produces future creative workers by introducing opportunities in creative disciplines as viable career paths
- Equalizes exposure to culture and creativity – without system-wide instruction in the public schools, only those who can afford extra-curricular lessons will be exposed
- Builds confidence in local cultural and creative talent
- Creates future cultural consumers with appreciation of the important role creative expression plays in the city.

Cutbacks in the public education system often impact creative curriculum most severely, as these disciplines are perceived by decision-makers as less important than other topics. Visual and performing arts education, music, creative writing, and libraries in the school system must be seen as more than mere ‘frills’. In today’s creative economy they are as important as science and math in improving our aggregate productivity and innovative capability.

Introducing creativity to children through the public education system and community programs also goes beyond instruction in creative disciplines. Training future artists and opening this career path for youth is essential; however, the more general goal of teaching all young people (including those who will not pursue creative careers) to think creatively is also important. Being able to problem-solve, ‘think outside the box’, and come up with creative solutions to society’s challenges will allow the future workforce in Toronto, London, and elsewhere to add value in all industries and professions throughout the economy.

Cautionary Tale – The potential results of ignoring this lesson are evident in the San Francisco Bay Area and the specific case of Cultural Initiatives Silicon Valley (CISV). CISV is an organization aiming to restore creative curriculum that has suffered from decades-old budget cuts in the California schools. A survey of residents in Silicon Valley identified the poor state of arts-based education as an issue of great concern. It was determined that 75 percent of the population – many of whom work in high-tech industries – engaged in some kind of creative activity, and wanted their children to learn creatively as well. Clearly, Silicon Valley residents recognized the value of and the need for creative curriculum in the public school system. To address these concerns, CISV established the Creative Education Program to train teachers to deliver arts curriculum, and to provide grants and technical assistance to create, improve, or expand arts education programs in schools. Seed funding for this program comes from the family foundations established by some of Silicon Valley’s technology giants. California’s experience confirms that long-term neglect of arts

education in public schools weakens a city's attractiveness to highly-educated workers with school-age children – and the firms that employ them – an important lesson for both London and Toronto.⁷

Lesson 2: Cultural and creativity-based programs offer an effective way to address social exclusion and community renewal.

In addition to the fundamental role that public education can play in imparting critical creative skills, it is equally clear that cultural and creativity-based community programs at the neighbourhood level are a primary tool for addressing social exclusion. This kind of activity can provide access to new career opportunities and trajectories, build self-esteem, and broader social understanding by enabling self-expression through various creative media, teach life skills, provide safe activities for youth, and build neighbourhood awareness. Our study of a number of projects that are successfully engaging in cultural and creativity-based community development demonstrated the benefits of supporting creative activity in this way.

In Berlin, Neighbourhood Management initiatives have been established within the framework of the *Socially Integrative City*, initiated by the federal and regional governments. In 17 neighbourhoods with residents ranging from 4,500 to 24,000 people, over 2,000 projects have been established in Berlin over a five-year period. Many of these district projects focus on developing creative potential, establishing and strengthening a sense of identity, and image improvement, learning, and communication. This cultural development initiative has reduced the number of pupils dropping-out and improved individual achievements in school in these areas. The number of social aid recipients has also declined, while the number of jobseekers entering the labour market has increased. Not only have the quality of life and the perceived feeling of security in the participating areas increased, but recorded crime has also declined.⁸

The Point Community Development Corporation in New York City is another compelling example of this type of creative community programming linked to local economic development. The Point used the creative heritage of the Bronx (a neighbourhood better known for poverty, crime, poor schools, and inadequate housing) to catalyze community development by encouraging youth to engage in artistic and entrepreneurial activities. The Point has identified the talent and aspirations of local residents as the area's greatest assets and offers programs to develop that talent in music, dance, photography, theatre, fashion, and other disciplines. Enterprise and community development activities are connected to the artistic programs as small businesses and non-profit organizations are incubated and as the Point works on projects dealing with local issues such as transportation, pollution, open space, and environmental stewardship.⁹

Another instructive example is the *Fresh Arts* program, an 'Arts and Culture Job Strategy' operating in Toronto in the early 1990s. *Fresh Arts* hired youth (primarily from the First Nations, Asian, and Black communities) over the summer to work on creative projects. Funded through provincial employment strategy programs, its aim was to provide opportunities for young people to gain artistic and administrative skills while paying them a salary. By connecting with artistic resources in the city (e.g. recording studios, professional artists), the program allowed youth to acquire experience in all aspects of the creative process in seven artistic disciplines. The *Fresh Arts* program is an example of a community creativity-based program that successfully developed youth skills in a supportive environment. Many successful musicians on Toronto's current urban music scene, including Kardinal Offishall, Motion, and Jelleestone, participated in this program while growing up in

⁷ For more information, please see www.ci-sv.org.

⁸ Senate. April 6, 2004. *Quattiersmanagement Bewaehrt sich als Instrument zur Aufwertung und stabilisierung von Stadtquartieren*, Senatssitzung. Berlin.

⁹ For more information, please see www.thepoint.org.

marginalized Toronto communities. In the context of recent gun violence in Toronto, these artists have pointed to programs like Fresh Arts as providing a venue that could support and foster their creative energy in a positive and constructive environment.¹⁰

Addressing creativity-based economic development at the neighbourhood level (in a way that complements policy-making and program implementation at a higher, city-wide level) ensures that all social groups have access to appropriate creative programs. Neighbourhood resources, such as community centres and arts organizations, have a unique perspective on local needs and issues and are often already linking creativity-based programming with area regeneration. Scaling-up such activities to enable other areas of the city-region to develop similar capabilities represents an effective strategy for addressing the kind of social polarization that has emerged in both London and Toronto in recent years. London has already taken steps to follow this principle with its Creative Hub Strategy (please see Lesson 12 for further discussion).

Lesson 3: The grassroots level is the source for much creative talent.

“If you dig deep at the grassroots level, you will find creative gold.”

Explicitly stated by a member of the Strategies for Creative Cities London Team, this lesson recognizes that some of the most forward-looking creative work occurs at the grassroots level, where ideas can flourish, experiments can take place, and creative activity is less constrained by institutional bureaucracy and market imperatives. As previously mentioned, neighbourhood-level and other grassroots organizations understand the context within which their communities exist. Such organizations not only respond more effectively to local needs than larger, top-down structures, but can also better focus and connect community resources to enable latent talent.

When developing strategies to advance the creativity agenda, cities such as Toronto and London must find ways to balance support for major cultural institutions and grassroots, neighbourhood-level creative initiatives. Toronto’s current ‘cultural renaissance,’ with the recent renovation and reconstruction of physical infrastructure to house its major cultural institutions provides a good example for discussion. A combination of public and private (philanthropic) investment has dedicated over a billion dollars to refurbish or rebuild these institutions through the creation of spectacular cultural projects across the city. The Canadian Opera Company, the National Ballet School, the Toronto International Film Festival, and Soulpepper Theatre all have (or will have) new homes, while the Royal Ontario Museum, the Art Gallery of Ontario, the Royal Conservatory of Music, and the Gardiner Museum of Ceramics are expanding or renovating.

Yet, Toronto must remember that its cultural renaissance was occurring, under the radar, long before such major capital injections into cultural organizations were ever announced. Districts like Queen Street West have been hubs of creative activity for decades. From television and music venues to fashion businesses to art galleries, vibrant arts and culture has transformed this strip in a continuous westward creative wave. In fact, protection of the creative heritage of this district from real estate market forces is currently being led by a grassroots organization of local citizens and artists called Active18.¹¹

Our research has highlighted a very successful creative talent development initiative in Toronto’s Regent Park, Canada’s largest and oldest public housing development. Regent Park Focus is a

¹⁰ CBC Radio, December 31, 2005. Kardinal Offishall Interview on *Big City, Small World* and January 6, 2006. Jelleestone Interview on *Here and Now*.

¹¹ Active 18 is a citizen, resident and business-owner association of the City of Toronto’s Ward 18. Information can be found at the official Active18 website: www.active18.org.

non-profit organization that was established in 1991. Led by Adonis Huggins, Regent Park Focus uses instruction in multiple media to engage youth to realize their creative expression. With its radio station, newspaper, photography program, music studio, and film and video program, Regent Park Focus teaches creative skills to youth, skills that include broadcasting, DJing, writing, editing, audio production, filmmaking, photography, and desktop publishing. Through these media, youth have an opportunity to express themselves creatively, find their voice on community issues, and gain valuable experience for future work in the media industry. Successful 'alumni' often go on to teach courses in the program, continuing to engage with their peers and local issues.¹²

Large cultural institutions will always be important elements of a city's creative fabric, drawing tourists, showcasing the highest calibre of talent, and serving as important economic anchors for a wide range of specialized suppliers in the city-region. But they are only one of many platforms through which individuals access or participate in creative activity. Unfortunately, such access is often limited due to language, income, or other social or economic barriers, and only a limited number of artists will ever have the opportunity to train for and participate in the performances and exhibitions sponsored by major cultural institutions. As Richard Florida advised Toronto: "you've got to play in the big leagues...but the mistake would be to put big institutions before actual artists," and as a recent commentary concluded: "it's not about buildings, it's about human content."¹³

Cities must also remember not to 'put all of their eggs in one basket'. Large institutions fare well during times of economic growth and stability; however, such institutions are equally vulnerable to the negative effects of unexpected events such as terrorism, health scares (e.g. SARS) or a general slow-down in the economy. There is a risk of the over-supply of arts and entertainment venues/seats, and under-capacity in original content and productions. Strong grassroots organizations and activity happening on the ground, across many districts and disciplines, provide economic diversity within the creative sector, not to mention a creative pool of individuals from which major institutions can draw. Grassroots organizations provide numerous mechanisms to unlock the creative potential of a city's varied population. Initiatives happening on the ground can help to give a city its diverse energy and buzz.

Lesson 4: Impressive projects often emerge from the visionary leadership of individuals or small groups of artists.

Our research revealed that it is often visionary individuals who kick-start and realize creative projects that eventually create wider economic and social benefits for a city.

The artists' studio organization SPACE was formed in London in 1968 by visual artists Bridget Riley and Peter Sedgley after visiting artists' spaces in New York. They realized that the old docks and the wasteland of empty warehouses on the South Bank of the Thames might offer a solution to the lack of affordable studios for professional visual artists in the city. A three-year lease on warehouses in St. Katharine's Dock was secured and the group of interested artists grew to 100, with applications from several countries. Almost overnight, the organization developed a waiting list of 200. This experiment is now seen as a pivotal point in contemporary British art and urban development, and the model was copied and adapted around the world, inspiring ACME in London (see Lesson 7 below), PS1 in New York, and WASPS in Glasgow.

SPACE vacated St. Katharine's Dock in 1970 when the building was redeveloped, and leased Martello Street Studios in London Fields and Stepney Green, in East London. This was the first of

¹² For more information, please see www.catchdaflava.com.

¹³ Ross, V. April 15, 2006. "Renaissance City: The billion-dollar baby." *Globe and Mail*. Toronto.

over 70 diverse buildings, varying in size from 1,000 ft² to 25,000 ft², which SPACE leased from both private and statutory sector landlords. SPACE now has 1,600 artists on its waiting list:

"The good health of so much of English art owes a debt to the efforts of SPACE studios."
Sir Anthony Caro, 1993.¹⁴

Examples from Toronto include Margaret Zeidler's redevelopment of 401 Richmond and 215 Spadina (through her company, urbanspace Property Group), which turned these buildings into co-location facilities for creative micro-enterprises and socially oriented organizations. Individual initiative has also been the driving force behind the renovation and rejuvenation of important cultural spaces such as the Gladstone Hotel (the Zeidler family) and Camera Bar (Atom Egoyan and Hussain Amarshi) on Queen Street West, which now provide new venues for artistic expression and cultural events.

In Brooklyn, Harvey Lichtenstein stands out for his achievements, first in turning the Brooklyn Academy of Music (BAM) into a first-class performing arts centre and then, after 'retiring', working to realize his vision of a cultural district in downtown Brooklyn. This vision has resulted in a \$650 million project, being carried out by the BAM Local Development Corporation and the City of New York, to convert currently vacant and underutilized properties into affordable, appropriate space for non-profit arts organizations. These facilities will be accompanied by diverse arts programming, mixed-income housing, arts- and culture-related educational facilities, and amenities such as restaurants, retail, cafes, and public spaces, to make up the BAM Cultural District.¹⁵

One of the key urban and cultural developments in post-reunification Berlin has been the emergence of new hybrid cultural as well as entrepreneurial agents, so-called *culturepreneurs*. Germany's new capital has been suffering under continuous socio-economic crises requiring a *new entrepreneurship*, individualized marketing strategies, and the skilful transition from unemployment to self-employment in cultural production. Declining financial support from the government forced many artists and designers to open up their professional practice to corporate firms, new forms of project-based cooperation as well as specific spatial practices in order to economically, culturally and socially sustain their target markets.¹⁶ These groups have provided the foundation for Berlin's dynamic creative and club 'scenes', and a critical mass of creative talent. For example, the Kircher-Burkhardt newspaper design and corporate publishing company was established in Berlin in 2000, relocating from Hamburg. The owner admitted: "I needed the best people in the field and they would only work for me if I was in Berlin". The firm's sales have increased five-fold over the past two years.¹⁷

Brazil has a dynamic artist, renowned singer-songwriter, Gilberto Gil, as its Minister for Culture. In 2004, Gil launched a joint initiative of the Brazilian government and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) to set up an International Forum on Creative Industries. The Forum focused on the role that creative industries can play in economic development practices in developing countries and reflected Gil's view that this dynamic sector provides "a singular opportunity for developing countries to establish new economic and trading relations". Creative industries can allow developing countries to use their rich supply of creativity to generate employment and reduce poverty. Forum activities have led to the establishment of an *International Centre for Creative Industries*, which will continue to explore the potential development benefits of the creative economy. Potential functions of the Centre, which will be based in Brazil and

¹⁴ For more information, please see www.spacestudios.org.uk/about/history.asp.

¹⁵ For more information, please see www.bamculturaldistrict.com.

¹⁶ Lange, B. 2005. "Socio-spatial strategies of culturalpreneurs. The example of Berlin and its new professional scenes." *Zeitschrift für Wirtschaftsgeographie*. Jg.49, heft 2: 79-96.

¹⁷ Benoit, B. February 2, 2006. "Berlin cool comes in from the cold." *Financial Times*. London.

operational in 2006, include serving as a knowledge bank of best practices for creative industry development, thematic research, capacity-building and training, public-private partnerships, and advocacy.¹⁸ Gilberto Gil also acts as a visionary in creative economy development in his activities regarding intellectual property. He visited London in early 2006 to sign the Royal Society of the Arts' (RSA) *Adelphi Charter on Creativity, Innovation and Intellectual Property*¹⁹, which calls on governments to restrain corporations from further locking down their ownership of ideas. The campaign encompasses everything from the music industry's stance on downloading to the recent efforts of one agribusiness firm to patent basmati rice, and then charge Indian farmers for the privilege of growing it.²⁰

Clearly, the visionaries described here do not work alone and a vast number of people have helped to realize their ideas. However, understanding that the spark for innovative, beneficial creative projects often comes from inventive individuals willing to take risks, and that a city's environment can either enable or suppress such vision, is an important lesson. Cities must create an environment that celebrates risk-taking to reap the rewards that such visionaries can bring. This lesson is particularly relevant for Toronto, which has a history of being risk-averse.

3.2 ENTERPRISE & INNOVATION

Lesson 5: Business support for creative enterprise is an essential component of building a city's creative economy.

To capture the full economic potential of the creative industries, specialized business support is critically important. Creative businesses survive and perform best when provided with business support services that address their unique needs.

Those starting and running creative businesses often lack entrepreneurial 'know-how' and require specialized business skills and support. Traditional business support may not be appropriate as creative entrepreneurs have needs that differ from those in other sectors. Also, within the creative industries, business types vary widely in size (from the self-employed to firms with many employees), needs, sector focus, audience, and goods produced. For example, the kind of support appropriate for a 'designer-maker' business will differ greatly from support for a film company. This type of specialized support can include (but is not limited to) business planning, training to deal with potential investors, marketing and export development, access to shared equipment and overhead services, and mentoring by successful creative entrepreneurs.

A number of programs in Europe serve these support needs:

- In Glasgow, Scotland, **Ideasmart** supports cutting-edge commercial ideas in creative industries. Based on early intervention, the project offers incubation grants (£2-15k), advice, and mentoring for high-risk creative projects with commercial potential that are unlikely to get alternative investment. Continued support and advice is a critical factor and Ideasmart brokers

¹⁸ UNCTAD. August 2004. *Minister Gilberto Gil Launches Joint UNCTAD – Brazilian Government Initiative on Creative Industries*. Press Release. [Available at: www.unctad.org/Templates/webflyer.asp?docid=5218&intltemID=1634&lang=1]. UNCTAD. May 2005. *Progress Made on Setting Up International Centre on Creative Industries*. Press Release. [Available at: www.unctad.org/Templates/webflyer.asp?docid=5218&intltemID=1634&lang=1].

¹⁹ For more information, please see www.adelphicharter.org.

²⁰ Burkeman, O. October 14, 2005. "Minister of Counterculture." *The Guardian*. London. [Available at : <http://technology.guardian.co.uk/news/story/0,16559,1592359,00.html>]

contact between the creative enterprise and those (in other business support agencies or the commercial sector) who can help solve specific creative or business problems.²¹

- The **Glasgow Film Office (GFO)** recognizes that production and service/facilities companies need to be of a sufficient scale to sustain growth and development of the city's film sector. GFO works with individual firms that have demonstrated high growth potential by accessing appropriate grants and loans from the public and private sectors to implement business strategies, and by offering mentoring advice aimed at tackling barriers to growth. Since experienced crews are a key marketing tool for the promotion of Glasgow as a production base, GFO also offers financial support to local freelance crew members wishing to enhance their knowledge and skills base through recognized training courses.
- **Barcelona Activa** is the Local Development Agency of Barcelona City Council. It provides incubator facilities and enterprise support to micro-enterprises including creative industry firms. Services include enterprise start-up/creation, business development and growth support, training/mentoring, and incubator workspace provision. Over 60 percent of coached business start-ups are transformed into companies in one year, each creating 2.3 jobs on average. The first year after a three-year incubation period, 92 percent are still operating, with average employment increasing to 2.6. In 2003, 1,414 jobs were created with 84 percent of post-incubation companies still active in their fourth year.²²

This lesson is particularly relevant for Toronto, as the UK has an established track record of providing this type of support through intermediary organizations. In several UK cities, specialist creative industry development agencies (CIDAs) have been servicing cultural organizations and creative enterprises, while sectoral and showcasing agencies have targeted creative market and production clusters, such as the London Fashion Forum, Fashion Capital, and Hidden Art.

However, it is important to note that even the long-established creative and cultural enterprise support organizations continue to be dependent upon subsidy through local, regional, and European regeneration funding. These have not generally developed an independent economic model, despite working with self-supporting small enterprises (but who have been unable or unwilling to pay the full economic cost of support provided). Traditional enterprise and business membership structures (e.g. Chambers of Commerce) have not emerged, although entrepreneurial activity and a mixed-economy have expanded their remit and resource base. Other enterprise development models that seek to be more business cluster-led include City Growth Strategies, currently being piloted in the UK, including several that are creative industry based²³; and Business Improvement Districts/Areas (BIDs/BIAs), again piloted in London, based on models first developed in Canada (Toronto, Vancouver) and in the USA (e.g. Brooklyn).

Lesson 6: Convergence centres can address many creative sector needs

Linking and connecting creative practitioners facing similar challenges can allow them to learn from each other, break down barriers between different scales of enterprise, organizations, and sectors, and stimulate further creative innovation and subsequent economic gains. Convergence centres can address these barriers by enabling the co-location of various organizations and individuals

²¹ For more information, please see www.ideasmart.org.

²² Barcelona Activa. 2006. *The Role of Entrepreneurship and Innovation*. For more information, please see: www.barcelonactiva.es.

²³ For more information, please see the Strategies for Creative Cities London Case Study [Available at: www.utoronto.ca/progris/web_files/creativecities]

working in different but related sectors, fostering unplanned 'collisions' that inspire new processes, ideas, products, and companies. Such environments foster collaboration among different sectors and encourage firms to think creatively.

It is important to have a diversity and scale of uses within these creative spaces (for-profit and not-for-profit, manufacturing/production, design, management, service delivery, financing bodies, etc.) as well as a flexible infrastructure that can respond to new ideas, opportunities, and developments. This can happen successfully in a convergence centre, if the right mix is achieved. One way to achieve the necessary diversity is to rent space at different prices, according to ability to pay. Flexible rents can accommodate a more diverse range of creative tenants that bring ideas, energy, and innovative spark to these environments.

Our research has uncovered a rich vein of evidence demonstrating the successes arising from this type of convergence through projects such as:

- **401 Richmond** - a development in Toronto, referred to above, that co-locates creative producers and micro-enterprises, combining market and affordable rental spaces with common areas such as a café, a roof garden, and an early learning centre, all in downtown Toronto. It stands out as an example of an innovative development that was led by a private-sector champion. Its tenants cover a wide range of creative activities, including visual artists and photographers, new media firms, graphic designers, architects, musicians, dance and theatre companies, galleries, film makers, magazine publishers, artisans, management consultants, and a variety of socially or environmentally oriented non-governmental organizations.
- **Innovation Centre, Central St Martin's College of Art & Design** (University of the Arts London) – with Higher Education Innovation (HEIF) and LDA capital funding. This newly-built centre provides space and co-locational synergies through three programs. 'Research, Innovation, Enterprise' provides business development on topics such as consultancy, merchandising, research, licensing, spin-out companies, etc. Research into such diverse design applications as 'design against crime', urban design, and 'smart textiles' influences the development of the design industry. The Design Laboratory acts as a bridge between education and the commercial arena for graduates of Central St. Martin's. This design studio provides architectural, interior, and graphics design consultancy for clients worldwide as recent graduates gain real world experience. The Creative DNA Think Tank brings multi-disciplinary experts together for discussions on issues such as 'cognition and creativity', 'intelligent tools', and 'sensory design'.²⁴
- **Kulturo** is a creative industries incubation, investor readiness, and investment vehicle for Turku Science Park in south-west Finland. The science park offers over 200,000 m² of space and specialist services for graduates from the three local universities. The scheme operates as a not-for-profit limited company, 96 percent owned by the City of Turku and 4 percent by the private sector. The Kulturo approach is to establish a comprehensive investment support and development service to creative businesses, combining specialist support, advice, investment, and workspace. This 'investment tube' cradles a start-up until it has the capacity and commercial partners to go it alone. 40-60 creative businesses are targeted each year; after three to four years, 90 percent attract further investment and continue to grow. Kulturo takes a value-chain perspective that stretches beyond these enterprises and connects them

²⁴ For more information, please see www.csm.arts.ac.uk/csm_design_laboratory.htm.

with other business sectors, instead of viewing the creative development of content as an isolated process and, therefore, inherently high-risk.²⁵

- **MaRS** is a convergence and innovation centre in downtown Toronto that fosters collaboration between the communities of science, business, and finance through physical co-location, and more broadly through structured networks and the MaRS web portal. MaRS creates an environment that enables a number of emerging companies to access risk capital, management resources, strategic business tools, and global markets. It provides communal gathering spaces and organizes events for tenants and outside parties, networking opportunities, mentoring programs, expert resources, and a conference and meeting facility. MaRS' outreach also bridges the gap between art and science by hosting music and film festivals, art exhibits, and book readings, in addition to collaborating with the Design Exchange and the Ontario College of Art and Design on unique design and visualization initiatives. MaRS has created an environment where new ideas can emerge, by enabling meetings without over-engineering the process – an approach called 'structured serendipity' by CEO Ilse Treurnicht.

Major design and showcasing facilities are also being developed at the scale of entire neighbourhoods in cities that are integrating area regeneration with creative production, R&D, and higher education in one site.

- Barcelona is embarking on a major regeneration project **Parc Barcelona Media “@22”**, a joint venture between developer MediaComplex, the University Pompeu Fabra (UPF), and the City of Barcelona. The Park complex will draw together dissemination, production, and education initiatives within the digital/audiovisual industry. The development covers over 22 hectares of industrial land, and aims to provide 100,000 new and relocated jobs located in over 220,000m² of new facilities, as well as public exhibition, meeting, and recreational space. Based in the former industrial/manufacturing district of Poble Nou, the project seeks to build a state-of-the-art facility for digital media industries, thereby creating an international centre of excellence for digital media start-ups and enterprise. The project aims to strengthen production, creative, and research/R&D activity, and to establish Barcelona as the media centre for southern Europe.
- **MediaCity, Berlin**, located in Adlershof, known as Europe's most modern technology park, MediaCity comprises 20 hectares of production facilities, hosting over 130 companies and 2,400 staff and freelance workers. Over 90 percent of the companies located at MediaCity cooperate with at least one partner, and 60 percent with three or more partners, on site. Humboldt University relocated its science departments to the area, plus a new audio-visual and IT centre with university and incubation/enterprise facilities, adding to the partners available for on-site synergies. Adlershof, which has been recently reconstructed, cleaned up, and planned as a City of Science, Technology, and Media, has become a 'city within a city', with hotels, restaurants, shopping centres, GP surgeries, kindergartens, a golf course, tennis courts, cafés, bars, and coffee shops, attracting new residents and workers to the area.²⁶
- In Milan, where design showcasing and production are linked through regional polycentric grids of independent producers, designers, and retail/wholesale activity, trade exhibition sites

²⁵ NESTA. 2005. *Creating Value: How the UK can invest in new creative businesses*. London: National Endowment for Education, Science and the Arts.

²⁶ For more information, please see: www.adlershof.de/index.php?id=stadt&L=14.

have undergone a massive expansion and concentration. They now play host to the leading international fairs in furniture, fashion, and textiles. New showcasing and convergence centres are planned in the city: **Fashion City**, a joint higher education (three university/polytechnic institutions), industry, and city development; and a **World Jewellery Centre** bringing together production, education, and training facilities, with showcasing and retail opportunities on single sites - both designed by star architects. The Jewellery Centre will be located in the Portello industrial district, formerly occupied by the Alfa Romeo factory complex, in an urban park of 90,000 m². These ambitious, large-scale developments form part of an urban renaissance which is promoted by a unique partnership between the city, Lombardy regional government and the FieraMilano exhibition company.²⁷

- In Helsinki, **Arabianranta Art and Design City** is a major innovative public-private collaborative brownfield/waterfront redevelopment on a site formerly dominated by the *Arabia china* factory. The development will focus on the interdependence of art, design, and technology in business, education, and community development. The project includes new infrastructural investment in units for creative/technology/knowledge enterprise development (6,000 workspaces, an enterprise incubator, network and business development resources), as well as homes (8,000 live/work spaces, student accommodation, and apartments for 'knowledge' and 'creative' workers). Close ties between local, creative/technology-based small and medium-sized enterprises and major companies has been built into the development of the neighbourhood through a pioneering 'virtual village' (developed and implemented by a consortium of telecommunications companies). This 'virtual village' provides high speed wireless connections for every business and home, fostering business-to-business connection, networking, local knowledge, and involvement. The relocation of the University of Arts and Design (in 1987) with its community of students and related creative enterprises provided a critical anchor for Arabianranta. Other creative establishments have followed (Pop and Jazz Conservatory, the AV-Communications Faculty of the Helsinki City College of Technology, and a Swedish cultural academy, as well as a primary school and other facilities). A percent for art scheme in new build development has been used to develop local talent and showcase local design, architecture, and art in the new neighbourhood.²⁸ The aim is to create "the leading geographical centre of art and design in the Baltic area" between the years 2005-2010.²⁹

3.3 SPACE

Lesson 7: Affordable space for creative activity and enterprise is a consistent and enduring issue.

Artists and other creative people are routinely priced out of areas that become popular due to the very creative activity that they helped generate. As they are displaced, their ability to continue to engage in creative activity in a setting that supports close interaction with their peers and local clientele is threatened. An extreme example of this is evident in New York City, where Manhattan's escalating rents and property costs have led to a severe shortage of affordable space, causing a shift in the city's creative centre of gravity to other boroughs.

²⁷ City of Milan, Lombardy Regional Government, Milan Chamber of Commerce, Milan Fiera Foundation. 2005. *Milan and Lombardy. The revival of the future.*

²⁸ For more information, please see www.helsinkivirtualvillage.fi/Resource.phx/adc/inenglish/index.htx.

²⁹ Solitander, N. 2005. *In the Search for an Ecology of Knowledge. The Finnish design cluster in the age of austerity.* Finland: Corporate Geography/ Dept. of Marketing, Swedish School of Economics and Business Administration.

The New York example is particularly well illustrated by the Greenpoint neighbourhood in Brooklyn, where the area's zoning recently changed from industrial to mixed-use (including residential). This new zoning has resulted in a rush by developers to convert buildings in this traditional manufacturing community into high-priced residential units. Furniture-makers, set-designers, woodworkers, and other small creative manufacturing businesses traditionally located in the area are no longer able to afford space locally. In addition, they can no longer find long-term leases for industrial space. Stable lease agreements are vitally important to these creative manufacturers as it is extremely expensive for them to move their operations to different locations. The Greenpoint Manufacturing and Design Centre (GMDC) – New York's only non-profit industrial developer – is one of the only places left in the newly zoned area where these creative businesses can be guaranteed long-term and affordable leases in the area.³⁰

This example demonstrates the importance of employing non-market solutions to protect affordable space for creative enterprise (see Lesson 8 below for further discussion of this theme). As these creative manufacturers are forced out of Brooklyn, and often out of New York completely, the city loses access to a ready supply of these specialized products, the high-quality employment, incomes, and purchasing associated with these businesses, and the very activity that made the area desirable in the first place.

At the opposite end of the spectrum is Berlin, a city with a wealth of affordable and available space for working, living, performing, and displaying that is drawing creative talent from across Europe and around the world (including New York). This abundance of space is due to speculative overbuilding during the 1990s that flooded the market with office, commercial, and residential development. It remains to be seen whether this space will be protected for creative uses when local property market conditions tighten up in the future. As rents rise, even Berlin will require some form of non-market intervention to preserve affordable space for artists and other creative producers in the central city. Under current market conditions, a number of organizations have emerged to fill empty spaces with resident and local creative enterprise. For example, the cultural quarters project of 'Boxion' re-uses empty shops around Boxhagener Place, Kreuzberg in order to provide artists and other creatives the opportunity to use and animate them as exhibition and communication space.³¹

Organizations providing affordable creative space include ACME (the largest artists' studio and live-work provider in the UK), a charity and registered housing association that supports practicing artists with low-cost studio and living accommodation. It has assisted over 5,000 artists, with over 20 ex-industrial buildings converted and sub-divided into self-contained, modular, serviced shell studio units. These include former meat pie, cosmetics, and cigarette factories.

In Berlin, Künstlerhaus Bethanien was founded in 1974 in the former Home and Hospital building. The project provides 25 studios, three exhibition studios, and a media lab, with the goal of supporting contemporary artists. It provides accommodation and support for international artists, representing one of the largest establishments among international residency programs. The artists sponsored by this initiative receive a monthly allowance throughout a 12-month period. In addition, the foundation pays their studio costs, provides a lump sum for materials and funds a documentation of their final project. The same building also houses the district's art council, a music school, and several other community organizations. Berlin's free higher education system (in contrast to fees imposed elsewhere in Germany and in England) also encourages students and talented artists to study and continue their creative practice in the city.³²

³⁰ For more information, please see www.gmdconline.org.

³¹ For more information, please see www.boxion.de.

³² For more information, please see: www.bethanien.de.

International artists studio residencies are also provided at the Hangar Arts Centre in Barcelona's Poble Nou district, while in Norway, lifelong living grants are available to selected artists (worth c.£14,000 p.a.) until state pension age.

Similarly, the work of Toronto's pioneering creative space developers, such as Artscape and urbanspace Property Group (401 Richmond), offer a much-needed refuge for creative practitioners facing escalating prices of the property market. However, the years-long waiting lists for these affordable spaces speak to the urgent need for much more accessible and workable space for artists.³³

The link between creativity and space is strong. Affordable, suitable space is crucial to attracting and retaining creative talent and allowing it to run successful creative businesses. Moreover, affordable space must be available on long-term leases to ensure stability and thus the survival of certain creative businesses. Not only do creative practitioners need space to live, to work, to display, and to inspire, but a city's spaces – natural and built – house, inspire, and express its collective creativity. This latter idea is discussed at greater length below.

Lesson 8: The most effective way to ensure access to affordable creative space on a long-term basis is by securing ownership of buildings.

As suggested above, successful initiatives to protect affordable spaces for creative practitioners always involve some form of non-market solution. Our research shows consistently that this is most effectively achieved when cities find ways to secure the ownership of buildings in public or non-profit hands. For example, the LDA maintains ownership of capital assets to protect them from market forces, which has been successful in developing creative hubs by stabilizing property costs through the public purchase of facilities for creative industries and individual practitioners.

In Toronto, Artscape is a non-profit enterprise that has acquired and redeveloped six buildings to provide affordable, secure space for creative communities. These multi-tenant arts use buildings offer 187,000 square feet of affordable space, including artist work studios, live/work studios, rehearsal space, office space for non-profit creative organizations (theatre and dance companies, art service organizations, galleries), a recording studio, and galleries.³⁴

In London, ACME (see Lesson 7 above) received an award of £2 million from the Arts Council under its Grants for the Arts Capital program (National Lottery Arts funded). The resulting long-term development program will provide up to 400 new studios within ten years. This will double the supply of studios in London and increase ACME's stock to 850 units. Previous Lottery awards enabled ACME to purchase the freehold of existing leased buildings in east London, providing assets against which secured loans could be used to finance further acquisitions. The Castle House project in Southwark, south-east London is a new-build ACME studio space which will provide 50 affordable and accessible studios as part of a larger commercial housing development. The studio site was made affordable by the use of 'planning gain' negotiated by the local authority with the developer (a development bonus similar to arrangements negotiated under Section 37 of Ontario's *Planning Act*),

³³ For more information, please see Strategies for Creative Cities Berlin, London, and Toronto Case Studies. [Available at: www.utoronto.ca/progris/web_files/creativecities]

³⁴ Other projects currently under development by Artscape include the Green Arts Barns project that will provide an additional 62,000 square feet of space. For more information please see: www.torontoartscape.on.ca and the Strategies for Creative Cities Toronto Case Study. [Available at: www.utoronto.ca/progris/web_files/creativecities]

Even in New York City, where free enterprise rules the real estate market, initiatives to secure affordable space can only succeed when *non-market* approaches are employed. The GMDC described under Lesson 7 above is a case in point. So too is the Alliance of Resident Theatres/New York (A.R.T./New York) that works to promote New York's Off Broadway theatre sector by providing low-cost theatre, rehearsal, and office space in both Manhattan and Brooklyn. Similarly, the BAM Local Development Corporation is a non-profit catalyst to the arts-led regeneration of Brooklyn's Fort Greene district, building or renovating affordable space for artists and creative enterprise in a part of New York whose property prices are now escalating rapidly. The Banknote building, located in the South Bronx, is an example of philanthropic intervention, courtesy of enlightened family owners who have allowed talented individuals to build innovative creative enterprise in one of the most economically challenged areas of New York City.³⁵ In doing so, they are helping to bring about a fundamental reversal in the area's fortunes.

Through the Creative Hubs program and creative workspace support, the London Development Agency's Creative London is acting as catalyst for incubator and workspace developments targeted at creative industry sectors such as fashion, furniture, and jewelry. These include specialist enterprise support, education and training, and equipment such as rapid prototyping and laser cutting equipment, bringing together designers, educators, and makers/manufacturers.

The organizations and projects described above all deliver much needed relief from the escalating prices of the property market for creative practitioners. However, in Toronto currently, this protection is provided in a piecemeal way and without sustained help from official planning policies and other forms of public intervention. Toronto needs a systematic approach to creating and keeping its affordable space, rather than relying on isolated projects accomplished by individual non-profit organizations and a few socially-minded developers.

Lesson 9: Built form, public and natural spaces express and stimulate a city's creativity.

A city can strengthen its creative spaces, and thus its creative energy, by preserving heritage buildings, promoting and financing art for public and natural spaces, and using well-designed built form to showcase its distinctive character.

Heritage buildings can provide attractive and unique spaces to accommodate creative activity. There are many interesting and successful heritage preservation projects in both Toronto and London that illustrate this point. For example, Toronto's Distillery Historic District (a National Historic Site) is a redeveloped distillery that provides a pedestrian-only village entirely dedicated to arts, culture, and entertainment. London's Spitalfields Market and the Truman Brewery are also vibrant examples of adaptive reuse of heritage buildings for creative activity.

In Glasgow, *Merchant City* is a five year public sector-led project, driven by the vision and leadership of key senior officers and local politicians, to create the physical and economic conditions for creative hub development on the eastern edge of the city centre. It is funded through regeneration, lottery, and enterprise development programs. The initiative follows past redevelopments of arts/heritage buildings, new social and private sector housing investment, and the longstanding location of arts organizations and creative SMEs in the vicinity. It represents the current phase of a very long-term strategy to reinvent Glasgow as a cultured and enterprising city. The Merchant City Plan combines an Arts Property Strategy refurbishing a number of large industrial buildings acquired by the city council for use by arts projects and creative enterprises with

³⁵ For more information on these projects in New York, please see the Strategies for Creative Cities New York Case Study. [Available at www.utoronto.ca/progris/web_files/creativecities]

a Townscape Heritage Initiative offering grants to retailers, restaurants, and landlords to improve the streetscape and facades. It also draws on a Street Lighting Program to improve the public realm for residents, employees, and visitors.³⁶

A local community council provides a platform for both residents and enterprises to engage in the development process and an annual Merchant City Festival showcases local creative work alongside a visitor event. This is accompanied by a marketing strategy to establish Merchant City as the prime location within the city for creative SMEs/creative entrepreneurs with all the attendant evening economy and cultural attractions. In this initiative, it has been recognised that a central anchor for creative enterprise growth is the funded arts sector. Local arts projects have been included within the Merchant City Plan following close co-ordination and co-operation between the Culture and Leisure Services (CLS) department and the Development and Regeneration (D&R) department of the city council. Consultation with the arts organizations and their role in the CLS action plan has been tied into the Arts Property Strategy implemented by D&R. This joint approach has provided a strong platform for securing the creative implementation of the initiative, additional funding, as well as political support.

Interesting, risky new buildings and innovative urban design regimes also create an environment where further highly-visible creative experimentation is encouraged. In Barcelona, priority is given to urban design and the quality of the public realm, combining built heritage with modern architecture, contemporary design, and public art. This imaginative collage of built form is seen in Barcelona's interesting use of colour and public squares, inspired by the radical architecture of Gaudi's buildings and the longstanding craft tradition that is upheld by civically active organizations such as the Foment de les Arts Decoratives.³⁷

Lessons can also be drawn from cities like Montreal whose reputation as a centre of design arises from a deliberate strategy. Montreal's 'Commissioner of Design' office was created by the Economic Development Division of the City in 1991, in recognition of the importance of design to Montreal's future.

Montreal's Design Commissioner is responsible for:

- increasing public awareness of design,
- promoting design to public officials and the business community, and
- encouraging outstanding design.

The Commissioner regularly meets with the private sector to encourage good design in city projects – especially for large institutional projects (e.g. Grande Bibliothèque, Quartier des Spectacles). The Commissioner also promotes success stories locally to inspire good design through the *Commerce Design Montreal* initiative: a competition for outstanding design in business in the city – roughly 100 businesses enter each year. In 2006, Montreal was appointed 'City of Design' by UNESCO (a designation previously awarded to Berlin).

Creative city spaces are not solely composed of large, high-profile design statements, but also include everyday, liveable built form. Toronto is currently following in the footsteps of cities such as Vancouver with the launching of its pilot Design Review Panel in 2006. A successful pilot will strengthen the City's commitment to ensuring that the design of built form is given high priority consistently on a city-wide basis. This means that design must be evaluated at an early stage in the

³⁶ For more information, please see www.glasgowmerchantcity.net.

³⁷ For more information, please see the Strategies for Creative Cities Barcelona Case Study. [Available at: www.utoronto.ca/progris/web_files/creativecities]

development process for its ability to promote interaction, liveable scale, heritage protection, aesthetic excitement, and a positive city image.

In 2005, the Singapore government launched a S\$3 million Architecture and Urban Design program that co-funds up to 50 percent of urban redesign promotion by the private sector. The initiative also seeks to encourage local architects to contribute to the city's urban renaissance and to improve the quality of the built environment.

Attention to transport, mobility, and the public realm can also successfully integrate design and improve access and the quality of a city's cultural experience. Before Gehry's Guggenheim was developed in Bilbao, the city had invested in major new road/bridge, rail and airport facilities – designed by leading architects (Calatrava, Foster, Stirling). In Barcelona, the city has invested substantially in public art and 'outdoor museums' with over 1,000 sculptures created in city spaces, including installations by Miro, Lichtenstein, and Calatrava. Barcelona has been recognized as an exemplar by the UK's Sustainable Transport Commission and awarded the Royal Institute of British Architecture's Gold Medal for architecture (normally given to an individual architect), reflected in Barcelona being ranked as the best European city for quality of life, and its success in attracting convention and exhibition trade events to the city.

Creative use of transport spaces, facilities, and interchanges can animate and improve safety on city transport. Examples include sponsored pitches for buskers on the London Underground; the *Arts on Track* initiative of the Toronto Community Foundation, through which revitalization of three Toronto subway stations will provide riders with visual links to the major cultural institutions in the vicinity; spontaneous in-car entertainment on Toronto's subway to help kick off the City of Toronto's Live with Culture campaign; and *Art on the Metro* in Stockholm, presenting the largest underground art gallery. London's tube network is undergoing a partial transformation, with *Platform Art* and *Poetry on the Underground*, and design-led stations and facilities using artists and architects (not engineers) to create landmarks and attractions that lift the travelling experience out of the mundane. Other examples include bold art and architectural commissions on metro stations and interchanges, such as Sir Norman Foster's *Fosteritos* in Bilbao and Anish Kapoor's sculptures in Naples and Chicago.

Well-designed and legible wayfaring/signage, creative lighting and routes also combine to improve safety and surveillance in exposed pedestrian walkways, and encourage walking at night. Since safety and personal security can be a key access issue and barrier to participation in cultural activity, particularly by vulnerable groups, tourists, and non-car users [in the UK, over 11 percent more journeys would be made on public transport if passengers felt they were more secure³⁸], this type of urban design can impact greatly on a city's cultural participation.

Improving creative city spaces can instill a sense of civic pride, and attract and retain creative talent/knowledge workers, investment, and tourism. This involves continuing to take risks on bold architecture projects and heritage preservation, using a mix of local and international talent to cultivate creative physical space. Cities must also consider their overall space assets, recognizing that public and natural spaces are often untapped assets where the city could express its creativity. For Toronto, this includes its unique ravine system that traverses the city, in addition to the hundreds of acres on the city's waterfront that are slated for redevelopment over the next 30 years.

In London, the Mayor's *Public Spaces Programme*, launched in 2002 with 10 pilot projects across London, seeks to create or upgrade 100 public spaces to demonstrate how new and revitalized public spaces can make a real difference to individual quality of life, community vitality, and liveability. Projects have levered resources from transport authorities, boroughs, regeneration

³⁸ Department for Transport. November 11, 2004. *Tackling crime on public transport*.

funds, the London Development Agency, and landowners. Trafalgar Square has been the highest profile *Public Space* project, reflecting its symbolic importance in central London. Innovative sculptures by Alison Lapper and Marc Quinn on Trafalgar Square have been displayed on an empty plinth as part of a rotating program of modern art³⁹.

Lesson 10: Creative people and capital assets are powerful forces for neighbourhood regeneration.

Creative people and cultural facilities are a powerful force to regenerate economically depressed and socially disadvantaged neighbourhoods. In the US, cities like Memphis are developing creative capital projects to re-invent themselves. Known as 'Soulsville, USA,' STAX Records began as a tiny recording studio in an old movie theater in 1959. By the 1970s it had grown to become the fifth-largest minority-owned business in the USA, and the district in which it was located was considered an area of racial harmony. However, due to general urban sprawl and inner city neglect, Soulsville USA fell into decline and STAX records closed in 1975.

'Music Soulsville' is a non-profit group revitalizing the area by building a new STAX Museum of American Soul Music and the STAX Music Academy for inner city youth by working with the city, county, and federal governments, LeMoyné-Owen College Community Development Corporation, anonymous private donors, and the Memphis Housing Authority. The purpose of the project is to preserve and rejuvenate the roots of culture, arts, and history of the city. Accessibility and the continuation of racial harmony in the area is a primary objective as the music academy will have a 'doors open' policy for children and will also be used as a 'charter school'⁴⁰ for schools in Memphis that do not offer music classes. Crime reduction and increasing local economic development are further goals. In fact, crime in the entire district is now down by roughly 90 percent and a new mixed-income community that offers homeownership resources has emerged in proximity to the area.⁴¹

In southeast London, Creative Lewisham has strategically linked Higher Education and Further Education institutions in a creative hub centred in Deptford. The presence of the Laban International Dance School and Theatre (designed by Herzog and De Meuron and funded in part by the National Lottery) has helped to stimulate regeneration of the area. A requirement of National Lottery funding was that the centre offer a community access program and hold a competition to select the Centre's architect, ensuring that the institution has positive ripple effects throughout the area. Since its opening, several theatre and gallery venues, art and design agencies, festival organizations, and studio enterprises have moved to the neighbourhood, including a new environmental arts centre. Sites for artists and creative business usage have been developed through the re-use of industrial buildings in Deptford. The Hub organization maintains a database of creative business space needs and premises.⁴²

A further example comes from Toronto's Artscape (described above), whose projects have triggered subsequent redevelopment in the neighbourhoods in which they are situated. A recent study employing a spatially detailed impact analysis has confirmed the positive influence of these buildings on their nearby environs. For example, within a five-year period of opening their multi-

³⁹ Greater London Authority. June 2005. *Squares Annual Report 2004/05. Trafalgar Square and Parliament Square Garden.*

⁴⁰ Charter schools are legally independent, outcome-based public schools.

⁴¹ Kemp, R. 2004. *Cities and the Arts: A Handbook for Renewal.* North Carolina: McFarland and Company. Further information can be found at www.soulsville.com.

⁴² For more information, please see the Strategies for Creative Cities London Case Study. [Available at www.utoronto.ca/progris/web_files/creativecities]

studio complex at 1313 Queen Street West, the number of culturally related business in the immediate area increased from 25 to 62.⁴³

The examples described above illustrate how the establishment of capital projects that accommodate and support creative activity can ignite further creative activity and other forms of economic development in otherwise neglected areas of a city. Of course, if this effect is too successful, it may set in motion powerful gentrification dynamics and rising property values. As noted above, the presence of non-profit and public sector providers of creative spaces becomes all the more critical in such instances. A real risk arising from large-scale redevelopments, including those that are triggered by the construction of major cultural institutions such as art museums, is the effective 'clearance' of incumbent communities and enterprises – including existing cultural and craft industries (e.g. in Barcelona and Milan). Integrating new development within existing social and economic systems and maintaining strong connections to the city are important factors for both sustainability and community ownership (e.g. Berlin and Helsinki).

3.4 VISION

Lesson 11: Multi-level, multi-sector support of the creative economy is critically important.

As a city endeavours to support and nurture creative activity, and to derive economic and social benefits from its creative economy, multi-level political support yields major dividends. For example, when the UK national government publicly acknowledged the role of creative industries as one of the most important components of London's economy, this greatly enhanced the credibility of the creativity agenda and helped loosen the purse strings on public funding of creative economy initiatives at all levels of government. This greatly eased the path for London's municipal government to develop a strategic approach to investing in and developing its creative industries. In Barcelona, a long history of political and industry consensus on developing and promoting the region has contributed to strong leadership in city regeneration, creative industries, and other related knowledge sectors. This has been further encouraged by the supportive environment shaped by the government of Catalonia in the realm of cultural policy.

The consensus of different orders of government must also be accompanied by the agreement of various departments within governments on the wide impact the creativity agenda has on all aspects of political, social, and economic urban life. Therefore, departments dealing with planning, infrastructure, social/community services, education, economic development, tourism, parks and recreation, heritage, and culture all have roles to play in ensuring a comprehensive and successful approach to creative economy support. Other sectors are also implicated, as success is even more likely if consensus is built between public, private, and non-profit actors concerning a city's creative strengths and how they can be cultivated.

Singapore has embarked on a 10-year creative industries strategy, following a severe economic recession and financial crisis in Asia in the early 1990s. This sector has been targeted by the national government (along with Education and Healthcare/Biotechnology) as one of three growth areas for economic and tourism development.⁴⁴ Creative sectors include the Arts (performing, museums, galleries, cultural tourism), Media, and Design. Each has a champion agency: the National Arts Council, Media Development Authority, and a new Design Singapore Council,

⁴³ Centre for the Study of Commercial Activity. 2003. *The Spillover Effects of Investments in Cultural Facilities*. Toronto: Ryerson University.

⁴⁴ ERC Services Subcommittee Workgroup on Creative Industries. 2002. *Creative Industries Development Strategy*. [Available at: http://app.mti.gov.sg/data/pages/507/doc/ERC_SVS_CRE_Exec.pdf]

respectively. S\$200m has been allocated over five years to stimulate creative activity, R&D, and enterprise. This includes the Arts Council funding arts business/for profit activity. The strategy is economic but also seeks to develop synergies between social, cultural, and employment/trade. Broadcast media is strong with early successes in the location of global media firms - MTV, Discovery/National Geographic, HBO, Lucas Films, and CNBC. Infrastructure including cable, digital, and satellite has enabled this competition to flourish, backed up by a skilled workforce, legal/IPR protection and ICT. *Design Singapore* is a collaborative initiative aimed at tapping the design sector's ability to fuse art, business, and technology to sharpen Singapore's competitiveness and creativity, and to develop as a leading design hub in Asia. Design Singapore was established by the Ministry for Information, Communication & the Arts with a Council made up of a partnership between economic and cultural agencies, universities, and industry. The Council chair and deputy are senior industry leaders. Once again, this example demonstrates the importance of political commitment by more senior levels of government, as well as the value of a multi-sectoral approach to the promotion of a creativity-led economic development strategy.

In the case of Barcelona, the vision of the city as a cultural project is one that is commonly shared by many stakeholders across the city. This vision emerged on the basis of a culture-led political reconstruction of the Catalan region and its capital Barcelona, and the successful leveraging of the 1992 Olympics as a driving force behind urban regeneration, economic renewal, and cultural expression. The Olympic opportunity was critical in forging an enduring alliance between the business and political communities, and in aligning interests and resources in service of a common goal. It was also important in demonstrating the strategic value of staging landmark events that keep the city in the public eye on the world stage on a regular basis. Due to the particular circumstances surrounding Catalan cultural and political identity, this experience is not likely to be wholly transferable to other cities (although London 2012 Olympics is an obvious regeneration legacy case). However, Barcelona's experience can teach a valuable lesson: cities should seize opportunities for a rallying of interest in creative life and use downturns to galvanize support in the face of difficult times. The project of building this kind of multi-level and multi-sector consensus is a helpful component of any city's approach to strengthening its creative ecology.

3.5 CONNECTIVITY

Lesson 12: Effective creative city strategies need strong connecting infrastructure. This infrastructure must be stable, light-touch, and perform an integrating function at (and between) two levels – city-wide and neighbourhood.

It is not enough for a city to be home to diverse and innovative creative activity, for this activity often occurs in silos, isolated and unable to benefit from co-operation, collaboration, and connections to appropriate supports. If creative work is to live up to its potential of beneficial economic and social impacts for a city's population, it must be connected – to other creative activity, to resources (financial and other), and to other realms of urban life that can support and nurture its growth.

Our research reveals a stark contrast between the successes of cities with strong integrating mechanisms linking the primary actors and organizations in the creative economy and the struggles of those that lack these vital ties. We saw how London fosters strong connections across creativity-supporting organizations and creative sectors, and enjoys a reputation for 'getting it right' as a creative city. New York City, on the other hand, is home to a great deal of creative activity, but its industries and projects work in isolation, each scrambling for survival in a city that has become too

expensive and offers too little support to its artists and creative types.⁴⁵ The result has been a declining creative image and creative practitioners fleeing Manhattan (and the New York region altogether). In recognition of the challenges its creative sectors now face, Mayor Bloomberg has recently announced the establishment of a new city office to address some of these obstacles. Situated within the New York City Economic Development Corporation, this new office signals the recognition that the creative sector needs strategic, integrated support if the city is to meet these challenges successfully.⁴⁶

Connective infrastructure linking multiple players and organizations needs to be developed at two different scales: not only across the city-region but *also* within individual neighbourhoods. At the neighbourhood or community scale, it is important to have organizations working at the local level linking together existing initiatives to support creative activity, while addressing the specific needs of people in that area. This level of infrastructure needs to address the fact that, in some areas, the necessary components already exist and must simply be linked/enabled (for example, Toronto's Queen Street West neighbourhood or Hubs in London's Creative Westside and Creative Lewisham); other areas may have massive creative potential, but gaps exist in their creative ecology and must be filled (e.g. Regent Park in Toronto). Only an integrating organization, familiar with the specific needs of the neighbourhood, can make this appraisal and take the lead in generating new initiatives to fill such gaps. Moreover, it is apparent from our research that this neighbourhood scale of intervention is the most effective level at which to integrate creativity-based economic development with community development to address social exclusion. Examples from London (Brixton), New York (South Bronx), and Toronto (Regent Park) demonstrate this vividly. Moreover, neighbourhood-level integration enables the physical proximity and close interaction that fosters the convergence of ideas and activity, which is so vital for the maintenance of a healthy creative ecology.

Infrastructure investment can also be needed in communications, particularly digital technology. A visionary and egalitarian approach to fast and wide broadband access by residents and businesses has been integral to achieving local and regional connectivity in Berlin and Helsinki (Arabianranta) as discussed above. Full digital access and participation is still bypassing a significant proportion of city populations, reinforcing social exclusion and limiting skills, employment, and cultural participation. A response to this challenge is the *Digital Bridge* agreement between a digital/cable channel and the Shoreditch New Deal for Communities in East London. This will provide high-speed digital services to 20,000 homes and over 1,000 businesses. Through a TV set-top box (not a PC), residents will access community and cultural information, partake in educational services, and vote in local referendums.⁴⁷

At a higher level, connecting infrastructure furnishes a linked-up understanding of all the components of creative life, how they can support each other, how they all have a role to play in developing a healthy creative ecology. This can be achieved through an entity that has a specific mandate to examine the creative city strategically, to link up existing parties doing mutually complementary work, to enable what is already happening and scale it up across the city-region, and to take advantage of creative opportunities of all kinds in a coordinated way.

⁴⁵ For more information on New York's creative industries, please see Keegan, R. and Kleiman, N. 2005. *Creative New York*. New York: Center for an Urban Future. [Available at http://www.nycfuture.org/images_pdfs/pdfs/CREATIVE_NEW_YORK.pdf]

⁴⁶ Chan, S. April 5, 2006. "New York City is Establishing an Office to Support Arts Groups." *New York Times*.

⁴⁷ *Regeneration and Renewal*. January 13, 2006. "NDC ties up Microsoft digital deal." London. *Regeneration and Renewal*. March 3, 2006. "The Crime Watcher." London.

In short: a city needs infrastructure that can connect and coordinate creative elements at and between two levels – city-region-wide and neighbourhood. Creative London has taken just this approach with the organization aiming to provide overall strategic direction to support creative industries in the city in four categories: Talent, Enterprise, Property, and Showcasing. The fifth element of its program, Creative Hubs, uses a bottom-up, neighbourhood-based model that draws on the experiences of existing initiatives and organizations to focus investment and support in different districts of the city. Ten geographical areas, each with high concentrations of creative businesses, have been identified to become hubs. In each area, a lead organization is appointed to connect all the local organizations that focus on supporting the creative sector and to develop a long-range plan. The structure of each hub may differ, but all will work to build networks, further develop successful projects, incubate small businesses, offer platforms to showcase work, keep tabs on available property, and challenge existing economic and social barriers. Indeed, a distinctive characteristic of Creative London's hub strategy is that, by targeting neighbourhoods that have both strong creative potential and pressing social needs, these creative hubs are a key mechanism for ensuring that the creativity agenda is pursued in a socially inclusive way.

Although the specific Creative London model may not be completely transferable to Toronto or other cities, it provides a valuable example of how creative activity and support can be connected at the city level. It also recognizes that local knowledge is invaluable and intervention is most effective when it is informed by a strong familiarity with local needs and conditions.