



Email Bulletin No. 9

Welcome to issue 9 of the Creative Edge email bulletin updating on the activities of the Creative Edge project. **Creative Edge is completing its work on December 31st and this is our last email bulletin.** The Creative Edge email bulletin is brought to you by the Creative Edge team and compiled by the Whitaker Institute, National University of Ireland, Galway.

About Creative Edge

The Creative Edge project brings together universities, development agencies and industry bodies from Ireland, Northern Ireland, Finland and Sweden to identify the current breadth and future scope of the creative economy in peripheral regions. The project seeks to put in place a number of measures that will promote creative industries in peripheral regions. This €1.1 million project is funded by the Northern Periphery Programme under Interreg 4B. For more information on the project see: www.creative-edge.eu

News and events

Creative Edge Conference

Exploring the key outcomes of the Creative Edge project, the conference 'How Creative Industries Contribute to and Shape Peripheral Regions, Societies and Economies' was held in Taibhdhearc na Gaillimhe in Galway on December 2nd 2013. Over the course of the day, the importance of place, the direction of policy and the role of education were discussed. Creative Edge initiatives were showcased, such as MyCreativeEdge, Creative Hubs in Northern Ireland, Creative Steps and the Creative Edge Mentoring Programme. Find more information on the Creative Edge website [here](#). If you missed the day, videos of presentations will be available in January 2014 on the [Whitaker Institute's](#) website.



Members of the Creative Edge team at the Galway conference

Launch of Newry Creative Hub

Lord Mayor Michael Ruane of Newry, and Newry & Mourne District Council opened the new Creative Edge Hub in Newry, along with Sarah Meaney of Social Clix. The Newry Creative Hub is located above the Sugar Supper Club at 14 Sugar Island in Newry.



Launch of the Newry Creative Hub

Update on MyCreativeEdge

[MyCreativeEdge](#) has reached a key milestone with over 300 creative people and businesses now showcasing their work and talent on the site. To create your free online profile register [here](#). MyCreativeEdge has had over 30,000 visits since its launch in June. The Creative Edge team is also working hard to promote the website and has attended a number of events. In the west of Ireland, MyCreativeEdge attended the *Letterkenny Institute of Technology Careers Fair* on October 21st in county Donegal where MyCreativeEdge was promoted to recent graduates, design and creative arts students. It was also promoted at the *Rough Draft Design and New Media Conference* on November 7th in Sligo. The Western Development Commission made a presentation to open the first [Rough Draft](#) conference, which was attended by around 150 creatives and students from Sligo's design and new media sectors. MyCreativeEdge flyers were included in the pack given to all delegates. MyCreativeEdge was promoted to 400 businesses from across the west of Ireland during the annual [MeetWest](#) business networking event held from November 21st to 22nd in Westport, county Mayo. A MyCreativeEdge flyer was included in the promotional pack given to all delegates.



Ten creative businesses awarded talent vouchers

Talent vouchers provide experience for emerging creative talent and creative businesses get a specific piece of work completed for them. The Creative Edge Talent Voucher Scheme offered vouchers of up to €2,000 for MyCreativeEdge business members to contract a creative talent from MyCreativeEdge to carry out a specific piece of work for them. Following evaluation of applications, ten members of MyCreativeEdge were selected to receive talent vouchers. From the western region of Ireland these were: Donegal Designer Makers, Cox Power Architects, Black Hole Studios, Allan Curran Architects and Leitrim Design House. Lucky Star Music, David Sandberg and Kulturstorm were awarded vouchers in Västerbotten, Sweden. From Northern Finland, Ilme Innoroom LTD and SunSää were awarded vouchers. Further information [here](#)

Creative Edge Operational Committee and Steering Committee meetings held in Galway, west of Ireland on December 2nd and 3rd

The Creative Edge Steering Committee members met in Galway for their final meeting on December 2nd. Project partners also met on December 3rd for their final Operational Committee meeting. Key among the items discussed at both meetings was the future of Creative Edge beyond the life of the project and how to sustain initiatives after the project itself ends.

Creative Edge in the news

Creative Edge conference, Galway

[Audio visual sector worth €72m a year to Galway](#) Galway Advertiser, 5th December 2013

Creative Hubs in Northern Ireland

[At the hub for creative business](#) Newry Reporter, 13th December 2013

[New creative hub opens first unit](#) Belfast Telegraph, 25th November 2013

MyCreativeEdge

The Arts Show, Ocean FM, West of Ireland, Sunday 15 December – Pauline White, Western Development Commission interviewed about MyCreativeEdge.

Project activities

Mapping the Creative Edge

Creative economy mapping is a useful tool for evidence based decisions than can inform both cultural planning and creative industry policy. Mapping can also catch the attention of powerful players, such as policymakers and the media, as patterns are clear and engaging when presented visually. Creative economies in cities have received more attention than those in peripheral places and mapping shows the significance and spatial distribution of the creative economy in peripheral places. Led by the Whitaker Institute, National University of Ireland, Galway, a central part of the Creative Edge project's work package 2 was mapping the creative economy in the Creative Edge partner regions.

Crossing between business and culture, the creative economy is a diverse domain. Defining creative industries that are part of the creative economy is a subject of debate and is also challenging to measure. Small and micro enterprises are part of creative industries and can be missed by business surveys. Culture is also an important part of the creative economy, another concept that is hard to definitively define. Though subject to some debate on the extent of definition, Creative Edge set out to gather data on creative industries and culture. A database was built and this is a first attempt in proving the existence of a vibrant set of creative industries across the north Atlantic region of Europe.

The database is divided into two parts, the first focusing on creative industries, and the second on culture. Creative industries were defined broadly for the Creative Edge project to ensure as comprehensive as possible a dataset was collected. Data collection included the following creative sectors: craft, design, advertising, printing, publishing, digital media, software, gaming, TV, radio, film, architecture, engineering, photography, arts, music, theatre, technology, scientific research and retailing. The cultural side of the database contains data on a diverse range of cultural industry activities and includes festivals such as arts, literary and music festivals; cultural spaces such as theatres and museums; creative and cultural education courses; organisations and places of heritage.

Based on the data collected, mapping was then carried out for each of the partner regions creative industries and also their festivals and cultural spaces. The result is a set of online, dynamic maps that show the breath of the creative economy in the Creative Edge region. Visit our interactive mapping site [here](#). We hope that our mapping of the creative economy catches the attention of policymakers so that more focus is placed on supporting and developing the creative economy in peripheral places.

The Double-Edged Sword: Listening to artist-entrepreneurs in the West of Ireland

Susan Monagan, [Manager of Audience Development](#) at the Department of Theatre Arts at Ithaca College in Ithaca, New York, has worked alongside the Creative Edge project team at the Whitaker Institute since autumn 2013. Obtaining a Fulbright grant gave Susan the opportunity to take leave from her work at Ithaca College and dedicate time to understanding how artist-entrepreneurs in the West of Ireland's creative enterprises make sense of their role and value their remote location. Susan's work aimed to complement that of Creative Edge, adding grounded insights on the realities of rural and remote artist entrepreneurship.

Susan conducted in-depth interviews with 26 creatives engaged in producing cultural projects, products, events and services, with representation from each of the seven counties in the western region, also representing a variety of art forms and projects. Individuals were aware of the economic impact their work has on their local community, especially in the form of job creation and attracting funding from outside. Susan also sought to represent a variety of organisational missions: market driven, community driven, and/or artistic product driven. Interviews sought to understand interviewee's values and priorities, and how a rural location has presented each with obstacles and opportunities, as well as unique approaches to networking. Interviews were transcribed, common experiences and values emerged, and themes began to develop. Sifting through the responses further, a set of 5 recommendations or responses emerged:

1. **Develop 21st century "cottage industries"**. Connect enterprises to place (and vice versa) by coordinating place-based networks and branding.
2. **Address gaps in education**. Develop undergraduate degree programs to include coursework and experiences in: project management, company management, producing, and resource development and management (fundraising, investment).
3. **Re-organise arts advocacy**. Ireland's creative individuals, businesses and organisations should create an activated, independent membership organisation whose remit is to advocate for funding. Americans for the Arts provides this function in the United States.
4. **Measure intrinsic impact**. If we are going to strategically address audience development, we need to measure intrinsic impact. See [WolfBrown](#) for an effective, free tool to get the conversation started.
5. **Reframe networking for the rural context**.
 - a. "Network in place" by staying in their remote locations and bringing artists and patrons to you.
 - b. Network internationally.
 - c. Develop broad local networks across employment sectors and interest areas to develop opportunities that might be more specifically tied to place.

Susan is continuing to work on her research and Creative Edge has greatly benefited from her collaboration with the project.

[Other news](#)

Creative Europe – call for proposals

Calls for proposals under Creative Europe’s Culture sub-programme and Media sub-programme are now open. The Culture sub-programme of Creative Europe supports cultural and creative organisations with a view to helping them operate transnationally and promoting cross-border circulation of works of culture and mobility of cultural players. It helps to launch projects with a European dimension and to share cultural content across European borders. The MEDIA sub-programme of Creative Europe supports the EU film and audiovisual industries financially in the development, distribution and promotion of their work. More information [here](#)

Arts Council of Ireland announces new €150,000 Laureate for Irish fiction

The Arts Council has established a new award which will honour an outstanding Irish fiction writer, and encourage the next generation of Irish fiction writers. The Laureate for Irish Fiction has been developed by the Arts Council and is supported by University College Dublin (UCD) and New York University (NYU). The Irish Times is media partner for the Laureate. The Laureate will be awarded to an Irish writer of national and international distinction. The honour will be used to promote Irish literature nationally and internationally and to encourage the public to engage with high quality Irish fiction. The Laureate will have a three-year term, during which the Laureate will teach creative writing, develop their own work, participate in public events and receive €150,000 over the three years. More information [here](#)

For more information on the Creative Edge project, or to express your interest contact:

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