



a creative
momentum
project

CREATIVE HOTSPOTS:
A MODEL FOR BUILDING TRANSNATIONAL CONNECTIONS
THROUGH ESTABLISHED CREATIVE EVENTS

MAY 2018

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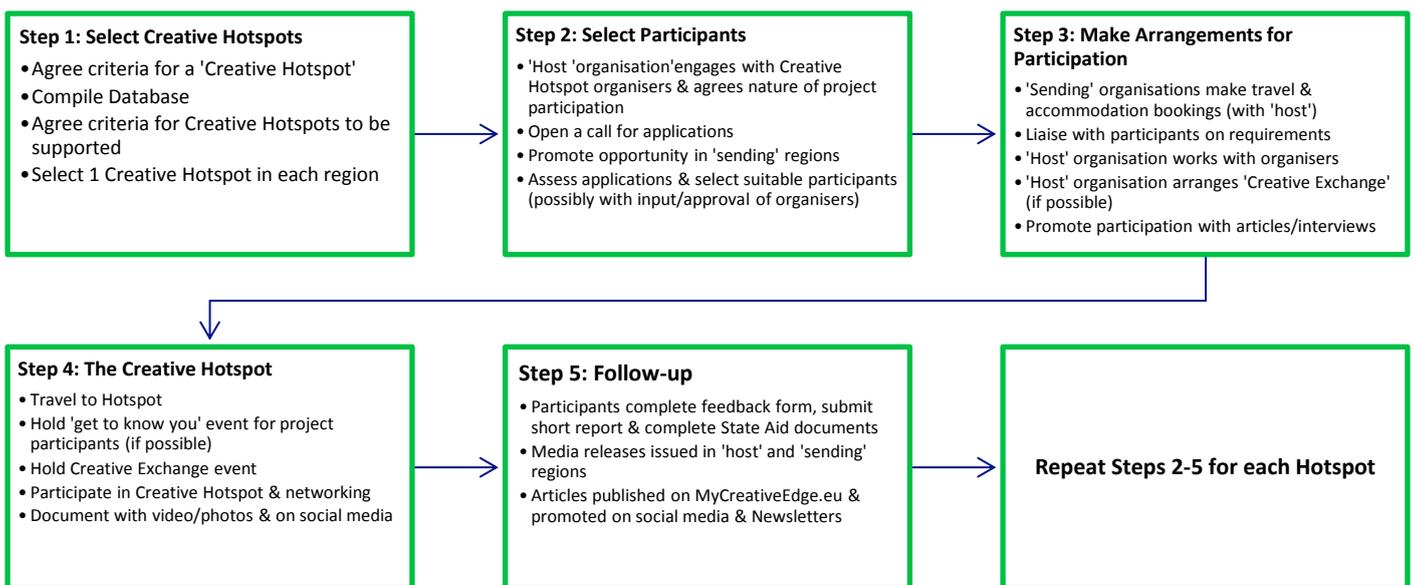
**research for:
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SUMMARY: THE CREATIVE HOTSPOTS MODEL

The transnational, EU co-funded 'a creative momentum project' developed and implemented 'The Creative Hotspots Model' during 2015-2017. The aim was to facilitate face-to-face transnational networking and knowledge exchange among creative sector entrepreneurs, while strengthening the creative sector ecosystem across Europe's Northern Edge.

A 'Creative Hotspot' is a general term used by the project to describe an established creative or cultural industry event (conference, festival etc.) which takes place in one of the partner regions. The 'Creative Hotspots Model' selected one 'Creative Hotspot' in each of the five partner regions and then selected and financially supported a number of relevant creative professionals from the other partner regions to travel to, and participate in, each of these Creative Hotspots. The aim was to stimulate transnational networking, create opportunities for possible collaboration and bring an added international dimension to existing creative sector events in the partner regions. The diagram below illustrates the Model.

THE CREATIVE HOTSPOTS MODEL



The Model was implemented five times over the course of 'a creative momentum project' for Creative Hotspots in Mid-Sweden, South East of Northern Ireland, Northern Finland, North East of Iceland and the West of Ireland. In total 49 creative professionals from five regions were supported to participate in these five Creative Hotspots (the initial target was 37). Below is a summary of the main lessons learned from the experience of developing and implementing the Model. These may be useful for others considering implementing a similar approach.

LESSONS LEARNED

1. **One Size Does Not Fit All:** A single 'Creative Hotspots Model' does not work for all creative sub-sectors, Events or organisations. The Model needs to be adapted and adjusted for each specific Creative Hotspot.
2. **Does 'Hotspot' have Meaning?** The term 'Creative Hotspot' was coined by the project and a set of criteria developed. However when compiling the database and trying to select the five Hotspots to support, the question arose if any of them truly met all the criteria for a 'Creative Hotspot'. Ultimately there were few options for events taking place in the partner regions that came close to meeting all the criteria for selection; the requirement for the event to mainly take place in English was a limiting factor in Nordic regions. One of the challenges of more remote and sparsely populated regions is the shortage of truly international 'Creative Hotspots'. The objective of the Model to help strengthen the international dimension of existing creative events in the partner regions should perhaps have received greater focus. One good example was Arctic Design Week which previously was held mainly in Finnish, but in 2017 took place mainly in English to attract a more international audience.
3. **Relationship with Creative Hotspot Organisers:** It takes considerable time and effort for the 'host' project organisation to engage with Hotspot organisers. It is important not to underestimate the commitment involved. The timescale required by the project (e.g. to promote opportunity, select enterprises, make bookings) means that event details are needed from organisers earlier than usual. If an event usually targets a local/national audience, the organisers may not be familiar with the needs of international participants. A previous relationship with organisers (e.g. Lapland UAS previously supported Arctic Design Week) can make it somewhat easier.
4. **Awareness of Event/Format:** If a small, unknown Hotspot is selected, this creates the double task of raising awareness of the Festival/Event, as well as promoting the opportunity to participate. Even if the event itself is not well-known internationally, if it has a well-known and established type of format (e.g. a Film Festival), this makes it easier for potential applicants to know what to expect and makes the appropriate target group very clear. Events with a higher international profile are easier to promote, but an aim of the project is to strengthen smaller events.
5. **Nature of Event:** Hotspots which are voluntary/community-driven and not run on a commercial basis can create some challenges in organising cooperation and participation. More input from the project partner organisations may be required. Such Festivals may operate with a limited budget and rely heavily on voluntary input which may lead to quite high expectations of participants. When working with event organisers with very specific ethos and values, it can be challenging to ensure that participation by the project meets these criteria (e.g. eco-friendly, sustainable, bottom-up ethos and values of the Urkult Festival, preservation of folk music ethos of Vaka Festival).
6. **Logistics:** Organising the logistics of participation takes considerable time and effort from both the 'host' and 'sending' project organisations. They need to have the human, organisational and financial capacity to liaise with event organisers, participants, service suppliers (e.g. freight company, hotels) and media. One of the most common problems was sourcing reasonably priced accommodation where all participants could stay in the same location. As many of the Hotspots took place during high tourist seasons this was very challenging and the groups had to be split, which reduced the chances for the transnational project group to connect. It is necessary to begin planning very early (a year in advance) to make provisional bookings before participants are even selected. Only for the Urkult Festival in Sweden could all participants stay together but

this was at a considerable distance from the Festival venue. A number of participants requested to bring family members, at their own cost, however this did create some additional logistical complications and may not always be appropriate.

7. **Suitability of Participants & Group Dynamics:** For some Hotspots it was difficult to judge who would be the most suitable participants. Sometimes participants who may not have been the best match for the event (e.g. stage of career, sector) were selected. It proved difficult to select the best matches, partly because of lack of information about the event and also because of low numbers of applications (e.g. for Digital DNA @ The Planetarium). As each partner organisation made their own selection from their region individually they were not aware of who was selected in other regions. Joint selection from across all regions might be useful to maximise the group dynamic and compatibility within the transnational group. It is also useful to select participants, not only for their own sake, but who have wider networks and influence across their sector in their home country/region.
8. **Clear Communication:** It is very important to maintain clear lines of communication between the Hotspot organisers, the 'host' country project organisation, the 'sending' country project organisations and the participants. It is easy for there to be miscommunication and lack of clarity if these lines of communication become confused.
9. **Networking & Creative Exchanges:** At most Creative Hotspots the majority of attendees are local and many already know each other and have existing relationships. It can be difficult for the international 'outsiders' to find opportunities to engage and network. Hotspots which include specific, structured networking opportunities as part of the programme (e.g. the Marketplace at Galway Film Fleadh, the Matchmaking at Arctic Design Week) are desirable. Organising a Creative Exchange event in advance of the Creative Hotspot, so that all the supported project participants can present their work and network with each other and the local industry, can be very beneficial and should be organised if possible. Promotion of the Creative Exchange locally in advance is important to attract attendees from local industry.
10. **Promotion:** Some participants reported a 'reputational bounce' for their business from having been selected to take part in a Creative Hotspot, they felt it gave them added credibility with clients in their home region. Promotion of selected participants in advance, during and after the Creative Hotspot is important to increase the profile of the participants, the Hotspot and the project.



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This report outlines the experience of ‘a creative momentum project’ in developing and implementing ‘The Creative Hotspots Model’ during 2015-2017. It has been written by Pauline White, Project Co-ordinator for the lead project partner the Western Development Commission. Inputs were provided by: Saira Puukko, Project Manager, Lapland UAS; Silvia Guglielmini, Project Administrator, WDC; Kristina Jeppson, Project Officer, Technichus Mid-Sweden; Niall Drew, Project Co-ordinator, Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon Borough Council; and Hulda Jonsdóttir, Project Officer, North East Iceland Cultural Council. The analysis of the feedback survey by participants in Section 9 was undertaken by Aisling Murtagh, Post-Doctoral Researcher, NUI Galway.

We would like to thank the organisers of the five Creative Hotspots we worked with to develop and refine the Model. In particular we would like to thank the 49 creative professionals from five countries who were supported to take part in the Creative Hotspots. Their feedback has been very valuable in preparing this report.



1.0 INTRODUCTION

'a creative momentum project' is a €2m, 3-year (2015-2018) transnational project to support the creative industries sector across Europe's Northern Edge. It is co-funded by the EU's [Northern Periphery & Arctic](#) (NPA) Programme.

1.1 WHY DID 'A CREATIVE MOMENTUM PROJECT' HAPPEN?

Creative industry entrepreneurs, artists and craftspeople working in the NPA area face challenges, such as limited networking opportunities and low export activity, because of their peripheral location. The creative sector contributes to sustainable regional and rural development and has potential for future growth. 'a creative momentum project' assisted creative entrepreneurs to address these challenges and sustain and develop their business.

1.2 WHAT DID 'A CREATIVE MOMENTUM PROJECT' DO?

'a creative momentum project' supported individuals and enterprises working in the creative and cultural industries. The activities covered were Arts, Craft, Design and Media & Technology. 'a creative momentum project' supported artists, craftspeople and creative sector enterprises to:

- develop their creative and business skills and innovate new product/service ideas by providing mentoring, new online knowledge resources and supporting collaborative product, service and organisational innovation;
- connect with other creatives to develop new opportunities locally, regionally and transnationally by supporting shared spaces, events and gatherings; and

- get their products and services to market by supporting them to attend Trade Fairs and showcase their work online and to the tourist market.

'a creative momentum project' conducted research on the processes operating in the sector to improve understanding of the sector's needs and make the case for public policy to support the sector.

1.3 WHO IMPLEMENTED 'A CREATIVE MOMENTUM PROJECT'?

The project was implemented by six partner organisations:

- [Western Development Commission](#) (WDC), Ireland
- [National University of Ireland, Galway](#) (NUIG), Ireland
- [Cultural Council of North East Iceland](#), Iceland
- [Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon Borough Council](#), Northern Ireland on behalf of South East Economic Development
- [Technichus Mid-Sweden Ltd](#), Sweden
- [Lapland University of Applied Sciences](#), Finland

It was implemented in the following regions:

- West of Ireland (counties Donegal, Sligo, Leitrim, Roscommon, Mayo, Galway and Clare)
- Northern Ireland (Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon Borough Council, Ards & North Down Borough Council, and Newry, Mourne & Down District Council areas)
- Mid-Sweden (Västernorrland)
- Northern Finland (Lapland, North Ostrobothnia)
- Iceland (North East)

2.0 BACKGROUND TO ‘THE CREATIVE HOTSPOTS MODEL’

2.1 WHAT IS A ‘CREATIVE HOTSPOT’?

‘Creative Hotspot’ is a general term used by ‘a creative momentum project’ to describe an established creative or cultural industry event (conference, festival etc.) which takes place in the partner regions.

The aim of ‘a creative momentum project’s Creative Hotspot activity was the develop and test a Model to facilitate face-to-face transnational networking among creative entrepreneurs, while at the same time strengthening the creative sector ecosystem of partner regions by adding an additional transnational dimension to existing creative industry events.

2.2 HOW WAS ‘THE CREATIVE HOTSPOTS MODEL’ TO BE IMPLEMENTED?

The planned actions were to:

1. Create a **database** of all Creative Hotspots in each region. Each ‘a creative momentum project’ partner organisation was to collect data and create an initial list of Creative Hotspots in their own region. This list was to be uploaded to MyCreativeEdge.eu. An Events facility for organisers of creative industry events to publish details of additional and future events was to be added to MyCreativeEdge.eu.
2. **Select one Creative Hotspot in each of the five regions** which the partner organisation in that region (‘host’ partner organisation) would support in either 2016 or 2017.
3. Partner organisations from the other ‘a creative momentum project’ regions (‘sending’ partner organisations) would select and pay for a number of relevant creative entrepreneurs from their own region to participate in that Creative Hotspot. The target was that

a total of **37 creative enterprises would be supported to attend a Creative Hotspot**. Five partner organisations were to take part in this activity based in Northern Finland, Mid-Sweden, North East Iceland, South East of Northern Ireland and the West of Ireland.

4. The ‘host’ partner organisation would **organise a Creative Exchange information and networking event** to coincide with the Creative Hotspot. The Creative Exchange would be attended by all the supported enterprises from the other regions as well as local creative enterprises. ‘a creative momentum project’ Operational Management Team meetings would be organised to coincide with the Creative Hotspot where possible to minimise costs.
5. Creative enterprises supported to attend a Creative Hotspot would then **share their experience and learning at a future Creative Exchange in their home region**.

2.3 HOW WOULD THE CREATIVE HOTSPOTS DATABASE BE DEVELOPED?

The initial development of the Creative Hotspots database was to have as wide a scope as possible so that potential appropriate events were not excluded. The database was to be narrowed down at a later stage. To be included in the Creative Hotspots database a creative industry event had to meet the following criteria:

1. **Focus on a topic relevant to the creative sector:** the event may specifically address a creative industry sector (Arts, Craft, Design and Media & Technology) or target a more general audience but be on a topic of particular interest to creative enterprises such as e-commerce,

marketing, crowd funding or innovation.

2. **Be established:** the event should have been held at least once previously. However if a partner organisation believes a new event has merit, due to the reputation and experience of the organisers, an argument could be made to include it.
3. **Industry focus:** the main target audience should be practitioners in the sector rather than the general public or consumers. In some cases an event may have a number of different parts or events/talks happening at the same time, some targeting the public and some for people from the industry (e.g. this often happens at film festivals). If the elements targeting the industry are substantial, such events can be included.
4. **Networking opportunities:** the organisation, scheduling and structure of the event should include clear opportunities for industry networking, formal or informal.

The following information was to be recorded for each Creative Hotspot in the database:

- Name of event;
- Dates on which it takes place;
- Objectives of event (specifically detailing which areas of the creative sector it addresses);
- Website, email address and contact details;
- Social media channels of event.

2.4 HOW WOULD THE 5 CREATIVE HOTSPOTS TO BE SUPPORTED BE SELECTED?

From the above database, a total of five Creative Hotspots – one in each 'a creative momentum project' partner region – would be selected. The selection criteria were:

1. **Mainly in English:** the vast majority of talks and events at the Hotspot should be through English.

2. **Extent of networking/export contact potential:** the potential opportunities for meaningful networking for the supported participants from other regions.
3. **International focus:** an outward looking perspective.
4. **Relevance to participants from other regions:** the content of the event, topics and speakers should be relevant to transnational participants and not be overly focused on local or national issues.

Weightings for each criteria were to be agreed among the partners and the highest scoring event in each region was to be selected. However, it was also acknowledged that it was important to ensure a range of creative sub-sectors were covered by the five selected Creative Hotspots (e.g. should not select five film festivals) to ensure that a broad range of creative enterprises in each region has an opportunity to apply to participate in a Hotspot. This 'mix' would have to be taken into account in the final selection.

2.5 WHAT WOULD HAPPEN WHEN THE CREATIVE HOTSPOTS WERE SELECTED?

For each of the five selected Hotspots the following was planned:

1. Decide whether the event would be supported in 2016 or 2017.
2. The 'host' partner organisation would contact the event organisers to discuss the possibility and nature of 'a creative momentum project' involvement. If agreement not reached, approach second choice.
3. When arrangements agreed with the organisers, each of the 'sending' partners begin an 'open call for applications' process (done centrally through MyCreativeEdge.eu) to select 1-2 relevant enterprises from their region to support to participate in the Hotspot. The number supported for each Hotspot would vary depending on the cost involved.

4. The 'host' partner organisation would arrange a Creative Exchange to coincide with the Creative Hotspot and also host a project Operational Management Team meeting (when possible).

2.6 HOW WOULD THE SUPPORTED ENTERPRISES BE SELECTED?

In total the target was that 37 creative enterprises would be supported to attend a Creative Hotspot in another region. An open call was to be held in each 'sending region' for each Hotspot. Therefore there would be four open calls in each region spread across 2016 and 2017.

The open calls for applications would operate centrally through MyCreativeEdge.eu. An online application form would be created and a downloadable file of the questions will be available to allow applicants to prepare responses in advance of completing the form online. Possible questions for the application form could be:

1. Describe yourself / your business
2. What is your current level of activity and future plans, including any export/international experience?
3. What benefits will you gain from attending this event?
4. How could you share your experience of this event with other creative businesses in your region?

Each open call would be widely advertised and promoted (social media, MyCreativeEdge.eu, newspaper ads, Press Releases etc). They would be advertised early to ensure value for money on flight costs and allow participants to make necessary arrangements.

Common selection and evaluation criteria would be agreed and used by all 'sending' partner organisations to select the enterprises to support. The criteria may be adapted to suit the requirements of each specific Creative Hotspot. Each partner would establish an evaluation panel, perhaps including a representative of the 'host' partner and/or the Hotspot organisers, to evaluate the applications received. Possible selection criteria could be:

- a) Background and relevant experience 40%
- b) Capacity / Readiness to benefit from event 40%
- c) Capacity to disseminate experience to others in region 20%

The top scoring applicants would be selected to be supported. The number to be supported by each partner for each Creative Hotspot would be based on budget, cost and other factors but would be approximately 1-2 per partner per Hotspot.

TERMS & CONDITIONS OF SUPPORT

- By completing this application form you are confirming your availability to attend [Creative Hotspot] on the dates specified.
- 'a creative momentum project' will cover all travel (from your home) and accommodation (bed and breakfast) costs for the duration of the Creative Hotspot as well as entry/registration fees for the event and any meals included in the ticket price. Additional meals and other costs will not be covered by 'a creative momentum project', the participant will cover these costs. No alcohol costs will be covered.
- You must ensure you have adequate travel insurance for the trip.
- You must be in possession of a passport valid for at least 6 months after the date of the event.
- After the Creative Hotspot you will be required to submit a short report on your experience and make a presentation at a future Creative Exchange information event.
- If unavoidable circumstances arise that prevent you from attending after bookings have been made, you are required to notify [a creative momentum project partner organisation] as soon as possible, and no later than X days prior to departure.

2.7 WHAT WOULD HAPPEN WHEN THEY ARE SELECTED?

The 'sending' partner organisations would make arrangements and pay directly for travel, accommodation and registration at the Creative Hotspot event for each supported enterprise. The project would cover 100% of the cost of attendance for the following eligible costs: travel (from their home) and accommodation (bed and breakfast) for the duration of the Creative Hotspot as well as entry fees to the Creative Hotspot and any food included in the event ticket price. The cost of one 'group evening meal' for all supported enterprises from all regions would also be covered. Additional meals and any other costs would be covered by the enterprise. A staff member of the partner organisation would accompany the enterprises (where possible).

2.8 WHAT WOULD HAPPEN DURING EACH CREATIVE HOTSPOT?

All supported enterprises would participate in the Creative Hotspot event as arranged with the event organisers. The nature of participation would depend on the nature and format of the event. The 'host' partner may organise an informal, social gathering for all 'a creative momentum

project' supported enterprises and local enterprises during the Creative Hotspot.

The 'host' partner would organise a Creative Exchange information and networking event the day before or after the Hotspot with speakers on a relevant topic, if appropriate. This would be advertised to local creative enterprises in that region. The transnational group of supported enterprises would provide an overview of their business and the sector in their home region.

Social media would be used before, during and after the Creative Hotspot to record and communicate 'a creative momentum project' participation. Enterprises supported would be featured as [In Profile](#) case study stories on MyCreativeEdge.eu.

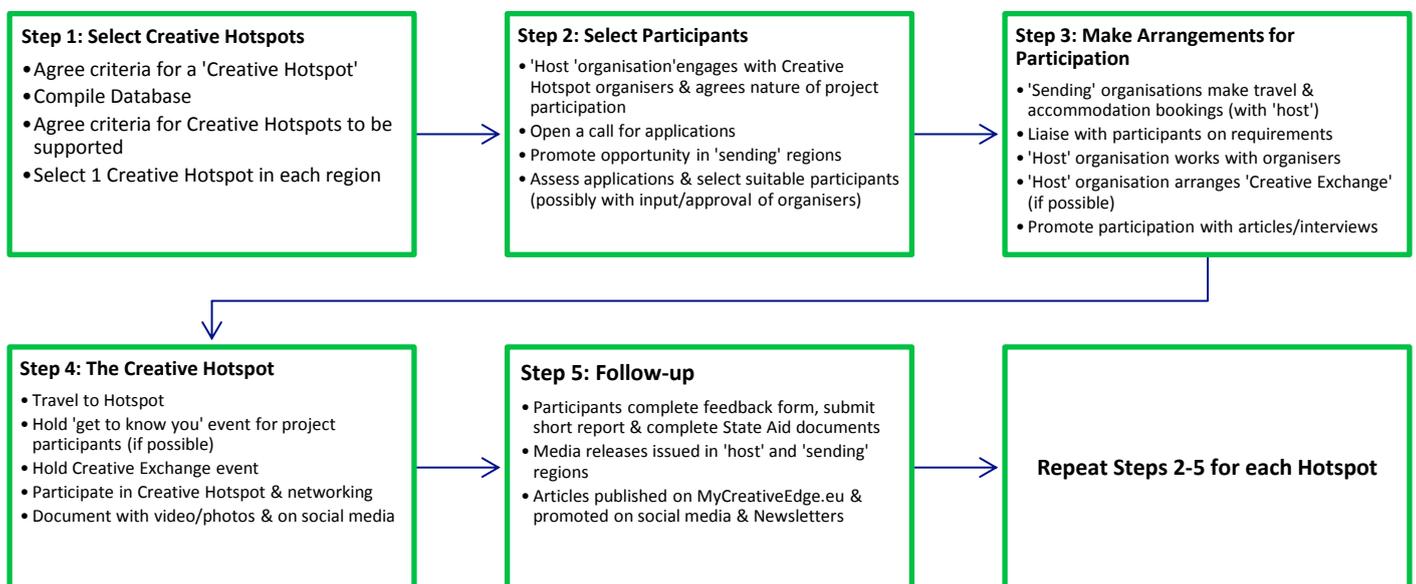
2.9 WHAT WOULD HAPPEN AFTER EACH CREATIVE HOTSPOT?

Following the first Creative Hotspot the above process would be reviewed and revised as necessary. The process would be reviewed following each Creative Hotspot and adjusted based on the experience. This would allow the development of a replicable Model that can be disseminated to other organisations supporting the creative and cultural sector.

All enterprises supported would be required to provide a short report/update on their experience at the event and any outcomes or contacts made. The learnings from these reports would feed into the Final Output Report and Model.

Enterprises supported would speak at a Creative Exchange in their home region to share their experience and any advice. Style and format to be decided, they may be quite informal. A Final Output Report would outline the Creative Hotspots Model, as well as details of its implementation and outcomes.

FIG. 1: THE CREATIVE HOTSPOTS MODEL



3.0 DEVELOPING THE DATABASE & SELECTING THE 5 CREATIVE HOTSPOTS

3.1 HOW WAS THE DATABASE DEVELOPED?

During Q4 2015 and Q1 2016, all project partners collected data to establish a central 'Creative Hotspots' database. This activity was co-ordinated by the Northern Ireland project partner Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon Borough Council, who developed an Excel template for the collection of the data (Fig. 2).

The criteria for selection of events to include were:

- Focus on a topic relevant to the creative sector:** the event may specifically address a creative industry sector (Arts, Crafts, Design and Media & Technology) or target a more general audience but be on a topic of particular interest to creative enterprises such as e-commerce, marketing, crowd funding or innovation.
- Be established:** the event should have been held at least once previously. However if a partner organisation believes a new event has merit, due to the reputation and experience of the organisers, an argument could be made to include it.

- Industry focus:** the main target audience should be practitioners in the sector rather than the general public or consumers. In some cases an event may have a number of different parts or events/talks happening at the same time, some targeting the public and some for people from the industry (e.g. this often happens at film festivals). If the elements targeting industry participants are substantial, such events can be included.
- Networking opportunities:** the organisation, scheduling and structure of the event should include clear opportunities for industry networking, formal or informal.

In total 100 events were included on the initial database (see Table 1). A decision was taken to adopt a broad interpretation of the above criteria for developing the initial database, but to adopt a narrower focus when selecting the five Creative Hotspots to be supported.

FIG. 2: DATA COLLECTION TEMPLATE FOR CREATIVE HOTSPOTS DATABASE

Creative Hotspots 4.2 - Database of Creative Hotspots										
Name of Event	Type of Industry Event	Sector	Dates	Address	Region	Postcode	e-mail address	Website	Social media	Roughly how many expected attendees

TABLE 1: EVENTS INCLUDED ON CREATIVE HOTSPOTS DATABASE

Northern Finland (15)	North East Iceland (15)	South East of Northern Ireland (8)	Mid-Sweden (26)	West of Ireland (36)
Arctic Design Week	Vaka Folk Arts Festival	Georgian Day	Sundsvall42/ SundsvallBIG	Allingham Arts Festival
Barents Reunion	Arctic Handcraft & Design	Armagh St Pats	Urkult	Barboro Galway International Children's Festival
Midnight Sun Film Festival	Baroque Festival	Blues on the Bay	New Orleans Festivalen	Clifden Arts Week
Skabmagovat Film Festival	Medieval Days at Gasir	Eagles Wing	Berättarfestivalen	Cúirt International Festival of Literature
Peräpohjolan markkinat	Reitir	Busk Fest	Stenstansdagarna	DICE (Design, Innovation, Creativity, Enterprise)
Hetta Music event	Blue North Music Festival	Culture night	Y-salongen	Doonbeg International Poetry Festival
Ylläs soikoon!	Home Video Art festival	Digital DNA	5 i 12	Drones Data X
Kalottijazz & Blues festivals	Summer Art Festival	Icons	Internationellafesten	Earagil Arts Festival
Ylläs Jazz & Blues	A! Performance festival		Poesifestivalen	Enterprise Start, Mayo
Rajasoitto	Ymur Festival		Svartviksdagarna	Galway Design Week - Design Network West
Pieni kansani laulu	Midsummer Festival		Korsmässomarknad	Galway Film Fleadh
Lapland's Tangocarnival	Little Festival of Poetry		Kulturtinget	Galway Fringe Festival
Kukkolakoski white fish festival	The Folk Music Festival of Siglufjordur		Xlents oktoberfest	Galway International Arts Festival
Sime rock	Berry Days - Music Festival		Kulturnatten	Galway Theatre Festival
Tornio Week	Skammdegi mid-winter festival		Swedish Connection	Guth Gafa International Documentary Film Festival
			Kulturfesten	Fleadh Nua
			Skulefestivalen	Innovating West
			Operafestival	InterTrade Ireland Innovation Masterclasses
			Sundsvalls kulturfestival	Irish Aerial Dance festival
			Folkan Waterfront	Mayo International Choral Festival
			Stöde musikvecka	Meet West
			Designveckan	Rory Gallagher International Festival
			Rafnastämman	Sea Sessions Surf and Music Festival
			Nipyran	Shorelines Arts Festival
			Ljunganrocken	Sligo Design Week
			Konstrunda	Sligo Festival of Baroque Music
				Sligo International Choral Festival
				Sligo Jazz Fest Summer School
				Spirit of Entrepreneurship

Northern Finland (15)	North East Iceland (15)	South East of Northern Ireland (8)	Mid-Sweden (26)	West of Ireland (36)
				Startup Gathering Galway
				Strokestown International Poetry Festival
				Swell Summit
				TechGate
				Tulca Visual Arts Festival
				Venture West
				Yeats International Summer School

3.2 HOW WERE THE 5 CREATIVE HOTSPOTS SELECTED?

When the database was compiled, all partners were asked to review it and indicate their preferences among the events listed for each region. The final selection of the five Creative Hotspots was agreed by all partners during a project partner meeting. In addition to the criteria for inclusion on the database, the criteria for selection were:

1. **Mainly in English:** the vast majority of talks and events at the Hotspot should be through English.
2. **Extent of networking/export contact potential:** the potential opportunities for meaningful networking for the supported participants from other regions.
3. **International focus:** an outward looking perspective.
4. **Relevance to participants from other regions:** the content of the event, topics and speakers should be relevant to transnational participants and not be overly focused on local or national issues.

In reality some of the most important issues influencing the final selection were:

- **English:** The need for the event to be mainly in English

significantly limited the options for Iceland, Finland and Sweden. Therefore it was decided to select the Hotspots from these three regions first, and then to see what sectoral 'gaps' remained before selecting for Northern Ireland and West of Ireland. Given the significant number of Hotspots identified in the West of Ireland, it was selected last.

- **Existing connections:** Where there was a good pre-existing relationship between the organisers of the event and the 'host' partner organisation it was felt this would make the logistics easier.
- **Northern Ireland:** As the partner region in Northern Ireland is located close to Belfast, it was found that a lot of events took place in Belfast (outside the region) rather than within the SEED region.
- **Sectoral mix:** Among the Hotspots listed there was a strong presence of Music & Theatre and Arts events, but fewer in the creative technology/digital sectors. Ensuring a good sectoral mix across the five Hotspots, to allow as broad a range of creative entrepreneurs as possible to have an opportunity to participate, became a key deciding factor.

THE 5 SELECTED CREATIVE HOTSPOTS

Swedish Creative Hotspot: Urkult Folk Festival 2016

Northern Irish Creative Hotspot: Digital DNA @ The Planetarium 2016

Finnish Creative Hotspot: Arctic Design Week 2017

Icelandic Creative Hotspot: Vaka Folk Arts Festival 2017

Irish Creative Hotspot: Galway Film Fleadh 2017



4.0 SWEDISH CREATIVE HOTSPOT: URKULT FOLK FESTIVAL 2016

4.1 URKULT FOLK FESTIVAL

[Urkult](#) is described by organisers as “an eco-friendly, hippie-style world music festival that’s been around since 1995”. It takes place in Mid-Sweden on the first weekend in August and opens with an event called Fire Night. Established in 1995, the festival has been growing into a major event welcoming more than 5,000 people every year. Over three days, festival-goers can enjoy music from all over the world, ranging from traditional Swedish folk music to Canadian bluegrass, from hip-hop to Gaelic chorus and African griot. There are two stages, one of which is a deep natural amphitheatre, and a venue called ‘the dance barn’.

The festival also offers theatre shows, seminars, Pecha Kucha events, workshops and a craft market. It is a well organised family-friendly event and meeting place, where it is possible to gain inspiration and be creative. Urkult is held near a small village called Näsåker, which comes alive during festival time. The festival site is stunning, surrounded by a gorgeous pine forest. The site is also important from an archeological point of view: there are about 2,000 ancient rock paintings – indeed Urkult’s site has been a hub for creativity for a very long time!

Urkult is the most culturally rich event of the region. The craft market has its very own style. There are clothes, jewellery and other hand-made items, and the price range is broad. (Anna-Carin Hulling, jewellery designer)

An absolutely core characteristic of the items sold at the market is the focus on sustainability and eco-friendly production.

4.2 HOW DID THE PROJECT ENGAGE WITH ORGANISERS?

When Ukult was selected as the first ‘Creative Hotspot,

Kristina Jeppson, the project officer for Technichus, met with festival organisers to discuss how the project could best work with the festival, for mutual benefit. It was agreed that participation in the Craft Market Place was most suitable. The project would rent a number of market stall spaces where supported craft makers from the other partner regions could sell their products to festival-goers. This would add to the international dimension of the Festival as well as exposing the craft makers to a new international audience.

The organisers insisted that a key criteria for selection of the craft makers would be that their products had some eco-friendly / sustainable attributes. It was agreed that the ‘sending’ project partners in each region would make the initial selection of participants, but that the final decision would be subject to approval by Festival organisers.

Following discussion among project partners, the Icelandic project partner (North East Iceland Cultural Council) decided that they would not participate in this specific Creative Hotspot.

4.3 HOW WERE THE PARTICIPANTS SELECTED?

A call for applications for ‘[Support to Exhibit at the Market Place of Urkult Festival in 2016](#)’ opened on 23 March 2016 on the MyCreativeEdge website. Applications were open to members of MyCreativeEdge.eu and were to be submitted through a Google Form. It was open to creative enterprises from the West of Ireland, South East of Northern Ireland and Northern Finland with a deadline of 4 April 2016. The application form questions were:



'A CREATIVE MOMENTUM PROJECT' SUPPORT FOR CREATIVE HOTSPOT APPLICATION

FORM:

Your Business/Practice

1. Describe yourself or your business/practice in no more than 200 words (what you do, when it was established etc)
2. What is your current level of business activity (turnover) including any current export/international sales? (200 words max)

Relevance of Urkult Festival for you

3. Outline how participation in the Market Place at the Urkult Festival will benefit you and your business
4. Outline your capacity to fulfill any orders/contacts/work you may receive as a direct result of attendance at this Creative Hotspot

Relevance of you to the Urkult Festival

5. Describe how your business fits into and can contribute towards the Urkult Festival's ethos of equality, cultural diversity and eco-friendliness

Benefit to region

6. How could you share your experience of participating in this event with other creative businesses in your region?

The opportunity was widely promoted through a published story on MyCreativeEdge.eu, Facebook, Twitter, the MyCreativeEdge.eu March Newsletter, boosted Facebook posts in all three regions and a dedicated Mailchimp email to MyCreativeEdge.eu members and Newsletter list. Project staff also made individual contact with potential applicants. Associate Partners and other stakeholders helped to promote the opportunity through their own networks (emails and social media). One of these was the Regional Council of Lapland with over 2,000 creatives in their contact list.

Lapland UAS found there was some difficulty in reaching people to apply. Some potential applicants felt that the application and selection process seemed too complicated.

Contacting people personally was found to be more successful than emailing larger target groups.

By the deadline, 10 applications were received in the Western Region of Ireland, two in Northern Finland and five in Northern Ireland. Common selection criteria and scoring definitions were agreed by the three 'sending' project partners (Western Development Commission, Lapland UAS and Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon Borough Council) and each partner used the same criteria and weighting in their evaluation of the applications:

- Background and relevant experience (40%)
- Capacity / Readiness to benefit from event (40%)
- Potential to disseminate experience (20%)



THE SELECTED ENTERPRISES

West of Ireland:

1. **Sallyann Marron** ([Sallyann's Handmade Bags](#)) is based in Co Clare. She hand produces a range of handbags made from coated oilcloth and lined with recycled jeans;
2. **Urs Harttung** ([Bearfoot Enterprise](#)) is a designer, producer and educator based in Co Galway. He produces recycled functional things from everyday material including toys, musical instruments and furniture for children and adults;
3. **Kevin Lynch** ([Airmid Natural Irish Skincare](#)) based in Co Clare produces a range of natural cosmetics using organic herbs including handmade soaps, body oil, beard oil, bath melts, shampoo bars, lotion bars, lip balms gift sets and hampers.

Northern Finland:

4. **Annika Konttaniemi** ([Susivilla](#)) is based in Rovaniemi. Susivilla is a Lappish slowfashion brand with Annika producing handwoven shawls in natural fibers at her home studio. She also designs woven textiles for industrial looms;
5. **Elina Söderstöm and Esa Rautiainen** (E-City Landscape & Art) are based in Tornio and provides public performance services as well as landscape gardening services. They would not participate in the craft Market Place but the wider Festival.

South East of Northern Ireland:

6. **Patricia Millar** ([Patricia Millar Ceramics](#)) based in Ballywater on the Ards Peninsula produces pit-fired ceramics. Patricia uses locally gathered fuel to pit fire and makes her own ash glaze;
7. **James Adair** ([Journey Man Saddler](#)) is based in Newry. He has worked for over twenty years making and repairing all types of equestrian and leather goods, as well as a range of fashion items using bridle leathers;
8. **Ciara Campbell** ([Ciara Campbell Ceramics](#)) is a ceramic artist from Banbridge, Co Down producing her own range of ceramic jewellery as well as running a series of pottery workshops and parties.



Top Left: Project staff Silvia Guglielmini (WDC), Niall Drew (ACBCBC), Saila Puukko (Lapland UAS) (seated), Kristina Jeppson (Technichus).
Bottom Left: Annika Konttaniemi (Finland) and James Adair (Northern Ireland). Right: Annika Konttaniemi (Finland) and Urs Harttung (Ireland).

4.4 HOW WAS PARTICIPATION ORGANISED?

Co-operation between project staff and the selected companies was good. Communication was mainly through email and by phone, with a face-to-face meeting organised for the Northern Ireland participants. The remote location of the Festival, which is an integral element of the Festival's character and identity, did create a number of logistical challenges for organising participation. Project staff made the following arrangements:

- **Flights/Land Transport:** As Urkult took place in Mid-Sweden, 630km from Tornio where Lapland UAS is based, Annika Konttaniemi (Susivilla) travelled by car with trainee Nina Niskala from Rovaniemi, while Elina Söderström and Esa Rautiainen (E-City), Saila Puukko and Henri Finström (Lapland UAS) travelled together from Tornio by car. For Irish and Northern Irish participants flights were booked from Dublin to Stockholm. One of the Irish participants requested that their partner and child accompany him to the Festival, at their own personal cost, and one Northern Irish participant requested for their spouse to accompany them, and this was agreed. A special 'Festival train' was available from Stockholm to Urkultstaget for those attending the Festival. The Northern Irish participants decided to take this option for the internal transfer. For the Irish participants an internal flight from Stockholm to Örnsköldsvik Airport, the closest airport, was booked.
- **Internal Transport:** Given the distance between the Hotel and Festival site (43km), the fact there was no public transport or taxis available for the journey and the need to transport stock for the Market Place, a bus was hired for the duration of the Festival to transfer participants and staff between the Hotel and Festival. Technichus got quotes from a number of bus companies and the cost of the bus hire was shared among the project partner organisations.
- **Accommodation:** As Urkult takes place in a remote location, there are limited accommodation options and

the onsite cabins/cottages are booked very quickly. Onsite camping accommodation was not appropriate as the participants would be bringing stock for the Market Place that needed to be secure. The host partner, Technichus, organised rooms at the closest hotel, [Hallstaberget](#) Hotel in Sollefteå, 43km from the Festival site.

- **Freight:** No freight shipping was required for the Finnish participants as they travelled by car. For the Irish and Northern Irish participants however organising the shipping of their stock created several challenges for project staff. The need for the stock to be collected from a number of different participants living in different areas, the packaging requirements for the shipping, insurance, the timeline for delivery, the remote location of the Hotel and the cost all complicated the process of identifying suitable shipping companies. Ultimately Emerald Freight was contracted to ship the stock for the Irish participants and All-Route Shipping for the Northern Irish participants.
- **Market Place:** Technichus liaised with Festival organisers in relation to the Market Place and organised the physical 'stalls' to be used. The three project partner organisations supporting participants made direct payment to Urkult Festival to rent the 'stalls' in the Market Place during the Festival. Supported participants were allocated stalls beside each other and Technichus organised signage to show the support received from 'a creative momentum project'. As there was no secure location to store stock, the stalls had to be set up each morning and stock transported back to the Hotel each night. Project staff advised participants in advance that price signage in Swedish Kroner was needed and that most transactions would be in cash.
- **Festival Tickets:** While a number of tickets were included with the fee paid for the Market Place, additional Festival Passes also needed to be purchased in advance.
- **Pecha Kucha:** A Pecha Kucha event, close to the



Festival site, was organised by Technichus where each supported participant was to make a presentation. This format involves presenting 20 images for 20 seconds each. Project staff engaged with participants to get their presentations in advance of travelling to Sweden.

The following project staff arranged participation of the enterprises and accompanied them to the event:

- Silvia Guglielmini, Project Administrator, WDC
- Niall Drew, Project Co-ordinator, Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon Borough Council
- Saila Puukko, Project Manager and Henri Finström, Project Worker, Lapland UAS

Travel and accommodation was excellent. Our hosts were outstanding in friendliness and support. Group dynamics were excellent both socially and professionally. (Urkult participant)

To promote and showcase the project's participation in the Festival, profile articles about some of the selected participants were written by project staff, published on MyCreativeEdge.eu and promoted on social media:

- ['Walking through life without restriction': Bearfoot Enterprise at Urkult Festival](#) 19 July
- [Creative Hotspot Support: Sallyann's Handmade Bags](#) 27 July
- [Airmid Irish Natural Skincare at Urkult festival](#) 1 August

4.5 THE CREATIVE HOTSPOT

The Urkult Folk Festival opened with its 'Fire Night' on Thursday, 4 August 2016. By that stage the participants from Finland, Ireland and Northern Ireland had all arrived. They set up their stalls at the Market Place that evening and got to enjoy the Festival opening at midnight.

On arrival at the festival site we went straight to work, setting up our stalls and beginning to talk to potential customers about why we were there, what we were selling and so forth. I sell the majority of my bags through markets that I attend, so it was a great experience to travel abroad to a large event to see how it worked, and how my bags might be received in a brand new market. I was

interested to explore if music festivals might be a particular outlet for my bags. Overall, my bags were received very positively, and I made a few sales. Feedback from buyers and browsers was overwhelmingly positive. (Sallyann Marron)

On Friday, 5 August the Pecha Kucha took place at 14.00 at Markusgården, some distance from the Festival site. While attendance was quite low, the transnational group of participants found it a useful way to learn more about the others in the group and their way of working. The Pecha Kucha presentations were recorded and some published on the project's YouTube channel:

- [Pecha Kucha @ Urkult festival 2016 - Annika Konttaniemi from Susivilla](#)
- [Pecha kucha @ Urkult festival 2016 - Ciara Campbell from Ciara Campbell Ceramics](#)
- [Pecha kucha @ Urkult festival 2016 - James Adair from The Journeyman Saddler](#)
- [Pecha kucha @ Urkult festival 2016 - Sallyann Maroon from Sallyann's Handmade Bags](#)

Participants then set up at the Market Place from 16.00-21.00. Annika Konttaniemi got her 15 minutes of fame when she was interviewed by a local radio station about her participation. She also reported some increase in Instagram followers after the event.

E-City Landscape & Art participated in a workshop by having an own performance with music and pictures (slideshow). The workshop we participated in was not really relevant to our work but it was interesting, and the whole event was quite interesting. (Elina Söderström)

I wish we had been informed of the overall festival price range beforehand so we could have adjusted our products to match... (Annika Konttaniemi)

On Saturday, 6 August, the main day of the festival, the participants were at their stalls from 11.00 to 17.30. During that day there was a lunchtime visit to the nearby creative space, the Nordic Centre (see Box) and a group dinner at the



Hotel that night. The group left Näsåker on Sunday, 7 August, and following an overnight stay in Stockholm,

returned home on Monday, 8 August.



Left: Poster for Pecha Kucha event. Centre Top: Sign for Pecha Kucha. Centre Bottom: YouTube video of Sallyann Marron's Pecha Kucha presentation. Right Top: Urs Hartung's stall at market. Right Middle: Opening Fire Night. Right Bottom: Urkult Festival.

THE NORDIC CENTRE

The [Nordic Centre](#) is a creative hub in central Näsåker housing a professional pottery studio and a farmer's shop as well as a beautifully renovated Art Gallery. The heart of their operation is a fully equipped and wonderfully spacious pottery studio with kiln and throwing wheels. Helen Blästa, owner of the Nordic Centre, runs [Nämforsen Keramik](#) ceramic studio.

The Nordic Centre offers overnight or long rental stays on the farm. They also run various courses and projects teaching ceramics to others. One of the projects they run is Sharing Hands, an integration project where people from different cultures learned how to tell their stories through clay.

During the Urkult Festival 2016, the group of participants supported by the project visited the Nordic Centre to learn about the activities of this rurality-based creative hub and also Helen's ceramic business.

Following Helen's engagement with the project participants, she applied for the opportunity to participate in the Finnish Creative Hotspot and travelled to Arctic Design Week in February 2017. During the Urkult Festival 2017 Helen staged an exhibition of her photographs chronically her experience at Arctic Design Week.



Participant experience varied (see Section 9). As E-City was not actually a handcraft company, the event was not as useful as it may have been to others. There was strong networking among some of the handcrafters participating.

While not successful as a sales event, this did become a very successful networking event with the other creative entrepreneurs participating from Ireland. I very much enjoyed exchanging thoughts with them both on a professional and a curiously personal note.
(Annika Konttaniemi)

I have noticed an increase in Swedish traffic on my own website and that of my Etsy page. Each of my bag purchasers took business cards, as did many visitors to my stall, so I can expect some additional sales from Sweden. (Sallyann Marron)

The main negative comment was about poor sales at the Market Place.

Unfortunately due to the bus pick up timetable, we were packing up when the concert was over, so we missed the huge numbers leaving. (Urkult participant)

For me, the only thing I would have asked for was more time at the festival actually selling. On the Friday particularly we could have been at the market area selling for much longer, and this for me

was a missed opportunity. But that is a small criticism for what was a great visit. (Sallyann Marron)

Also while there had been strict criteria from the Festival organisers that the companies selected had to have an eco-friendly ethos and approach, it seemed that not all of the other companies selling at the Market Place met these same strict criteria and seemed to include mass produced imported handcrafts.

Project staff felt their overall experience of the Festival was great. It was nice to get to know some of the project participants/companies a lot better during the trip. The group dinner was a good idea for people to get to know each other better, as was the Pecha Kucha.

On a local level, I have now got to know some other makers and support between each other at home markets is wonderful. We have talked about collaborating in some way. (Urkult participant)

As a group we gelled together straightaway, and found a huge amount of common ground, even though our individual crafts were very different. The informal time spent talking and sharing ideas, knowledge and experiences was invaluable. Overall, all the participants were really generous with their time, knowledge and information. It was a huge learning experience. (Sallyann Marron)



ANNIKA, SALLYANN & NINA

Two of the selected enterprises – Annika Kontaniemi, Susivilla, Finland and Sallyann Marron, Sallyann’s Handmade Bags, Ireland – had previously taken part in another project activity called Creative Steps 2.0. This innovation workshop process matches two enterprises from different countries and assigns a multidisciplinary team of students, who work on an innovation idea for the companies. Annika and Sallyann were matched during the first round of Creative Steps 2.0 run by Lapland University of Applied Sciences in May 2016. They communicated online through the Creative Steps 2.0 programme and subsequently remained in touch in the run up to the Urkult Festival.



Student trainee Nina Niskala from Lapland UAS was part of the Creative Steps 2.0 student team who worked with Annika and Sallyann during Creative Steps 2.0 and she also attended Urkult, mainly to help out Annika Kontaniemi. During Urkult Annika, Sallyann and Nina were interviewed about their collaboration after Creative Steps 2.0 which was promoted on Facebook. [Annika Konttaniemi speaks about Sallyann's Handmade Bags @Urkult 2016](#) (737 views)

During Ukult, Annika suggested putting Sallyann in touch with a Finnish design collective – Piirre Collective – to help Sallyann develop her own unique fabric design for her bags. This led to the design of the first unique print for Sallyann’s bags – Meadow – launched in November 2016. The original print proved so popular that two more colour patterns for Meadow were developed and launched in September 2017. And in January 2018 they designed another unique ‘Sallyann’ print Fushia. Both Meadow and Fushia are inspired by the landscape of county Clare in the West of Ireland.



4.6 FOLLOW UP TO THE CREATIVE HOTSPOT

Following the Festival participants were requested to complete an online feedback survey, the results of which are given in Section 9. They were also asked to submit a short report on their experience and to sign official forms relating to State Aid requirements.

During the Festival, short video interviews were conducted with a number of the participants discussing their experience at the Festival. These were subsequently edited and uploaded to the project’s [YouTube](#) channel:

- [Patricia Millar Ceramics @ Urkult festival 2016](#) (75 views)
- [Airmid Irish Natural Skincare @ Urkult festival 2016](#) (232 views)
- [Urkult 2016 - Sallyann's Handmade Bags](#) (56 views)
- [Urkult 2016 - Urs Harttung](#) (67 views)

directly to Facebook. Videos uploaded directly to Facebook are promoted more heavily by Facebook than links to YouTube and generally receive more views:

- [Patricia Millar Ceramics @ Urkult festival 2016](#) (1,044 views)
- [Airmid Natural Irish Skincare @ Urkult festival 2016](#) (694 views)
- [Urs Harttung, Bearfoot Enterprise, at the Urkult folk festival...](#) (132 views)



Shorter versions of these interviews were also uploaded

A number of articles were written and published on MyCreativeEdge.eu about the experience, these were promoted widely on social media:

- [3 West of Ireland Craft Businesses Participate in Swedish Festival](#) 19 August
- [Mesmerised by nature's little details](#) 20 October

There was also some media coverage of the project's participation in the event:

- [Internationella hantverkare möttes i Näsåker – samarbete utvecklas i nytt project](#), Tidningen Ångermanlands (Swedish newspaper) website and print edition, 9 August
- P4 Västernorrland (Swedish radio) – interview with Annika Konttaniemi, 5 August

- Connemara Community Radio (local Irish radio station) live radio interview, 24 August
- [Galway Craft a Hit in Sweden](#), Galway Advertiser (local Irish newspaper), 25 August
- [Swedish Folk Festival Trip for Sallyann](#), The Clare Champion (local Irish newspaper), 26 August
- [Kilfenora's Kevin Big in Sweden](#), The Clare People (local Irish newspaper), 25 August



Tidningen Ångermanlands (Swedish newspaper) print edition, 9 August



The Clare People (local Irish newspaper), 25 August



4.7 SWEDISH CREATIVE HOTSPOT – LESSONS LEARNED

Host Organisation	Sending Organisations
<p>Working with organisers: It takes considerable time and effort for the host organisation to engage with the event organisers. It is important not to underestimate the commitment involved in this.</p> <p>Differing Timescales: The timescale required by the project to promote a call for applications, select the enterprises and make international travel arrangements meant that decisions and information was needed from event organisers earlier than they would usually do so. As event organisers were not working full-time on this event, this created some challenges.</p> <p>Ethos/Values: The organisers of this event strongly stressed their eco-friendly, sustainable, bottom-up ethos and values and expressed some reservations about engaging with a publicly funded initiative. They would not permit significant visual branding of the project /EU support (e.g. a pull up banner) at the event with only smaller table-top signs allowed. They also insisted on final approval of selected participants.</p> <p>Logistics: The remote location of the event, limited accommodation, lack of public transport and the size of the project group (18 people in total) created challenges in organising the logistics of participation.</p> <p>Pecha Kucha: The Pecha Kucha format for the Creative Exchange worked well and participants found it useful to learn more about each other. However promotion of the Creative Exchange more widely to the Festival audience was difficult. The fact that the venue for the Pecha Kucha was at some distance from the Festival site also made this challenging. Promotion of the videos helped to extend the reach.</p>	<p>Selection criteria: The selection criteria for the event, both the general criteria of the Creative Hotspots Model and the specific criteria of the Festival, could have been off-putting for potential applicants. Some potential applicants felt the process was too complicated and onerous.</p> <p>Awareness of Event: As this was a small, unknown Festival in the other partner regions and the majority of its online presence was in Swedish, raising awareness of the Festival among potential applicants was necessary, as well as promoting the opportunity. If an event has a higher profile internationally it is easier to 'sell' the opportunity to participate. Also applicants had to depend on the information supplied by the project to gain an understanding of the nature of the event and this may have led to differing expectations among participants.</p> <p>Additional persons: Two participants requested to bring family members, at their own cost, which was agreed. However this did create additional organisational complications and there may have been some problems in communicating practical information to the additional persons.</p> <p>Freight: As some participants were bringing high value and/or fragile stock, shipping of stock (timing of arrival, potential damage) created an added risk to their participation and to the project organisations, as well as additional insurance costs.</p> <p>Mix of companies: As each partner organisation made their own selection from their region but were not aware at the time of who was selected in other regions, the overall mix of companies across the transnational group was not considered though ultimately the group gelled quite well. Joint selection from across all regions might be useful.</p>



5.0 NORTHERN IRISH CREATIVE HOTSPOT: DIGITAL DNA @ THE PLANETARIUM 2016

5.1 DIGITAL DNA @ THE PLANETARIUM

[Digital DNA](#) is the leading digital media industry event in Northern Ireland, incorporating the many digital elements that have allowed us to explore the world around us. Digital DNA takes place in Belfast, however in 2016, in collaboration with Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon Borough Council, the organisers decided for the first time to hold a Digital DNA conference in Armagh City – Digital DNA @ The Planetarium – on 29 September 2016. The event featured influential thought leaders and successful businesses providing a practical and relevant understanding of how technology can help business grow. It was held at the distinctive venue of the [Armagh Planetarium](#).

Digital DNA has been a key catalyst in advancing Northern Ireland's entire digital landscape and we are delighted to collaborate with Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council to create this unique event at one of the region's most inspiring venues. (Gareth Quinn, Digital DNA's Managing Director)

According to organisers the top reasons to attend are:

- Build relationships, secure clients and develop strategic partnerships;
- Develop your knowledge of key digital topics like digital strategy, content marketing, the power of video and importance of mobile;
- Explore ground-breaking innovations;
- Gain cutting edge insight into what the future holds for consumer and corporate markets.

Among the speakers at Digital DNA @ The Planetarium 2016 were:

- Ryan Owens, Head of Customer Solutions & Innovation – Google EMEA
- Rob Elkin, CTO – Busuu

- Leanne Ross, Digital Consultant – aCupofLee
- Andy Hill, Managing Director – Dokoo Digital
- Peter Craven, Head of Marketing – CDE Global
- Alan McMurray, Director – Total Hockey
- Mark Haslam, Managing Director – Loud Mouth Media
- Paul McNally, Director – Paul McNally Design

5.2 HOW DID THE PROJECT ENGAGE WITH ORGANISERS?

As Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon Borough Council (the Northern Ireland project partner for 'a creative momentum project') were already supporting the event, a relationship with the organisers already existed. Niall Drew, project co-ordinator for ACBCBC, met with organisers. As this event was a one-day conference, the only option for participation by project participants was to attend talks, seminars and workshops held during that day. In order to increase the learning value of the visit to Northern Ireland, a number of other supplementary activities were also organised by ACBCBC (see below).

A challenge in engaging with organisers was the timeline. As the organisers were focused on their Digital DNA event in Belfast in June, they were not focused on the Digital DNA @ The Planetarium event until the Belfast event was over. However the timeline for project partners to advertise the opportunity, select enterprises and make flight bookings meant they required information and details far earlier. Another complication was the timing, as the event was in September the call for applications had to take place during the summer months when many project staff and potential applicants would be on holidays.



5.3 HOW WERE THE PARTICIPANTS SELECTED?

A call for applications for '[Support to Participate in Digital DNA @ The Planetarium](#)' opened on 27 June 2016 on MyCreativeEdge.eu. The call was open to creative enterprises based in the West of Ireland, Mid-Sweden, Northern Finland and the North East of Iceland and applications were to be submitted through an online Google Form. The supported enterprises would take part in a Creative Exchange event on Wednesday 28 September, the Digital DNA @ The Planetarium conference on 29 September and visit the [AMMA creative education centre](#) on Friday 30 September.

The original deadline for applications was 7 August 2016, however due to a low number of applications, the [deadline was extended](#) to 18 August for applicants from Iceland and 21 August for applicants from the West of Ireland.

The call for applications was promoted through two articles

on MyCreativeEdge.eu, twelve Facebook posts, eight Tweets, a MyCreativeEdge.eu Newsletter, a dedicated e-mail to MyCreativeEdge.eu members and e-mails to relevant regional and sectoral organisations requesting cross-promotion. Promotion and marketing of the opportunity through individual contacts and emails also took place. Lapland UAS has several Associate Partners in Northern Finland who helped to promote through their own networks.

As noted above, promotion of the opportunity was more difficult because of the summer holiday season. Also, for enterprises based in the West of Ireland the attractiveness of an event in Northern Ireland was probably less than the opportunity to travel beyond the island.

By the deadline, four applications were received in the West of Ireland, five in Northern Finland, two in Mid-Sweden and one in North East Iceland. Applications were assessed using the same criteria as for the previous Creative Hotspot. After assessment the following were selected:



THE SELECTED ENTERPRISES

Northern Finland:

1. **Julius Oförsagd** ([Julius Oförsagd Company Oy](#)) based in Rovaniemi provides a range of product and service design solutions. Julius is also producer of Arctic Design Week.
2. **Niina Karvinen** ([Somanen /Soma Media Oy](#)) runs Soma Media Oy which operates Somanen, a multiplatform for live streaming and videoblogs based in Oulu.
3. **Antti Kaarlala** ([EverWhatProductions](#)) runs an Oulu-based creative agency and production company with Antti Kairakari.

Mid-Sweden:

4. **Mikael Bergvall** ([planet4us](#)) from Alnö runs a start-up company within sustainable development. Consumers want to buy more sustainable products. planet4us offers skills and mobile IT-solutions to bring sustainability data to the market.
5. **Lars Persson Skandevall** ([Bron Innovation](#)) runs the IT company Bron Innovation, an innovation system in IT and digitalisation based in Sundsvall. Lars is also active in promoting entrepreneurship development in his region.

West of Ireland:

6. **David Pierce** ([Black Hole Studio](#)) based in Roscommon provides a centre for visual arts: photography, graphic, video and multi-media.
7. **Fergal O'Connor** ([Happy Marketing & Media](#)) based in Castlebar founded Happy Marketing & Media in 2015 to provide businesses with content marketing and media buying services. They offer the [buymedia.ie](#) media buying and selling marketplace to help advertisers save time and money, and media companies to develop new markets.
8. **Camilla Meegan** ([DNK media productions](#)) produces video content for a range platforms. Based in Letterkenny, Kieran Kelly who co-owns the company also participated at the Creative Hotspot at his own cost.
9. **Gary Reddin** ([Reddin Designs](#)) runs a creative studio based in Sligo offering design, illustration and architectural services.

North East Iceland:

10. **Anna Sæunn Ólafsdóttir** ([NyArk Media ehf](#)) from Akureyri runs NyArk Media, an Iceland-based media production company focusing on an interdisciplinary approach to storytelling via film, publishing, social media and other unknown future medias.

5.4 HOW WAS PARTICIPATION ORGANISED?

Project staff arranged participation of the enterprises. Co-operation between project staff and the selected companies was good. Communication was mainly through email and by phone. Project staff made the following arrangements:

- **Flights/Land Transport:** As the Finnish participants were based in both Rovaniemi and Oulu, separate flights were arranged and they met at Helsinki airport to travel to Northern Ireland. Flights for the Icelandic and Swedish participants were organised from Reykjavik and Stockholm respectively. Flights were to either Dublin or Belfast and bus transport booked to travel to Armagh city. All Irish participants travelled by car and their

travel expenses were reimbursed.

- **Internal Transport:** As the conference location was within walking distance of the Charlemont Hotel, and the Irish participants had their own transport, no internal transport needed to be organised.
- **Accommodation:** The host partner, Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon Borough Council pre-booked rooms at two hotels in Armagh, as enough rooms could not be found at a single hotel. The Irish participants stayed at the [Armagh City Hotel](#) and all other participants at the [Charlemont Hotel](#) which is located next to the conference venue.



- **Event Tickets:** Event tickets for Digital DNA @ The Planetarium for participants and project staff needed to be booked in advance.
- **Creative Exchange:** A Creative Exchange event was organised for the evening of 28 September, before the conference. It took place at Armagh Market Place Theatre. Supported participants did not have to make formal presentations, but did have to prepare a short introduction of themselves and their company.

Given budget limitations, no project staff member accompanied the Icelandic participant. The following project staff participated in the Creative Hotspot:

- Silvia Guglielmini, Project Administrator, WDC
- Kristina Jeppson, Project Officer, Technichus Mid-Sweden
- Jorma Mölläri, Marketing Lecturer, Lapland UAS
- Aisling Murtagh, Post-Doctoral Researcher, NUI Galway
- Niall Drew, Project Co-ordinator, Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon Borough Council

To promote the project's participation in the event in advance, a number of articles were published on MyCreativeEdge.eu:

- [Happy Marketing & Media wins place @ Digital DNA](#) 13 September
- [Niina Karvinen from Somanen/Soma Media Oy](#) 21 September
- [Icelandic Filmmaker taking part in Creative Hotspot](#) 22 September
- [Planet4us will come to the Digital DNA Creative Hotspot](#) 24 September
- [Looking for new development ideas – Julius Oförsagð Company Ltd](#) 26 September

In the lead up to the event, I researched the speakers that were going to be there and decided on which ones I wanted to see. There was one speaker in particular, a designer, that I felt would be of benefit to hear speak and to try and get to talk to him following his talk. He was more than willing to speak following his presentation

and after some conversation, he agreed to be a mentor to me. (Gary Reddin)

5.5 THE CREATIVE HOTSPOT

The Creative Hotspot experience began on the evening of Wednesday, 28 September with a Creative Exchange information and networking event 'Grow Your Digital Business' held at the [Armagh Market Place Theatre](#). All the supported enterprises met each other in advance so had a chance to introduce themselves. The [Lord Mayor addressed the group](#). The main speaker was Kevin Sexton, founder of [Mobstats](#) discussing digital business. In total 23 people including the supported companies and local enterprises from the region participated.

Wednesday night was an opportunity to introduce yourself to the group and start to monitor who would be the people you were going to make further contact with based on their sector and background. We also had an introduction from Niall ..., that was informative and he did a great job at making us feel welcome and it was much appreciated as I arrived alone from Iceland and didn't know anybody there. (Anna Sæunn Ólafsdóttir)

On Thursday, 29 September the supported companies participated in the main sessions of the Digital DNA @ The Planetarium conference as well as selecting a number of parallel workshops. That evening they all gathered for a group meal.

I made good contacts, whom I believe will help me in networking with other Irish companies in the future. I also learned a lot about the industry in Ireland and believe that as a spin off I will travel back to Ireland to take part in the local film fair next summer. (Antti Kaarlela)

The conference took place in a very interesting setting in Armagh, at the Planetarium. The Schedule was super tight and there were so many lecturers, but we had a few coffee breaks and lunch break. Many of the lectures I attended very pretty relevant for me and my company, some were less though. Over all I would say that the event itself was interesting and inspiring and sparked a lot of new



ideas in my head, which is great, even though sometimes what you need isn't more ideas. (Anna Sæunn Ólafsdóttir)

The Digital DNA-Conference was, sad to say, a big disappointment. There was almost no possibility to network - which was the purpose of attending. (Digital DNA participant)

The key takeaways from the conference were later summarised in an article by Dr. Aisling Murtagh (see Box).

I found the event highly relevant to our business. We are a video production business specialising in the area of video content for digital marketing purposes. Many, if not all of the speakers I attended at the event spoke of the power and necessity of video to enhance business profile and to engage and attract new customers. It was very encouraging to hear so much emphasis being placed on what is not only our business but our passion and part of our

creative life. (Camilla Meegan & Kieran Kelly)

On Friday, 30 September the group got to visit the [AMMA creative education centre](#) which is a multimedia creative learning centre where digital technology, alongside traditional media, can be used creatively by organisations and individuals from schools, the youth sector and the community. They received a tour of the facilities then had a chance to test the green screen technology.

On Friday morning we visited the Amma Centre, we had an introduction of the work that is being done there in technology with kids and I was pretty fascinated, I work myself with kids and teenagers in another project in relation with music, and I was very curious about the great work that is being done there with teaching kids to produce their own film material. (Anna Sæunn Ólafsdóttir)



Top Left: Camilla Meegan (Ireland), David Pierce (Ireland), Mikael Bergvall (Sweden) and Lars Persson Skandevall (Sweden) visiting the AMMA Centre. Bottom Left: Mikael Bergvall (Sweden) with AMMA Centre staff demonstrating green screen technology. Right: (l-to-r) Camilla Meegan (Ireland), Silvia Guglielmini (Ireland), Julius Oförsagd (Finland), Lars Persson Skandevall (Sweden), Mikael Bergvall (Sweden), Jorma Mölläri (Finland), Niall Drew (Northern Ireland), Niina Karvinen (Finland), Kristina Jeppson (Sweden), Antti Kaarllela (Finland), Anna Sæunn Ólafsdóttir (Iceland)



ACTIVATING YOUR DIGITAL DNA

by Aisling Murtagh, NUI Galway (published on MyCreativeEdge.eu, 25 October 2016)

Through a *creative momentum project*, a number of creative enterprises were supported to attend Digital DNA, held on September 29th at the Armagh Planetarium. We've put together some of the key takeaway messages from this information-packed day on using digital technology to develop your business.

If you spend money on digital advertising target your ad campaign

The closer you can get to your target market the better. But the digital world is a massive space. For example, Alan McMurray from Total Hockey described how it used a geo-targeted Facebook ad campaign at the European Hockey Championships in 2015. This delivered their message to likely potential customers and had a huge impact on sales. While all businesses might not have such a relevant event to focus their digital advertising around, it can still be targeted such as by region, age and gender, for example.

Focus on what you're good at and do it well

With so many digital platforms to present your business on, should you have a presence on them all? The key message emerging from Digital DNA was whatever you do, do it well and keep it up to date. Digital content contributes to telling the story of your business and is part of its public face. If writing is not your forte, a blog might not be for you, but maybe more visual platforms are. That said, a strong visual element does appear universally important, such as using graphics, images and videos.

Make efforts to understand your industry and competitors

Leanne Ross from A Cup of Lee advises that digital tools can be useful to get to know what your competitors are doing and work on understanding changes in your industry. Keeping an eye on the news through perhaps a Google News search to help you stay up to date with developments in your industry and what competitors globally and locally are up to.

Use digital tools to get to know your customers better

Digital tools can give you inspiration for your own digital content or help you understand what people are taking about, helping build customer insights. Leanne Ross mentioned Answer the Public that allows you to enter search terms and it'll return lists of questions people are asking. Or try Quora and it'll give you answers to questions asked. Lana Richardson from Engage explained how we can use data to our benefit such as getting to know how people interact with your Facebook page using Facebook Insights to understand what content was most popular. Google Analytics helps you track activity on your website. There's plenty of information online, such as in blog articles, to help you get started with these.

Using digital tools make a good business better

At the end of the day with all the data analytics and digital insights in the world you can't forget about the basics of business. Niall McKeown from Ionology reminded us that digital enhancement and flash web design don't make a business thrive. Activating your digital DNA will make a good business better.

Overall participants gave positive feedback about the event, facilities and organisation. One criticism was about a lack of information about other participants beforehand, some felt it would be good to have lists in advance of who would be attending the conference. Unfortunately the organisers of the event could not provide such data in advance.

It was felt that networking between 'a creative momentum project' participants was good, but that there were not necessarily good 'networking' matches in the group. The challenge was that companies were from different fields and at different stages of development, so they were not always the "right kind of" match.

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The group of participants could have been more selectively picked to match each other better. I felt that it was quite a big mismatch in the group, even if everybody was nice and interesting people to meet. (Digital DNA participant)

We – people from Northern Finland, Sweden, Island and Ireland – were quite tight team together (in a good way) for two days and therefore in the event the networking was maybe not as effective as expected. It would have been nice to network in more organised way also with the other participant of the event (Digital DNA). It would have been nice for example to get a list of all of participants with company and contact information in order to find specific people of interest and needs. (Niina Karvinen).

Opportunities to connect with other enterprises supported by a creative momentum project was very good. It's important to have links and expert network in many countries. (Julius Oförsagd).

Concerning communication before and especially after the event, there was some follow-up online on contacts made.

I met with many helpful and like-minded peers. I have spoken

through Skype on a few occasions with two of the contacts made at the event. This has supported me in decisions on the direction of the business. We have sold printed illustrations and had enquires for design jobs directly as a result of this Creative Hotspot. (Gary Reddin)



Anna Sæunn Ólafsdóttir (Iceland) outside the Armagh Planetarium



TOP TIPS FOR ATTENDING THIS TYPE OF EVENT

Gary Reddin

1. Research who is going to be speaking and make a list of who, where and when your highlights are in advance of the event so that you can make sure not to miss anything.
2. Don't be afraid to go and speak to those who you think would have information that would be beneficial to you and your business.
3. Go to the event with a list of 3 goals (e.g. meet x, win x amount of new jobs, organise a sales meeting with x, find out x), that way you will go with direction and come away with achievement.
4. Share your experience so that people know that you are increasing your knowledge in the creative sphere and to promote the event for future years.
5. Follow up with contacts made. People appreciate being remembered and acknowledged and it also means that they have your number/email, if and when, they need to contact you.

Camilla Meegan & Kieran Kelly

1. Find out as much as you can about your fellow attendees before you attend – this way you have more time to think about and then engage in more in-depth discussions about how you could collaborate.
2. Partner up with someone – quite often at large events such as the Digital DNA two presentations that are of interest to you are scheduled at the same time. If you make an arrangement to buddy up with someone else who has similar interests to yourself then you can attend a talk each and then share the info after. This has the added advantage that you will be more motivated to pay attention and absorb as much as you can to relate later. In the relating of the info later you are consolidating it in your own mind as well as your partner's.
3. Make sure to follow up on any contacts you wish to maintain as soon as possible after you attend, while the event and the people are still fresh in your mind and you in theirs.

Anna Sæunn Ólafsdóttir

1. Make sure to get enough sleep in the days before the event to be fully energised and be able to get as much out of the short time as possible.
2. I also recommend having a high quality phone/camera and shoot as much as you can and take a lot of pictures, I had a very old phone that didn't even support the app used to scan other participants and put up in a contact list. I don't consider that a problem though but I regret not having had a decent device at the event.
3. Be open to all sorts of conversations, even though people don't seem to be exactly working in your area of expertise, there are many topics and tips that can come out of such conversations as well as the general idea around the Hotspot to be inspired by each other's work as folks living on the edges of Europe, sharing many of the same hindrances as well as objectives.

5.6 FOLLOW UP TO THE CREATIVE HOTSPOT

Following the event all participants were requested to complete an online feedback survey, the results of which are given in Section 9. They were also asked to submit a short report on their experience and to sign official forms relating to State Aid requirements.

As a result of the encouragement we received from other attendees at the Creative Hotspot we have developed a new branch to our

business. We are now providing training in video production on Smart phones for business people to produce their own professional quality video content. This new service is proving very popular and we project it will add a valuable revenue stream to our business. (Camilla Meegan & Kieran Kelly)

The Cultural Council of North East Iceland hosted a Creative Exchange called 'Cultural Soup' in cooperation with Akureyri Cultural and Marketing Office on Thursday, 17 November. Anna Sæunn Ólafsdóttir shared her experience of Digital



DNA with 25 attendees. [Good turnout at our Cultural Soup](#)

Artist connects at Digital DNA Event, Sligo Champion (Irish local newspaper), 11 October 2016

There was some media coverage of the project's participation in the event:

Council welcomes local and international guests for exciting digital events, Lurgan and Portadown Examiner (Northern Ireland local newspaper), 13 October 2016



Lurgan and Portadown Examiner (Northern Ireland local newspaper), 13 October 2016



Sligo Champion (Irish local newspaper), 11 October 2016



5.7 NORTHERN IRELAND CREATIVE HOTSPOT – LESSONS LEARNED

Host Organisation	Sending Organisations
<p>Selection of the Hotspot: There were very few options for events taking place in the region that met the criteria for selecting a 'Creative Hotspot'. It was not ideal to select a one-day conference, but there were few options.</p> <p>Creative Exchange: Organising the Creative Exchange for the evening before the conference was very useful as it gave the participants a chance to meet and network.</p> <p>Networking: It would have been better if there had been more facilitated networking opportunities as part of the Digital DNA @ The Planetarium event. Vast majority of participants were local Northern Ireland businesses, many of whom already knew each other, it was difficult for 'outsiders' to find opportunities to engage. The tendency to network can also vary across sectors.</p> <p>Information from organisers: It was difficult to get information on the speakers and line-up in advance. Information on the attendees was not available as there were data privacy issues.</p>	<p>Advance information: It would have been good if lists of speakers and attendees could be circulated in advance. Speakers were announced late.</p> <p>Suitability of participants: The participants may not have been the best match for the event. Some were at a too advanced stage of development in their business to find the event of much benefit. It was difficult to select the best matches partly because of lack of information about the event content but also because of low numbers of applications.</p> <p>Group dynamics: Would have been better if partners discussed selection more when selecting the companies to see what type of connections/group dynamic was possible.</p> <p>Site visit: The hands-on, site visit to the AMMA Centre worked very well and was enjoyed by the participants.</p> <p>Accommodation: Being based in two different hotels reduced the chances for the group to connect. Booking accommodation very far in advance is necessary to ensure a big group can stay together.</p> <p>Wider impact: It is useful to select participants, not only for their own sake, but who have wider networks and influence across their sector in their home country/region e.g. some of the participants work as mentors or are active in local industry networks and can spread the learning.</p>



6.0 FINNISH CREATIVE HOTSPOT: ARCTIC DESIGN WEEK 2017

6.1 ARCTIC DESIGN WEEK

[Arctic Design Week](#) (ADW) takes place each year during late February in Rovaniemi, Lapland. Arctic design and especially service design play a key role. The main target group for ADW are not only designers, but all types of companies interested in service design. The producer of the event is Julius Oförsagd Company and the organiser is the City of Rovaniemi local authority.

The background to ADW comes from the University of Lapland and its industrial design (and service design) education (Master's degree) programme. Because of this strength in art and design studies, there is strong expertise in the region. Service design has a lot of potential for companies across a wide range of fields. Arctic design also has its own specifications/criteria such as snow, ice, coldness, darkness and light which makes it unique. This expertise is something we in Lapland want to export.

In 2017, Arctic Design MISH MASH, held on 23-24 February, was the main event of ADW. MISH MASH was a creative platform of arctic stories, business development and matchmaking. MISH MASH Day 1 was organised in Santa Park and the theme of the morning session was customer experience and service design. The afternoon was organised by Nordkalott Symposium, and was about arctic architecture opportunities and challenges. The MISH MASH evening Matchmaking took place at Arktikum in central Rovaniemi during which the Arctic Design Company of the Year was awarded.

MISH MASH Day 2 was a very different and unique experience. It was organised in Sodankylä army base located approximately 120km north of Rovaniemi. The venue was an army base of the Finnish Defence Forces and the event was

mainly held outdoors and was experimental.

6.2 HOW DID THE PROJECT ENGAGE WITH ORGANISERS?

The Finnish project partner, Lapland UAS, had previously engaged with organisers during ADW 2016 when 'a creative momentum project' collaborated with ADW to support an international speaker ([Leif Rehnström CEO of Hello Future – a company based in Skellefteå, Sweden](#)) to present at the event and also supported a number of students to attend the ADW Business Day.

This existing relationship meant they could start to collaborate with the organisers shortly after ADW was selected as the Finnish Creative Hotspot. Saila Puukko and other members of the Finnish project team had a good understanding of the kind of an event ADW was. They had a good amount of time to discuss and plan beforehand and met with the producer Julius directly after he was officially contracted as the main organiser for ADW 2017. In addition to the face-to-face meetings, they communicated via email and phone.

Julius has organised ADW in every previous year. He is a service designer and is enthusiastic and passionate about exporting Arctic Design. The project wanted to collaborate with ADW to help make it a more international event. The Finnish project partner also wanted to introduce the 'a creative momentum project' creatives from other regions to Arctic Design.

From the project manager's point of view however, some information was received a bit late. It would have been preferable to inform the participants about the practicalities earlier.



6.3 HOW WERE THE PARTICIPANTS SELECTED?

A call for applications for '[Support to Participate in Arctic Design Week 2017](#)', opened on 28 November 2016 on the MyCreativeEdge.eu website. Applications were open to members of MyCreativeEdge and were to be submitted through an online application form in the Members' Login Area. It was open to designers from the West of Ireland, Mid-Sweden, South East of Northern Ireland and the North East of Iceland. The deadline for applications was 15 December 2016.

The opportunity was widely promoted through an article on MyCreativeEdge.eu, five Facebook posts (1 in Swedish, 1 in Icelandic and 3 in English), 1 Facebook post was boosted and reached 5,968 people, Twitter and the MyCreativeEdge Newsletter. Project staff also made individual contact with potential applicants.

By the deadline, 18 applications were received in the West of Ireland, 13 in Northern Ireland, two in Mid-Sweden and three in North East Iceland. Applications were assessed using the same criteria as for previous Hotspots. After assessment the following were selected:



THE SELECTED ENTERPRISES

South East of Northern Ireland:

1. **Laura McFarland** ([Paper Harmonic](#)) runs a graphic design studio in Lisburn offering business design services, wedding stationary, album artwork and anything else you like.
2. **Samantha Moore** ([Samantha Moore Silversmith](#)) is a silversmith. Her work in the medium of silver and precious metal, investigates how objects, inherited, gifted, collected and found, tell the stories of our lives.
3. **Shaun Byrne** ([Design Stics](#)) runs a multimedia company dealing in all types of media from business cards to promotional videos and advertising.
4. **Michael Geddis** ([Michael Geddis](#)) is an artist specialising in detailed graphite drawings and prints which are made intuitively and inspired by microscopic living things.
5. **David Henderson** ([DHD](#)) is based in Kilkeel, Northern Ireland. He runs an award-winning multimedia design company, David Henderson Design Ltd which provides excellent marketing and media services.
6. **Brenda Moffett** ([Nick Moffett Design Ltd](#)) runs a design and marketing agency based in Bangor, County Down offering the full spectrum of design and marketing services from development of strategy through to implementation.

North East Iceland:

7. **Hugrun Ivarsdottir** ([Islensk.is](#)) is a product designer who designs products based on traditional heritage and culture. In her products there are familiar patterns but in a different form than has been seen before.
8. **Herdís Björk Thordardóttir** ([Herdís Björk](#)) is a graphic designer and an artist with certification as a teacher. Her work is diverse but mostly focuses on illustrations, book design, product and app design. She also teaches History of Art and Design at the Akureyri Junior College.
9. **Helga Björg Jonasardóttir** ([Helga Björg](#)) is a designer, artist, art teacher and experimental farmer. In winter, Helga teaches art and design at VMA Comprehensive College in Akureyri but, in summer, she works as a designer and artist.

Mid-Sweden:

10. **Petra Staav** ([The Northern Paper Studio](#)) is an illustrator and paper artist. With a paper scalpel and tons of patience, Petra cuts out patterns in paper. Petra's studio is near her home in Sundsvall.
11. **Helen Blästa** ([The Nordic Centre](#)). During the Swedish Creative Hotspot (Urkult Festival 2016) the group of participants visited Helen Blästa at The Nordic Centre in Näsåker. Helen Blästa is a ceramics artist and runs the Sharing Hands integration project at The Nordic Centre.

West of Ireland:

12. **Jo Anne Butler** ([Superfolk](#)) Superfolk is a design and make studio. Jo Anne runs it with partner Gearoid Muldowney. Craft is at the heart of what they do. Their products reflect the character and behaviour of the raw materials from which they are made.
13. **Davin Larkin** ([Davin Larkin](#)) is a qualified furniture and industrial designer, as well as a design educator with a wealth of experience in the Irish furniture industry. Davin designs his own range of furniture and homewares and lectures at Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology.
14. **Ainslie Peters** ([Nádhúra](#)) Nádhúra is a Galway-based design company specialising in furniture products and design services. Ainslie Peters works in the areas of product design and development, project management, and marketing and sales.
15. **Deirdre Duffy** ([Wild Cocoon](#)) has developed a range of handwoven treasures – for the person or the home. Wild Cocoon products are handwoven on a foot powered floor loom ensuring that no two pieces are ever the same.

6.4 HOW WAS PARTICIPATION ORGANISED?

Project staff arranged participation of the enterprises. As the deadline for submissions was 15 December, the selection of

applicants, booking of flights and hotels all had to be done before the Christmas holidays to ensure better prices. This meant that key decisions had to be taken in a very short space of time. Also, unlike the two previous Creative



Hotspots, an Operational Management Team meeting for project staff was organised to take place for two days prior to the Creative Hotspot. This meant that no project staff members would accompany the supported enterprises to the Hotspot, which created some additional logistical complications.

Co-operation between project staff and the selected companies was good. Communication was mainly through email and by phone, with a face-to-face meeting organised for the Northern Ireland participants. Project staff made the following arrangements:

- **Flights:** Flights were booked for Irish, Northern Irish, Icelandic and Swedish participants to Helsinki from Dublin, Reykjavik and Stockholm respectively. An internal flight was also booked from Helsinki to Rovaniemi. For some participants this involved an overnight stay at an airport hotel in Helsinki. One of the Irish participants requested that their partner accompany them to the Festival, at their own personal cost, and this was agreed. A shuttle bus operated from Rovaniemi airport to the city and all participants availed of this.
- **Internal Transport:** As the hotels were based in the city centre, internal transport did not need to be organised in advance. When needed, people either walked or took taxis. Bus transport to the ADW MISH MASH venues was provided by the organisers as part of the ticket price.
- **Accommodation:** As there was quite a large group of project participants and staff attending, and because it was the high tourist season in Rovaniemi, there was a limited number of hotel rooms available. It was not possible to find accommodation for all participants in the same hotel. All Northern Irish participants, as well as Finnish project staff, were booked at the [Aakenus Hotel](#) with all other participants booked at [Hostel Café Koti](#).
- **Event Tickets:** 2-day MISH MASH event tickets for participants and project staff needed to be booked in

advance.

- **Display Area:** It was arranged with organisers that 'a creative momentum project' could have a display area at the venue for MISH MASH Day 1. All project participants were invited to bring a selection of material for display e.g. examples of product lines, brochures, business cards. Also it was agreed to have two display screens. One would have a video playlist of videos about 'a creative momentum project' e.g. official project video, videos of previous OMT meetings, examples of MyCreativeEdge.eu Profiles, enterprise interviews. The second screen would show videos of the work / imagery of the 15 supported designers. Project staff contacted participants requesting material and, as lead partner, the WDC took responsibility for creating the playlists, as well as adding subtitles to some videos. Lapland UAS organised the screen and physical display.
- **Company BIO:** In response to feedback from the previous Hotspots, a 'Company BIO' document was prepared by project staff providing an image, short introduction and links for each of the 15 entrepreneurs supported to attend. This was circulated to all participants in advance.

As a project Operational Management Team meeting was organised to coincide with the Hotspot, a larger number of project staff participated in this Hotspot than the two previous:

- Saila Puukko, Project Manager, Lapland UAS
- Henri Finström, Project Worker, Lapland UAS
- Jorma Mölläri, Marketing Lecturer, Lapland UAS
- Anitra Arkko-Saukkonen, Lecturer, Lapland UAS
- Silvia Guglielmini, Project Administrator, WDC
- Pauline White, Project Co-ordinator, WDC
- Kristina Jeppson, Project Officer, Technichus Mid-Sweden
- Niall Drew, Project Co-ordinator, Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon Borough Council
- Ragnheiður Jóna Ingimarsdóttir, Project Manager, North



East Iceland Cultural Council

- Aisling Murtagh, Post-Doctoral Researcher, NUI Galway (participated in OMT meeting but not at ADW)

To promote the project's participation in the event in advance, a number of articles were published on MyCreativeEdge.eu:

- [Helen Blästa – a Swedish creative looking forward to Arctic Design Week](#) 19 January
- [Helga Björg](#) 27 January
- [Petra Staav looks forward to Arctic Design Week](#) 2 February
- [Davin Larkin will participate in Arctic Design Week](#) 3 February
- [NI Companies meet prior to Arctic Design Week](#) 8 February
- [Herdís Björk](#) 10 February
- [Two creative enterprises from Co. Mayo will travel to Arctic Design Week](#) 17 February

6.5 THE CREATIVE HOTSPOT

As mentioned, project staff held a project meeting on 20-22 February so the supported designers travelled to Rovaniemi independently. They arrived on 22 February and that evening a tour of Rovaniemi was organised (see Box). After the walk, there was a casual group dinner and then the official opening event for ADW held at [Korundi](#) Art Museum.

The MISH MASH Day 1 seminar on 24 February took place at the unique venue of [Santa Park](#). A number of project staff travelled in advance to set up the display area and the other participants joined the ADW bus. The morning session included a wide range of inspiring international and Finnish speakers (all presentations were in English). The participants

found this very useful.

I found manning the display stand a very useful way of informally chatting to other participants and getting their feedback on my work (examples of which were displayed on the stand). The video loop presentation prepared by Niall Drew was good for getting conversations going as well as showcasing our work when the stand was unmanned. Whilst on the stand, I was interviewed about my work by a journalist from a German radio station. (Michael Geddis)

The talks were mostly relevant to my business – especially Arne's session with 10 rules of storytelling including the telling of stories that share values related to each business and the telling of stories as structured narrative. (Michael Geddis)

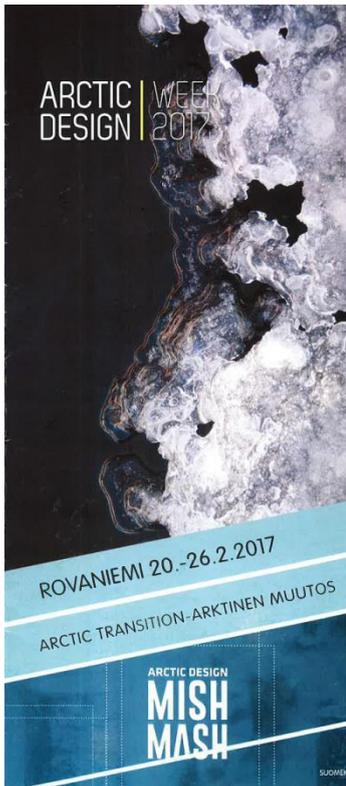
If I could suggest any improvement it would be to have more opportunity to actually exhibit work. Due to the limitations of the conference, there wasn't much scope for this and although we had a table for the Creative Momentum group to showcase a few things, it wasn't really announced or promoted and was a bit overloaded. (Laura McFarland)

The afternoon of the MISH MASH seminar, with a focus on architecture, was not as relevant to the project participants however, so it was decided to travel back to the city a bit earlier than planned to allow for some free time and rest, as the timetable was very hectic.

Think that there could have been one more day - it was a lot of travel for the length of time that we were there. (Arctic Design Week participant)

That evening the ADW Matchmaking event took place at [Artikum](#) where the Arctic Design Company of the Year was awarded and participants had a chance to network with the local design industry.





Brochure for Arctic Design Week 2017 MISH MASH. Presentation from MISH MASH Day 2

WALKING TOUR OF ROVANIEMI

Jorma Mölläri, Marketing Lecturer at Lapland UAS organised an 'Arctic Design Mini-Walk' for project participants on the evening of 22 February. The purpose was to introduce the city of Rovaniemi to the project guests, as well as give a chance for the group to meet. During the walk, the group visited:

- [Pilke Science Centre](#)
- [Marttiini knife factory](#)
- [Damastikoru Jewellery](#)

A video of one of the visits was uploaded to Facebook: [Creative Momentum businesses from Iceland, Ireland, Sweden, Finland & N. Ireland were welcomed to TAIGAKORU making and selling Jewellery around the world from Rovaniemi, Lapland](#) (220 views)

This was an opportunity to hear from people operating creative and design businesses in the region and to get to know the city. When organising the walk, the organisers realised that there would be very little time and that people would be hungry and tired after travelling, as most had arrived just before the walk. Originally there had been an idea to have a joint dinner with a local creative enterprise, but as the timetable was so busy a more casual meal was organised.

MISH MASH Day 2 on 25 February was a very different experience with a visit to [Sodankylä](#) army base. This began with a series of talks from entrepreneurs on Arctic Design

case studies. This was followed by outdoor demonstrations of Arctic Design by the Finnish Defence Forces and selected companies. The day was very successful even if it was very

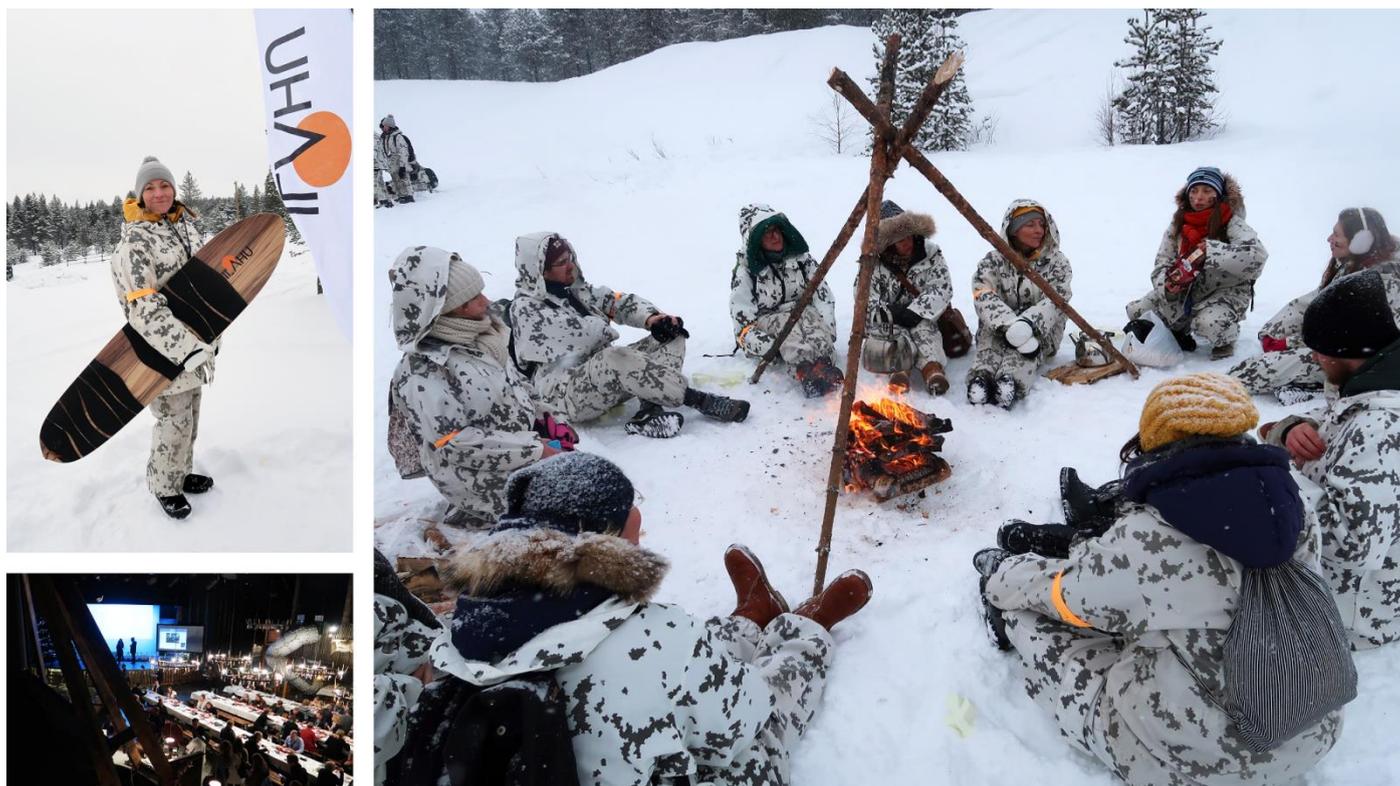


cold, but it was a very memorable and unique insight to the realities of Arctic conditions.

We had some good time to network at various points both during the conference and at social events scheduled around it. The more informal times I found were the most useful. Just getting to know people in a casual setting was really beneficial in learning how other people do business and what matters to them. The events organised by the conference were fantastic for facilitating this,

most notably the day at the army barracks where everyone had a bit of fun and discussion around the camp fires! An unforgettable day! (Laura McFarland)

A video of the snow experience was uploaded to Facebook: [Samantha Moore Silversmith arriving at Finland's #ArcticDesignWeek for some #MishMash2017 creative networking](#) (364 views)



Top Left: Brenda Moffett with an Ilahu Board at MISH MASH Day 2. Bottom Left: Santa Park during MISH MASH Day 1 seminar. Right: Making Finnish coffee in the snow at Sodankylä army base.

6.6 FOLLOW UP TO THE CREATIVE HOTSPOT

Following the event all participants were requested to complete an online feedback survey, the results of which are given in Section 9. They were also asked to submit a short report on their experience and to sign official forms relating to State Aid requirements.

If I was to give any advice to others attending a similar event, it

would be to put yourself forward, initiate conversation with people about their work and be upfront about trying to find ways to collaborate. I wish I had been a little braver, but lesson learned for next time! (Laura McFarland)

A video chronicling the project's ADW experience was created by WDC, published on the project's YouTube Channel [Arctic Design Week 17 - One Inspiring Experience](#) (86 views). A shorter version was uploaded directly to



Facebook [ADW - One Inspiring Experience](#) (757 views)



North East Iceland Cultural Council organised a 'Cultural Soup' Creative Exchange on 22 June in Akureyri on 'Design and Local Material'. The three Icelandic designers who participated in ADW shared their experience at this event which was attended by 15 people.

A Creative Exchange '[Taking a Creative Business Abroad](#)' was organised in Northern Ireland on 24 August where the six designers from Northern Ireland who participated in ADW shared their experiences. It took place during August, Northern Ireland's 'Craft Month' and featured in Craft NI's brochure for 'Craft Month'. Les Black, a member of MyCreativeEdge.eu posted a short blog post about the event afterwards [Taking a Creative Business Abroad event](#).

Videos of the designers describing their experience at the

Hotspot were created and a summary video of the speakers was uploaded to Facebook and boosted [6 NI companies discuss their experience on the Creative Momentum project activity in Finland](#) (2,399 views)



Videos of the individual designers were uploaded to YouTube:

- [David Henderson "Taking A Creative Business Abroad" August 17](#)
- [Shaun Byrne of Design Stics "Taking A Creative Business Abroad" August 17](#)
- [Michael Geddis Taking A Creative Business Abroad August 17](#)
- [Laura McFarland of Paper Harmonic "Taking A Creative Business Abroad" August 17](#)
- [Samantha Moore Taking A Creative Business Abroad August 17](#)



6.7 NORTHERN FINLAND CREATIVE HOTSPOT – LESSONS LEARNED

Host Organisation	Sending Organisations
<p>Accommodation: As this was the high tourist season and Rovaniemi has experienced huge tourism growth recently, and given the large number of people needing accommodation in the group (23 people) it was extremely difficult to find accommodation and it proved quite expensive.</p> <p>Co-operation with organisers: The previous relationship with organisers made it easier to work with them. Also the main organiser Julius had previous experience of the project, having been a participant at the Northern Ireland Creative Hotspot in 2016, and was an enthusiastic supporter of the project and its objectives.</p> <p>Timing of information: Information was not received early enough on some specific details of the ADW activities and programme. This made it more difficult to make arrangements and inform the participants.</p> <p>International needs: As the event previously mainly targeted a local/national audience, the organisers were not used to addressing the needs of international participants who would need to book and make arrangements much earlier. As well as the specific needs of a publicly funded project.</p>	<p>Reputational bounce: Some participants reported a 'reputational bounce' for their business from having been selected to participate in the event, they felt it gave them added credibility with clients.</p> <p>Articles/Advance promotion: Promotion of who was selected to participate in advance of the event was seen as positive to increase profile.</p> <p>Meeting in advance: The Northern Ireland participants found that meeting each other and the project co-ordinator in person in advance helped to answer questions, increase confidence and start the process of networking.</p> <p>Company BIO: The circulation of the Company BIO document on all participants was seen as positive.</p> <p>Confusion over programme: There was some lack of clarity between Arctic Design Week (which includes many events/activities over a full week) and the 2-Day MISH MASH. It may have worked better to have been involved in some of the other ADW events as well as just the MISH MASH seminar.</p> <p>Presentation: The lack of an opportunity for each participant to 'present' themselves and their work to the rest of the group was seen as a weakness. Some form of presentation at the start may have helped the transnational group to network better.</p> <p>Finnish experience: The group felt they did get a truly 'Finnish' experience.</p> <p>Separate travel: The fact that participants travelled to Rovaniemi without being accompanied by a project staff member caused some difficulties with payments. Also if project staff had travelled with them, the separate groups from different countries may have connected earlier in the journey. It is better to travel together if possible.</p> <p>Army base: The practical hands-on experience of Sodankylä really helped the group to bond over such a unique experience.</p>



7.0 ICELANDIC CREATIVE HOTSPOT: VAKA FOLK ARTS FESTIVAL 2017

7.1 VAKA FOLK ARTS FESTIVAL

The annual [Vaka Folk Arts Festival](#) presents a singular opportunity to enjoy the very best folk musicians, dancers and craftworkers, rooted in the traditional folk arts of Iceland, along with performers from Nordic and other countries of northern Europe. It is held in the vibrant small town of Akureyri, the capital of northern Iceland.

This small and friendly festival has a varied programme including:

- Concerts and dance displays, where you can listen to the ancient Icelandic rímur ballads and the old traditional instruments, langspil and fiðla, alongside performances carrying the old traditions into the future.
- Morning and afternoon singing and instrumental workshops for all ages and abilities.
- Informal song and tune sessions and social dancing.
- Exhibitions and workshops in traditional arts and crafts.

Events take place in intimate local settings with lots of opportunities to meet and chat with all the artists. In 2017 most events took place at the [Hof Cultural Centre](#) which is also home to the [Akureyri School of Music](#) which cooperated with [Vaka 2017](#).

7.2 HOW DID THE PROJECT ENGAGE WITH ORGANISERS?

The Icelandic partner organisation, the North East Iceland Cultural Council, had an established relationship with the organisers of the Vaka Festival. During the [fourth project partner meeting, which took place in Iceland in June 2016](#), one of the main Vaka organisers Guðrún Ingimundardóttir, made a short presentation about the event and answered questions. This was a good opportunity for all partners to learn more about the Hotspot. She noted that the Festival

promotes traditional / folk music. She said that it would take place in May/June of 2017 and that they would start inviting and selecting artists in September/October 2016.

The Festival organisers said they would like the partners to mainly select musicians, singers and dancers to participate, keeping in mind that the definition of 'folk' can be quite comprehensive. For example, in Sweden, Persian music is seen as folk – folk is not nationalistic. At times, 'folk' is seen as synonymous with 'traditional' – these are labels assuming different meanings, depending on who one talks to. She noted that they were also interested in researchers and festival organisers interested in building transnational networks. One of the festival events is a seminar – if selected, researchers and/or festival organisers could make a presentation. Also, any performers at Vaka Folk Festival would hold a teaching workshop. Guðrún indicated that it may also be possible to organise additional gigs in Reykjavik to make the visit more worthwhile for the performers.

Following this meeting, the Icelandic project partner engaged directly with the organisers on the details for participation. The 'sending' partners engaged directly with organisers on selection and logistics for participation. A decision was taken by the Northern Ireland project partner that they would not participate in this Creative Hotspot.

7.3 HOW WERE THE PARTICIPANTS SELECTED?

The call for applications for '[Support to participate in Vaka Folk Arts Festival, Iceland](#)' opened on 4 November 2016 on MyCreativeEdge.eu. The call was open to musicians, researchers and festival organisers and applications were submitted via an online Google Form. The call was to select creatives from the West of Ireland, Mid-Sweden and Northern Finland to participate in the Vaka Festival from 23-

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27 May 2017. How participants would take part depended on their areas of expertise (musicians, researchers or festival organisers) but could include: Performing; Participating in a discussion/performance event; Giving workshops to young music students; Leading or participating in lunchtime jam sessions; and/or Making a presentation during the Seminar 'Folk Art Festivals' on 25 May. The deadline for applications was 20 November 2016.

The call for applications was disseminated through an article on MyCreativeEdge.eu, Facebook, Twitter and a MyCreativeEdge.eu Newsletter. With the help of Associate Partners and other stakeholders the opportunity was promoted widely across the three regions, using both email and social media. Promotion and marketing of the opportunity in Northern Finland was mainly organised by individual contacts and through emails. At this time, Lapland UAS tried specifically to contact musicians from Northernmost Lapland, especially Sami musicians. It was found that personal contact was most successful.

When contacting potential applicants, it was noted that it might be difficult to find solo artists. Many musicians perform in a band and wanted the full band to participate. This however was not possible as the support was limited to one person per application, given the very high cost of travel and accommodation in Iceland for such a long period. Therefore if a group applied, only one person would be supported by the project with other members covering their own cost. This may not have been fully clear to all applicants.

During the promotion of this opportunity the question arose

of what kind of music is 'folk' music. Did potential applicants feel that their music is 'folk'? Is Sami music a folk music? In Ireland what is called 'folk' music in other countries is called 'traditional' music, whereas 'folk' is used differently. So there was a question of definition during the promotion.

By the deadline, four applications were received in Northern Finland but two were not eligible (one was located in Northern Norway and the other was based in the southern part of Finland, outside the NPA region). The two eligible applicants were therefore selected. In Sweden two applications were received and both were accepted.

A total of seven applications were received from the West of Ireland. The applications were assessed by project staff from the WDC and NUI Galway. They were also sent to the organisers of the Vaka Folk Arts Festival who made the final decision on the musicians they wished to participate.

As one of the Irish applicants, Dr. Verena Commins, was a researcher from the Centre of Irish Studies at NUI Galway, and the research work she proposed in her application was complementary to 'a creative momentum project' Intelligence & Influence research led by NUI Galway, they decided to support Verena Commins to participate in Vaka Folk Festival as a staff member (not as a supported enterprise). Her analysis of the impact of festivals has on local areas formed part of the [research outputs of the project](#).

Following assessment, the following applicants were selected:



THE SELECTED PARTICIPANTS

Northern Finland:

1. **Oula Guttorm** ([Ijahis idja](#)) is a 26-year-old Sámi man from Inari. Oula has been working with Sámi music since he was 15. He is currently involved in the [Sámi Music Centre](#) in Sajos and is the producer of Ijahis idja – a music festival celebrating indigenous people. He is also Artist Manager at [Tuupa Records Ltd.](#)
2. **Eetu Suominen** ([Northern Sound](#)) is a promoter delivering Finnish artists to festivals and venues around the Nordic countries, mostly above the Arctic Circle. He lives in Inari. Eetu's company Northern Sound provides sound, light, AV-rentals and services.

Mid-Sweden:

3. **Duo Systrami** ([Duo Systrami](#)) consists of twin sisters Fanny Källström, violin and Klara Källström, cello. With roots in Ångermanland in the north of Sweden, they create music inspired by the dramatic and mysterious landscape from their district and also their relation to each other as twin sisters.
4. **Kristina Sandberg** ([Kristina Sandberg](#)) is a singer and violin player living in Sundsvall. Kristina has been singing and playing at many different occasions, such as music festivals, church concerts, weddings, funerals etc. both in Sweden and abroad. Kristina is also a graphic designer and has made many folders and advertisements for music events.

West of Ireland:

5. **Mharhi Baird** ([Mharhi Baird](#)) is a Galway-based musician playing flute, tenor banjo and singing. Mharhi's passion lies with traditional music and song from various diaspora, particularly that of Scotland, Ireland and more recently Brittany. Her music has taken her across Europe and the USA to perform and teach at a number of festivals, summer schools and institutions. She is the recipient of two prestigious Dewar Arts Awards.
6. **Aisling Ní Churraighín** ([Aisling Ní Churraighín](#)) is a PhD researcher from Teelin, southwest Donegal. She is undertaking her research in the field of Folklore and Ethnography at NUI Galway on the National Folklore Collection undertaken by Seán Ó hEochaidh, also of Teelin. Along with her research interests, Aisling is a keen traditional musician, and plays the accordion, melodeon and tin whistle.
7. **Tiarnán O Duinnchinn** ([Tiarnán Ó Duinnchinn](#)) is an award winning Uilleann Piper who, in January 2013, won the Seán O Riada Bonn Oir (Sean O Riada Gold Medal) competition. Tiarnán has been touring and performing professionally on a regular basis since 1995 both as a member of various bands and as a solo performer.

7.4 HOW WAS PARTICIPATION ORGANISED?

Project staff made the following arrangements:

- **Flights:** As the two Finnish participants were based in Inari in Northernmost Finland, flights were arranged and they met the project manager Saila Puukko at Helsinki airport to travel to Iceland. Flights for the Swedish participants were organised from Stockholm, they travelled to Iceland a few days early, as a concert was organised in Reykjavik in advance of the Festival. Flights for the Irish project staff, as well as Mharhi Baird and Aisling Ní Churraighín were organised from Dublin to Reykjavik on Monday 22 May, while Tiarnán O Duinnchinn

travelled separately on Wednesday 24 May. All participants flew home on Monday 29 May except Aisling Ní Churraighín who wished to undertake research in the national Icelandic archives on the folklore and musical links between Ireland and Iceland for her PhD research (at her own cost), her return flight was booked for a week later.

- **Internal Transport:** Internal return flights from Reykjavik to Akureyri were booked for the Finnish participants. In consultation with Festival organisers, it was arranged that Swedish and Irish project staff and participants, as well as the Northern Irish project staff, would travel by a hired mini bus from Reykjavik to



Akureyri on 22 May, a seven-hour journey. The cost of this would be shared between the Festival and the participating project partner organisations. As well as project supported participants, other musicians performing at the Festival would take the bus, giving an opportunity to meet in advance. An internal flight was booked for Tiarnán O Duinnchinn. All participants and project staff took an internal flight to return from Akureyri to Reykjavik.

- **Accommodation:** Accommodation in Akureyri at that time of year was very limited and expensive. The Icelandic project partner and the Festival organisers tried to source accommodation at a reasonable cost. All the Finnish, Swedish and Irish musicians were booked into the [Gula Villan](#) guesthouse along with all of the other Festival musicians. Project staff, as well as researchers, were booked in other guesthouses.
- **Event Tickets:** Event tickets for the Vaka Festival were booked in advance for project staff.
- **Seminar:** Four of the participants were to make presentations at the Seminar 'Folk Music Festivals', and arrangements for their presentations were made in advance.

Musicians and instructors selected to participate were also paid €300 by the organisers of the Festival for their performances and work at the Festival. The Festival organisers liaised directly with the performers about their schedule of performances and teaching.

As a project Operational Management Team meeting was

organised to coincide with the Hotspot, the following project staff attended:

- Saila Puukko, Project Manager, Lapland UAS
- Silvia Guglielmini, Project Administrator, WDC
- Pauline White, Project Co-ordinator, WDC
- Kristina Jeppson, Project Officer, Technichus Mid-Sweden
- Niall Drew, Project Co-ordinator, Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon Borough Council
- Hulda Jónsdóttir, Project Officer, North East Iceland Cultural Council
- Aisling Murtagh, Post-Doctoral Researcher, NUI Galway
- Verena Commins, NUI Galway

To promote the project's participation in the event in advance, a number of articles were published on MyCreativeEdge.eu:

- [Sámi musician Oula Guttorm looks forward to Vaka Folk Festivals](#) 24 April
- [Tiarnán Ó Duinnchinn to perform at VAKA Festival](#) 11 May
- [Swedish musicians ready for Vaka](#) 15 May
- [Eetu Suominen from Northern Sound will attend Vaka to find new contacts](#) 17 May

In addition, one of the Irish participants Aisling Ní Churraighín published her own Deep in Thought blog post about her research, the folklore links between her own area and Iceland and her interest in attending the Festival [From Teileann to Inis Tuile](#) 17 May.





Top Left: Kristina Sandberg (Sweden) and Fanny Källström (Sweden) during a lunchtime jam session. Bottom Left: Hof Cultural Centre. Right: Lunchtime Jam Session.

7.5 THE CREATIVE HOTSPOT

The musicians Klara and Fanny Källström from Duo Systrami held a concert at the [Nordic House](#) in Reykjavik before going to the Vaka Festival, 70 tickets and 12 CDs were sold at this concert. A short video of the performance was published on [Facebook](#) and received 124 views.

The Creative Hotspot was quite an intensive experience for some of the participants. The musicians Duo Systrami, Mharhi Baird and Aisling Ní Churraighín ran music workshops with young Icelandic musicians from the Akureyri Music School from Tuesday 23 May. They all felt this was a great experience to teach young musicians and meet their teachers. Teaching a group of Icelandic young people a tune from their home country was a special experience.

They were also involved in rehearsals for group and individual performances. A group dinner for all project

participants and project staff was organised by North East Iceland Cultural Council on the evening of 23 May.

The Festival programme began on Wednesday, 24 May and continued until Saturday, 27 May (see Box). All performers performed at the opening concert on Wednesday evening, at a 'Tunes & Chat' session, as well as an individual concert and the Grand Finale concert. Those who were teaching workshops also performed with their students at the Student Concert. The musicians also had an opportunity to sell CDs at their concerts. One of the Finnish participants "Northern Sound" was asked to help with sound engineering during the Festival though this had not been made clear previously. He provided his services to the organisers.

The information received from the festival was at the same time too much and too little. You had... pages of email and the vital information was very little, or unnoticeable (Vaka participant).

VAKA 2017 FESTIVAL PROGRAMME - TRADITION FOR TOMORROW

24 - 27 MAY 2017, HOF CULTURAL CENTRE, AKUREYRI

Wednesday 24th May

19:00-19:45 Folk dance from Iceland and Norway: Hildur Dance company from Norway and the Dance Group Vefarinn from Akureyri.

20:00-22:00 Sumer is icumen in (Summer is here): Spring Concert of the Akureyri-Geysir Male Choir and Vaka 2017 opening Concert.

Thursday 25th May

10:00-12:00 Workshop: Rímur song: Introducing Iceland's ancient, epic rímur ballads with Bára Grímsdóttir & Chris Foster.

12:30-13:30 Lunchtime jam session: Everyone welcome to come and play and sing with our festival artists.

13:30-16:30 Seminar: Folk music festivals: Their mission and influence on traditional music

Chairperson: Guðrún Ingimundardóttir; Presenters: Eetu Suominen and Oula Guttorm from Finland, Dr. Verena Commins and Aisling Ní Churraighín from Ireland.

14:00-16:30 Workshop: Icelandic dance tunes: Come and play Icelandic dance tunes from the 19th century and do the dances with Benjamin Bech, Wilma Young and Barnaby Walters.

17:00-18:30 Tunes and chat: Vaka festival artists sit together to play, sing and chat about their music and their instruments. Mhàiri Baird & Seán Earnest, Tiarnán Ó Duinnchinn, Aisling Ní Churraighín, Gillibríde MacMillan.

20:00-22:30 Nordic and more: Music from Iceland, Sweden, Denmark, Norway, England and Estonia. Kvæðamenn, Duo Systrami, Benjamin Bech, Duo Jansen/Jüssi, Chris Foster.

Friday 26th May

12:30-13:30 Lunchtime jam session

13:30-16:30 Student Concert: Students and teachers of the Akureyri Music School together with Vaka musicians sing and play folk music from Ireland, Norway, Sweden, Scotland, England and Iceland. The concert is the finale of three days of workshops.

17:00-18:30 Tunes and chat: Festival artists sit together to play, sing and chat about their music and their instruments. Chris Foster, Benjamin Bech, Duo Systrami, Rósa Jóhannesdóttir and family.

20:00-23:00 Near Neighbours: Music and Gaelic songs from Ireland, Hebrides, Scotland and Shetland. Tiarnán Ó Duinnchinn, Aisling Ní Churraighín, Gillibríde MacMillan, Mhàiri Baird & Seán Earnest, Wilma Young.

Saturday 27th May

10:00-12:00 Band workshop for acoustic instruments: Come and learn to play Icelandic dance tunes with Benjamin Bech and festival artists.

10:30-12:00 Family singing workshop for children, parents and grandparents: Come along and sing some old favourites and learn new ones with Bára Grímsdóttir and Rósa Jóhannesdóttir & family.

12:30-13:30 Lunchtime jam session

14:00-16:00 The rímur ballad of Walt Disney: Don't miss this performance of Disneyrímur by Þórarinn Eldjárn where traditional singers from different parts of Iceland come together to perform this humorous rímur ballad about the life story of Mickey Mouse's creator.

20:00-23:30 Grand Finale: Our artists come together for this final festival concert of Vaka 2017. Chris Foster, Bára Grímsdóttir, Kvæðasystur Anna og Stína, Benjamin Bech, Duo Systrami, Rósa Jóhannesdóttir og fjölskylda, Tvisöngsbræður, Duo Jansen/Jüssi, Aisling Ní Churraighín, Mhàiri Baird & Seán Earnest, Tiarnán Ó Duinnchinn, Akureyri-Geysir Male Choir.



During the Festival a number of short social media videos were recorded by Silvia Guglielmini of the WDC and posted directly to Facebook, some of these proved very popular.

- [Akureyri-Geysir Male Choir, Vaka Folk Arts Festival 2017](#) (692 views)
- [Benjamin Bech @ Vaka 2017](#) (200 views)
- [Final tune @ Vaka 2017](#) (834 views)

At the 'Folk music festivals: Their mission and influence on traditional music' seminar on Thursday, 25 May, Eetu Suominen, Oula Guttorm, Verena Commins and Aisling Ní Churraighín presented on the topic of Festivals and their role (see Box). Oula presented about an indigenous people's music festival from a festival producers point of view. He gave information about the Inari region and a background to the Festival. Eetu presented on the folk music scene in Finland and how it affects his work as a music promoter. His biggest client is Varangerfestival in Vadsø, Norway.

Project staff held an [Operational Management Team meeting](#) on Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday of the Festival week, and also attended the Seminar on Thursday and evening performances.

After the participants returned to Reykjavik on Sunday, the Irish musicians played a concert arranged at [Kex Hostel](#). A short video is [here](#).

As the two Finnish participants were not folk musicians, but

music producers and promoters, while other participants were mainly musicians with their own performance and clear role at the Festival, networking for the Finnish participants was not rated very successful. However they noted that it was a great experience to take part to this kind of opportunity.

I made a few contacts but the event didn't really have any relevance to my work. The festival was obviously targeted for folk musicians. (Eetu Suominen)

The Festival was small, but this gave a better chance to get to know people attending the Festival; other artists and companies. Kristina Sandberg from Sweden felt she got inspiration from the Festival lunchtime jam sessions and has since been inspired to become even more involved in local music activities in her home region.



All performers on stage for the final tune of the Grand Finale concert

PERIPHERAL FOLK MUSIC FESTIVALS EXCHANGE IDEAS FOR THEIR FUTURE

PRESERVATION

By Aisling Murtagh, NUI Galway (published on MyCreativeEdge.eu, 1 June 2017)

Based in Akureyri, North East Iceland, the five days of this year's Vaka Folk Arts Festival incorporated a series of concerts, workshops, sessions and a seminar. With the support of a creative momentum project a number of creative professionals from the music sector participated in Vaka. From Västernorrland in Mid-Sweden these were Duo Systrami and Kristina Sandberg. Tiarnán Ó Duinnchinn, Mharhi Baird and Aisling Ní Churraighín attended from the west of Ireland and from Northern Finland Eetu Suominen and Oula Guttorm participated. This year's seminar assessed the role



of festivals in the preservation of folk music. Also from the west of Ireland, Dr. Verena Commins attended Vaka with National University of Ireland (NUI), Galway and discussed her research on the Willie Clancy Summer School.

Verena's work identified how the Willie Clancy Summer School has played a valuable role in the preservation and future practice of Irish traditional music. It also plays a strong part in the image associated with Miltown Malbay, the west Clare town where the summer school takes place each year since 1973. Tunes taught at the festival are carried forward and played elsewhere by the local and international participants. The summer school has a strong underlying ethos of volunteerism and is deeply embedded within the local community.

The approximately 20,000 visitors the summer school attracts each year should present an infrastructural challenge for the town. However instead the existing spaces of Miltown Malbay, its homes, pubs and schools, become places of teaching. The summer school has literally brought Irish traditional music back home. Verena explains: "Due to a shortage of space one year, people opened up their living rooms to hold uilleann pipe classes – and they've been happening ever since. So the summer school brings domestic music-making back into people's homes where it traditionally emerged from".

The Willie Clancy Summer School also brings wider benefits to the town. It has resulted in traditional music being strongly associated with it and this attracts visitors outside of the summer school's ten day duration. Miltown Malbay's location also adds to the sense of authenticity surrounding the event. Its peripheral geography on the west coast means it also becomes associated with the west of Ireland which can be constructed as a 'place apart'. According to Verena historically: "The west of Ireland has been imagined as an untainted cultural heartland of language, music and literature".

The Vaka seminar also featured other speakers who provided insights based on their experience and research. Aisling Ní Churraighín, also from NUI Galway, talked about folk music traditions and festivals in south-west Donegal assessing their influence on the communities in which they are held. It also featured presentations based on experiences from Northern Finland. Oula Guttorm producer of Ijahis idja, the Sámi music festival in Inari, discussed how this festival combines both traditional and contemporary Sámi music, as well as other events such as workshops and competitions to broaden the festival's appeal. Eetu Suominen from Northern Sound explained the challenges, but also the unique experience provided by a peripheral music scene.

Now in its fourth year, Vaka Folk Arts Festival focuses on music performance. However the seminar provides a valuable opportunity to combine practice with research and reflection.

7.6 FOLLOW UP TO THE CREATIVE HOTSPOT

Following the Festival all participants were requested to complete an online feedback survey, the results of which are given in Section 9. They were also asked to submit a short report on their experience and to sign official forms relating to State Aid requirements.

Participation in the event was documented through video. Following the Festival two videos were uploaded to YouTube:

- [Mharhi Baird and Seán Earnest, Green Grows the Laurel](#) (69 views)
- [Duo Systrami at Vaka Folk Arts Festival](#) (208 views)



Shorter versions were also uploaded directly to Facebook, as direct uploads to Facebook perform better than links to YouTube:

- [Mhàiri Baird @ Vaka 2017](#) (260 views)
- [Duo Systrami at Vaka Folk Arts Festival 2017](#) (222 views)



A story about Duo Systrami at Vaka appeared in the local Swedish newspaper [Allehanda](#) in Härnösand

Härnösandsysstrar spred influenser från Västernorrland på isländsk festival

159 images [Dela på Facebook](#) [Dela på Twitter](#)

Klara och Fanny Källström är sysstrarna från Håggstänger, Härnösand, som tillsammans ger folkmusiken ett lite yngre ansikte. I dagarna har de återvänt från en folkmusikfestival tvärs över Norska havet.

– På Island verkar det inte finnas någon folkmusikscen överhuvudtaget, de håller på att bygga upp någonting, säger Fanny Källström i ett pressmeddelande.

Med sitt band Duo Systrami har de nyligen gjort uppträdanden på den isländska festivalen Vaka Folk Art Festival och spridit traditioner från Västernorrlands musikhistoria – Schottis från Haverö som exempel. De snappades upp genom det EU-finansierade projektet Creative Momentum, tillsammans med sju andra musiker, forskare och arrangörer från både Finland, Sverige och Irland.

– Vi har spelat mycket, sålt många skivor och fått viktiga kontakter under resan. Det är bra att vara ute och spela och träffa mycket folk, säger de i ett pressmeddelande från Technicus, som är en av projektets samarbetspartners.



7.7 NORTH EAST ICELAND CREATIVE HOTSPOT – LESSONS LEARNED

Host Organisation

Accommodation: As this was the high tourist season and tourism activity in the area has increased substantially, it was difficult to source accommodation, especially at a reasonable cost. Participants and project staff had to be spread across a number of guesthouses. Also when the booking was made it was assumed that the rate included breakfast, however when they arrived it turned out it was a 'room only' rate. The project partner organisations had to arrange to cover breakfast costs for the participants.

Voluntary/community driven event: The Festival is largely a voluntary/community event. The organisers share a passion for the preservation of Folk Music and invite performers from other countries who share this passion. The Festival is not run on a commercial basis. Organisers had other work and responsibilities.

Limited budget: The organisers of this Festival operate with a limited budget and rely on voluntary input.

Communication: There was some confusion with communication taking place between organisers, the Icelandic project partner, other project partners and directly with participants.

Loss of project staff: As a key staff member of the Icelandic project partner, who had a close relationship with the Festival organisers, moved to a new position shortly before the Festival, the remaining staff member had to take on increased responsibility with short notice, including also organising the project meeting as well as Creative Hotspot participation.

Reykjavik: Some exposure for musicians in Reykjavik at concerts was organised by Festival organisers.

Sending Organisations

Heavy workload for musicians: The musicians attending the Festival contributed a considerable amount of time input. It did present a good performance opportunity but they had a heavy workload as a result.

Miscommunication: There was some miscommunication and lack of clarity in advance on the role and level of involvement expected of the musicians and attendees. Organisers expected one participant to provide sound engineering services for concerts but this had not been clear to him in advance. While musicians had a clear role at the Festival, it was a less clear for the event organisers and academics. They had a smaller role.

Timing of communication: It would have been good to have more information earlier. Some key information was not communicated until a late stage. When a lot of key information is communicated in one email, it can be missed.

Cost: Iceland is an expensive country, as this Creative Hotspot lasted for longer others, and the project only covered breakfast and one group meal, it was expensive for participants to cover all other food costs. There was a discount at the restaurant at the Hof Cultural Centre, but costs were high. Project partner organisations took a decision to cover some additional food costs.

Workshops very positive: The opportunity to give the workshops to the young students was a good professional and personal opportunity.

Stage of career: This Festival offered more benefit to performers at an earlier, less established stage of their career. More established performers would get less benefit.



8.0 IRISH CREATIVE HOTSPOT: GALWAY FILM FLEADH 2017

8.1 GALWAY FILM FLEADH

The [Galway Film Fleadh](#) (11-16 July 2017) is a six-day international film event held every July and welcomes a mad diversity of filmmaking from around the world. The Fleadh is very much a film lovers' festival, and attracts directors, actors, cinematographers and artists of all generations and cultural backgrounds.

2017 marked its 29th year and the central goal of the Galway Film Fleadh remains unchanged: to bring together audiences and filmmakers within an intimate environment, and share a common experience – the wonder of cinema. The Fleadh's diverse audience is made up of the general cinema going public, film buffs, industry professionals and invited guests.

Screening approximately 100 Feature Films and 100 Short Films over the course of six-days in July the Fleadh is also an Oscar Qualifying Festival in Short Animation and Drama categories. The audience selects awards for:

- Best International First Feature
- Best International Feature
- Best International Feature Documentary
- Best Irish First Feature
- Best Irish Feature
- Best Irish Feature Documentary
- Human Rights Cinema Award
- The Bingham Ray New Talent Award

Galway Film Fair

The Marketplace at the [Galway Film Fair](#), the industry arm of the annual Galway Film Fleadh, is a unique opportunity to meet with the world's leading financiers in an intimate and informal atmosphere, allowing new talent to be discovered and long term partnerships to be made.

[The Marketplace](#) at the Galway Film Fair (13-16 July 2017) takes place during the Galway Film Fleadh and co-ordinates pre-scheduled meetings between filmmakers with projects in development and/or completed films and invited Film Financiers, Distributors, Sales Agents, Broadcasters, Film Funds and Major Producers.

A pre-selected group of Irish and European producers with feature films/documentary projects have the opportunity to meet with representatives of these companies. A project book will be available for all decision makers and, in the case of completed films, viewing facilities will be available.

The Marketplace's unique selling points:

- Transatlantic Bridge;
- Intimate and informal atmosphere;
- Privileged access to the world's leading financiers;
- Showcasing new European and International cinema to leading Film Buyers, Distributors and Festival Programmers.

Alongside the Marketplace many other industry events take place at the Galway Film Fair including conferences, seminars, masterclasses, debates, workshops and much more.

8.2 HOW DID THE PROJECT ENGAGE WITH ORGANISERS?

The Galway Film Fleadh was the last of the Creative Hotspots. Staff of the two project partner organisations in Ireland – Patrick Collins and Aisling Murtagh of NUI Galway and Pauline White and Silvia Guglielmini of Western Development Commission – held a meeting with the organisers in early February 2017 to agree the details for the project's involvement. It was agreed that NUI Galway and the WDC would sponsor the Fleadh, this sponsorship would include a



full page advertisement in the Fleadh programme. The respective 'sending' project partners would cover the ticket costs for participation by their selected filmmakers. It was agreed that applicants for support could be any of the following:

- Filmmakers who wished to submit a feature length film (minimum 52 mins long) including, but not limited to, documentary, animation, experimental and narrative feature film, for consideration for screening during the Fleadh.
- Filmmakers/Producers who have a well-developed project and are seeking to meet with international financiers during the Marketplace.
- Writers, actors, directors who wish to take part in masterclasses and debates.
- Film Festival professionals who wish to connect with and participate in the Galway Film Fleadh.

Any filmmakers who wished to submit a feature film for consideration for screening, would need to complete the Fleadh's 'Film Submission Form' with details of the film, as well as the normal project application form. All applicants would be requested to submit a CV and final acceptance to participate in the Fleadh would depend on approval by the Fleadh organisers. Following this meeting, the WDC prepared a draft application form and got agreement from the organisers before publishing the call for applications.

8.3 HOW WERE THE PARTICIPANTS SELECTED?

The call for applications for '[Support to Participate in Galway Film Fleadh](#)' opened on 2 March 2017 on MyCreativeEdge.eu. The call was open to filmmakers who wished to submit a feature film, filmmakers/producers with a well-developed

project, writers/actors/directors and Film Festival professionals. Applications were to be submitted via the online application form within MyCreativeEdge.eu and applicants also had to e-mail a CV to support@mycreativeedge.eu. Filmmakers wishing to submit a film for consideration for screening also had to submit the Film Submission Form. The call was open to filmmakers from Mid-Sweden, North East Iceland, South East of Northern Ireland and Northern Finland. The deadline for applications was 26 March 2017.

The call for applications was disseminated through an article on MyCreativeEdge.eu, Facebook, Twitter and a MyCreativeEdge.eu Newsletter. After the initial article promoting the opportunity, a second article [July? Where else would you be if not in Galway!](#) was published on 15 March to promote the opportunity further. The opportunity was promoted also via email and through cross-promotion by Associate Partners and other stakeholders.

By the deadline, four applications were received in Northern Finland, two in Mid-Sweden (from two persons from same company), two in Northern Ireland and two in North East Iceland.

The selected filmmakers indicated an interest in different aspects of the Fleadh: two made film submissions for consideration for screening; six indicated they wished to take part in the Galway Film Fair Marketplace to pitch a film project; and three were young filmmakers interested in the Masterclasses and learning opportunities. In Mid-Sweden, as two young filmmakers from the same company both applied, it was decided to support partial costs for both to participate.



THE SELECTED ENTERPRISES

Mid-Sweden:

1. **Simon Bergström & Daniel Nordlund** ([Mountain North Pictures](#)) are young filmmakers and photographers from Sweden who together established Mountain North Pictures. Their first collaboration was the short film 'Mulberry Night'. Commercial film and photography is an important source of business and nature inspired film and photography is a particularly strong interest for Mountain North.

South East of Northern Ireland:

2. **George Kingsnorth** ([Gullion Media Limited](#)) has been working in digital film for over 30 years. Having spent many years working for BBC NI alongside such luminaries as Oscar winning director Danny Boyle, George has gone on to develop a career that has seen him write and direct his own movie and recently co-direct his first documentary. Following on from his experience on writing and directing the feature film 'Fiddlers Walk' George has been developing his next feature.
3. **Joe Marcus** ([OMAS Media Ltd](#)) OMAS Media is a full service production and post-production company specialising in music and documentary. The company was founded in 2009, but Joe Marcus's media career spans 35 years and includes editing work with Oscar winning and nominated directors. He also has experience in writing, producing and directing, most notably for the BBC.

Northern Finland:

4. **Antti Kaarlela** ([EverWhatProductions](#)). EverWhat Productions is a production company and creative media powerhouse from Oulu. The company produces compelling narratives in the fields of TV, Film, Literature and Theatre as well as tailored live events. The company was established in 2011.
5. **Joonas Pirttikangas** ([Hepola Films](#)). Hepola Films is a filmmaking crew from Kemi, Finland. Hepola Films makes quality independent feature films, short-films and commercials. 'Lilian' is their first feature.
6. **Petteri Staven** ([Mutant Koala Pictures](#)). Mutant Koala Pictures is a production company based Oulu, Northern Finland. In its short six years of existence, the company has built a broad portfolio of services from photography to production services, as well as web-series and corporate video production.

North East Iceland:

7. **Birna Pétursdóttir** ([Fluga Hugmyndahús](#)) is co-founder of the creative media production company Fluga Hugmyndahús. She has spent time working as a journalist, producer and editor at the regional television station N4. This is where Birna met Árni Theodorsson and they set up Fluga Hugmyndahús in 2016. They've produced commercials and TV documentaries.
8. **Gústav Geir Bollason** lives and works in Hjalteyri, a village in north-east Iceland. He is an interdisciplinary artist: draughtsman, filmmaker and sculptor. He also runs an art space and residency in a disused herring factory called [Verksmiðjan á Hjalteyri](#) since 2008. The factory is an exhibition and project space.

8.4 HOW WAS PARTICIPATION ORGANISED?

Project staff arranged participation of the filmmakers. Co-operation between project staff and the selected companies was good. Communication was mainly through email and by phone, with a face-to-face meeting organised with one of the Northern Ireland participants.

As this was the last Creative Hotspot, the project team and partners were now much better at planning the organisation

than when the Creative Hotspots Model was first used for the Swedish Creative Hotspot a year before. Project staff made the following arrangements:

- **Flights/Land Transport:** Flights were booked for Swedish, Icelandic and Finnish participants to Dublin Airport. There were some flight problems for the Finnish participants as the transfer time was very tight, but ultimately it worked out. The two Northern Ireland participants drove themselves and were reimbursed their travel costs.

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- **Internal Transport:** The Finnish participants hired a rental car for the transfer from Dublin to Galway, with other participants travelling by bus. All participants returned to Dublin by bus. As the hotels were in Galway city, but not very close to the centre, people either took taxis or walked to get to Fleadh events.
- **Accommodation:** As there was quite a large group of 'a creative momentum project' participants attending, and because it was the high tourist season in Galway it was difficult to source accommodation. As NUI Galway has arrangements with a number of hotels in the city they pre-booked rooms in advance of participants being selected. It was still not possible to find accommodation for all participants in the same hotel however. The Northern Irish and Finnish participants and project staff, as well as the Irish project staff, were booked at [The Westwood Hotel](#) and the Icelandic and Swedish participants at the [Maldron Hotel](#).
- **Event Tickets:** As the participants were taking part in different aspects of the Fleadh, the WDC took responsibility for liaising between the participants and the organisers to schedule participation. The payments for the different ticket types were made directly by the 'sending' partner organisations. A number of participants selected Masterclasses they wanted to attend, while others selected to take part in the Marketplace. For those taking part in the Marketplace, the organisers contacted them directly to get details of the project they wished to 'pitch' so that they could schedule a series of 1-to-1 meetings over the two days of the Marketplace.
- **Creative Exchange & Site Visits:** NUI Galway organised a half-day Creative Exchange event on the day before the Galway Film Fair began and also organised a site visit to Telegaol to show the visiting filmmakers an example of the West of Ireland's film industry.
- **Display Area:** It was arranged with organisers that 'a creative momentum project' / MyCreativeEdge.eu could

have a display area at the venue for the Galway Film Fair.

- **Programme:** The WDC provided the design for a full-page advertisement in the Fleadh Programme promoting MyCreativeEdge.eu.

Due to budgetary and personal reasons, no project staff from the Northern Irish or Icelandic project partners participated to this Hotspot. The two 'host' organisations took responsibility for these participants. The following project staff participated:

- Saila Puukko, Project Manager, Lapland UAS
- Silvia Guglielmini, Project Administrator, WDC
- Pauline White, Project Co-ordinator, WDC
- Kristina Jeppson, Project Officer, Technichus Mid-Sweden
- Aisling Murtagh, Post-Doctoral Researcher, NUI Galway
- Patrick Collins, Researcher, NUI Galway

To promote the project's participation in the event in advance, a number of articles were published on MyCreativeEdge.eu:

- [Joonas Pirttikangas is looking for international contacts from Galway Film Fleadh](#) 8 June
- [Slieve Gullion Media are going to the Galway Film Fleadh](#) 16 June
- [Petteri Stavén, Creative Director, Mutant Koala Pictures](#) 21 June
- [Birna Pétursdóttir, Flugá Hugmyndahús](#) 7 July
- [Joe Marcus, OMAS Media](#) 11 July
- [Come and meet us at the Galway Film Fleadh!](#) 11 July

8.5 THE CREATIVE HOTSPOT

In advance of the Galway Film Fair, NUI Galway organised a Creative Exchange event '[Screen Industries on the Periphery: Policy and Practice](#)' on Wednesday, 12 July where all the supported participants had an opportunity to present their experiences.



A CREATIVE EXCHANGE



Screen Industries on the Periphery Policy & Practice



JULY 12TH 2017, 9.30AM-1.30PM
HUSTON SCHOOL OF FILM AND DIGITAL MEDIA, NUI GALWAY



The programme included: [A Creative2Creative Matching journey](#) (Antti Kaarlela, EverWhatProductions & Emma Owen, Babyjane Productions); 'Working in the Screen Sector in Northern Finland & West of Ireland' (Antti, Emma, Joonas Pirttikangas & Petteri Staven); [Galway UNESCO City of Film](#) & the Screen Talent Europe Network (Declan Gibbons, Galway Film Centre); A short history of Irish cinema and film funding (Dr. Conn Holohan, [Huston School of Film & Digital Media](#), NUI Galway); Collaborative learning across regions (George Kingsnorth, Gullion Media); 'Working in the Screen Sector in Northern Ireland, Iceland and Sweden' (Birna Pétursdóttir, Joe Marcus & Daniel Nordlund); Who lifts the mirror? (Paddy Hayes, [Magamedia](#)).

The Exchange was attended by 39 people, many from the West of Ireland's film sector and a full report can be found [here](#).

I made video of my latest works for the discussion panel, and tried to have answers ready if someone would like to ask something about my work or about myself. (Joonas Pirttikangas)



Joonas Pirttikangas (Finland) and Lisa Bolton (Ireland) networking at the 'Screen Industries on the Periphery: Policy and Practice' Creative Exchange.

In the afternoon, the participants were brought on a site visit to the offices of [Telegael](#) as well as a tour of their studios. Established in 1988, Telegael is a multi-E Emmy® and IFTA award winning studio that works with international producers, distributors and broadcasters to develop, finance and co-produce animation and live-action content for the global market. They have co-produced more than 750 hours of television with their productions distributed to over 140

territories throughout the world and translated into more than 40 languages. Following the site visit a group meal was organised in the city centre.

The following day was the start of the Galway Film Fair with the Screenwriting Masterclass with Richard Kelly (Writer and Director of Donnie Darko) which many of the participants attended, as well as other events. That evening the Creative Europe MEDIA Networking Dinner took place and all participants attended. This dinner is an 'ice-breaker' with people assigned to tables where they have a chance to meet with new people and make connections before the Marketplace.

The participants taking part in the Marketplace had each been sent in advance an individual schedule of 1-to-1 meetings with financiers, distributors, studios etc over two days (Friday and Saturday). Those who took part in the Marketplace rated it as very good and useful

We came here excited and moderately optimistic. We were seeking funding for our documentary Drift, and a possible co-producer. We were very happy with our meetings as the feedback was positive. Although no promises were made, we are engaging in further conversations with a few of the producers. What we thought was amazing, was the willingness amongst almost everyone to give advice and pointers. That was extremely valuable for us. (Birna Pétursdóttir, Flugá Hugmyndahús)



Instagram post by @eucreative of Antti Kaarlela (Finland), Birna Pétursdóttir and Þóra Pétursdóttir (Iceland) socialising at the Fleadh.

Meeting people at the marketplace was really useful for me. I got a better understanding about the interest of investors, producers and what kind of cooperation we should start build. (Petteri Staven)

Being able to get to the whole event meant I got more out of the experience than when I attended on previous occasions. This type of event requires attending on an annual basis to gain the full benefits. (Northern Ireland Galway Film Fleadh participant)

Other project participants, at an earlier stage of their careers, took part in the Masterclasses. The younger filmmakers particularly appreciated the Screenwriting Masterclass, as well as the connections they made with the other filmmakers travelling with the project. During these days participants also attended the Film Forum discussion, seminars and panel discussions on various topics e.g. new distribution channels for film. As well as a few films!!





Top Left: Props at Telegael studios. Bottom Left: Telegael studios. Right: Richard Kelly during Screenwriting Masterclass.

The Galway Film Fleadh was a great chance for us to connect with other filmmakers from around the world, people with similar ideas on low budget moviemaking, as well as people who've been in the business for a long time. The whole experience broadened our view of the business of making films, that will be very useful as we move on to bigger productions in future. After the Fleadh we drove along the entire western seaboard in four days, the first real step in the photography/on-the-go-filmmaking project that we'll be doing right around Europe. (Simon Bergström)

The feedback from the Finnish project partner was that overall the Galway Film Fleadh fulfilled (every) wish their participants had when they started their journey. This Creative Hotspot was a great example of an event with real opportunity to meet other creatives, other companies and specially to have an opportunity to pitch ideas to financiers. This is also very natural to film festivals. People attend such events to build real networks and they have actual products

(or ideas) to sell.

When selecting the three participants from Finland for this event, Lapland UAS were aware that the three were quite different, based on their professional experience. Some might be more natural and active in networking, but for some this would be more of a challenge. It was good to see that for those who were less experienced at networking or this type of an event, this Festival was an eye-opener.

Attending Galway Film Fleadh was a great experience in how to market your films and make new contacts. The Masterclasses really helped me in my creative thinking and I finally got inspiration to finish my latest feature film script. I also had the opportunity to attend the premiere of 'Michael Inside' which went on to win Best Irish Feature and discussed filmmaking with the Director Frank Berry. (Joonas Pirttikangas)



GALWAY FILM FLEADH FROM A SWEDISH POINT OF VIEW

By Technichus Science Centre (published on MyCreativeEdge.eu, 17 July 2018)

Technichus Science Centre in Mid-Sweden is one of the partners in a Creative Momentum project who runs MyCreativeEdge.eu. Our project manager has just arrived back home from a trip to Galway with the project. Together with our partners from Finland, Iceland, Ireland and Northern Ireland we arranged a so called Creative Hotspot at Galway Film Fleadh 11-17 of July. Filmmakers from the partner regions were supported to go to the Fleadh to network, learn and get new inspiration. From Mid-Sweden we brought Simon Bergström and Daniel Nordlund from Mountain North Pictures – This trip is a really great opportunity for us, Simon says.

The programme in Galway started off with a Creative Exchange last Wednesday. Speakers from five different countries shared their stories in Room 202 at Houston School of Film and Digital Media. International connections and filmmaking in the periphery where the theme of the day. The producers Antti Kaarlela from northern Finland and Emma Owen from west of Ireland, who participated in a Creative2Creative Matching programme, were two of the speakers. They shared experiences and outcomes from the matching programme and pointed out the importance of making connections abroad. Joonas Pirtikangas spread his knowledge of how to make low budget films in Northern Finland, how to cooperate with local firemen when you need fire effects for example, to make the most out of the budget you have.

"This conference is much better than many others I have paid a lot of money to attend," says a female filmmaker in the audience.



During the afternoon, we continued the programme with a really interesting visit at Telegael studios and their two creative premises in Spiddal. In our workshop at Technichus we also build stage design and exhibitions so it was great insights and good inspiration for us to step into the workshops of Telegael. The following days we attended masterclasses and networking events and we also had the chance to watch great films at the Fleadh in Galway. The session about screenwriting with Richard Kelly was one of the highlights, he talked about his cult classic *Donnie Darko* from 2001 as well as newer creations.

"The masterclasses was the best part, and to hang out with the other filmmakers," says Simon and Daniel. At the moment they are taking a few days extra to travel around and explore Ireland.

Thanks to WDC, NUIG, Galway Film Fleadh and Telegael studios for having us over! We had a great time in Galway!

8.6 FOLLOW UP TO CREATIVE HOTSPOT

Following the Fleadh all participants were requested to complete an online feedback survey, the results of which are given in Section 9. They were also asked to submit a short report on their experience and to sign official forms relating to State Aid requirements.

Participants reported some increase in social media activity and increasing visit on their websites following the event.

Yes, we had some increase of visits in our website, Facebook and Instagram after the Creative Hotspot and that was really good promotional thing for us (Petteri Staven)

I do expect to do business with new customers acquired from this Creative Hotspot. (Antti Kaarlela)

A number of articles about the event were published as a follow up:

- [Galway Film Fleadh from a Swedish point of view](#) 17 July 2017

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- [Northern European film-makers connect in the west at our creative exchange](#) 25 July 2017

experience to local and regional media:

[Meeting on the Edge of Europe: 9 Filmmakers from Northern Europe participate in Galway Film Fleadh](#) 26 July 2017

The WDC issued a Press Release about the Film Fleadh

8.7 WEST OF IRELAND CREATIVE HOTSPOT – LESSONS LEARNED

Host Organisation	Sending Organisations
<p>Accommodation: As this was the high tourist season it was extremely difficult to find accommodation and it was quite expensive. Accommodation at some distance from the city centre had to be booked which made it a bit more awkward for accessing Fleadh events and socialising.</p> <p>Timeline: The event organisers have a lot of experience. They work to their own internal timeline but project partners needed information earlier than this, which was sometimes a challenge.</p> <p>Marketplace: The Marketplace at the Galway Film Fair is extremely well established and well organised. They have a specific procedure to gather information from participants and set up a schedule of appropriate meetings. The host and sending partner organisations did not need to provide input for this.</p> <p>Networking: A downside of the Hotspot being so well established is that a lot of attendees already know each other and have existing relationships. This could make networking and 'breaking in' a bit more difficult. This was especially true of the people who were not taking part in the Marketplace.</p>	<p>Film Festival a widely understood format: The format of a 'Film Festival' is quite standard, as many have a similar format. This meant that it was easy to translate to potential applicants what the potential benefits would be. It also meant that the appropriate target group for the opportunity was very clear.</p> <p>Plan VERY early: When events take place at busy tourist seasons it is necessary to begin planning very early (a year in advance) and to make provisional bookings even before the participants are selected. It is better if it is possible to have everyone staying in the same accommodation so they have more chance to engage together.</p> <p>Creative Exchange: An event at the start where all participants can present themselves and their business is a good chance for the group to meet as well as to network with the local industry. It would have been nice if there had been a chance to have some 'get together' at the end as well.</p> <p>Flexible Options: It was a busy schedule but the fact that the participants had options on what they wanted to participate in, to match their business needs and stage of development, was positive. They did not need to all follow the same schedule but could adapt it.</p> <p>Networking: There were some good networking opportunities, the extent to which they were taken advantage of depended on the stage of career development and personality. Participants in the group also learned from each other.</p> <p>Learning: The Masterclasses and other events were an excellent learning experience for the younger filmmakers.</p>



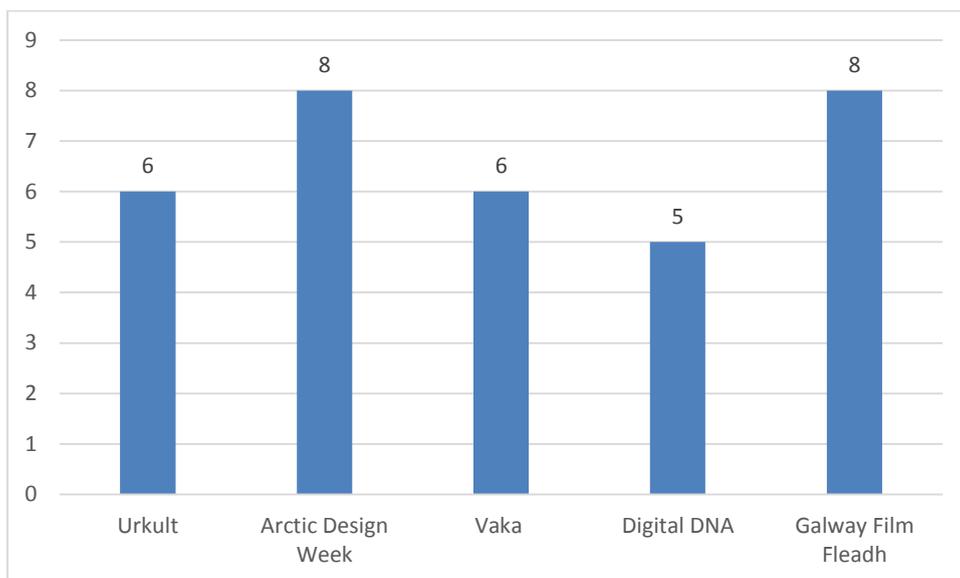
9.0 FEEDBACK FROM PARTICIPANTS

Creative Hotspot participants were asked to complete a feedback questionnaire providing insights on their experience of attending a Creative Hotspot. Overall there were 33 responses (from a total of 49 supported professionals), relatively well balanced across the five events (see Fig. 3).

There was a balance of male (55%) and female (45%)

respondents. Most (61%) were in the 25-44 age group. Enterprises were classified as mostly micro (less than 10 employees) (42%) or freelance/sole traders (48%). Most were media and technology (30%) enterprises, followed by arts (24%), design (21%), crafts (15%) and other (9%).

FIG. 3: NUMBER OF RESPONSES BY CREATIVE HOTSPOT



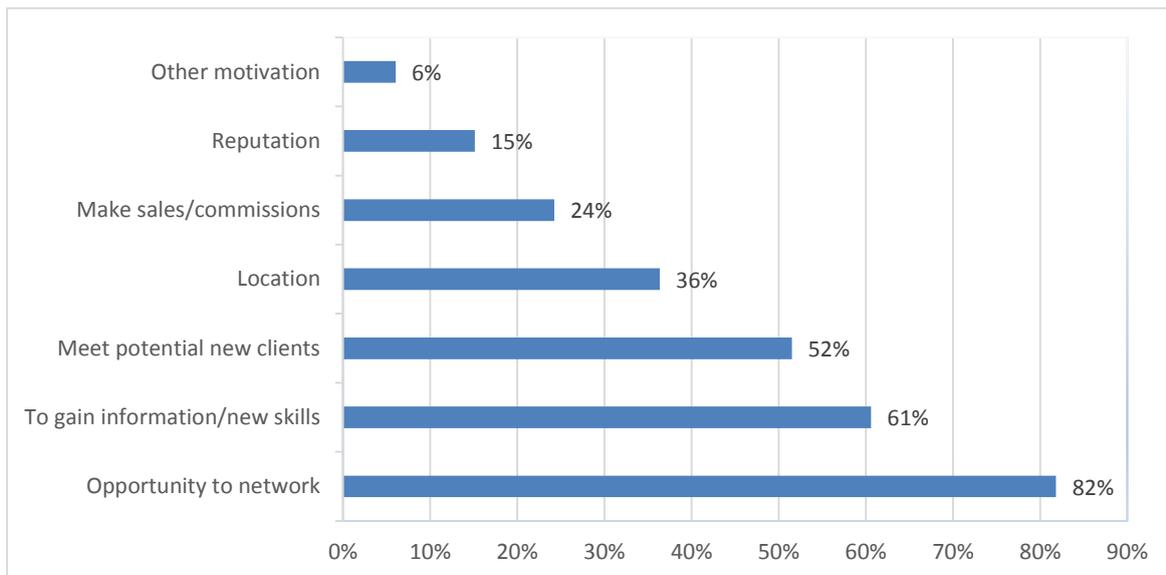
9.1 MOTIVATIONS TO ATTEND

Participants attending Creative Hotspots had a diverse range of motivations to attend (see Fig. 4). The most common driver overall was the opportunity to network. The least

common was the reputation of the event. Depending on the Creative Hotspot, some notable differences were observed.



FIG. 4: MOTIVATION TO ATTEND CREATIVE HOTSPOT



Make sales/commissions: None attending Arctic Design Week or Digital DNA said they did so to make sales/commissions. However for those attending the Galway Film Fleadh, 38% were focused on making sales/commissions. This motivation was highest among those who attended the Urkult Festival, where 67% indicated this was an attraction driving their attendance.

Meet potential new clients: Meeting potential new clients was also highly important to participants at Urkult, with 83% saying so. It was not a strong motivation (20%) among those attending Digital DNA.

Gain new information and skills: Gaining new information and skills was a less common motivation (33%)

to attend Urkult than found overall (61%). This motivation was highest (75%) among participants who attended Arctic Design Week.

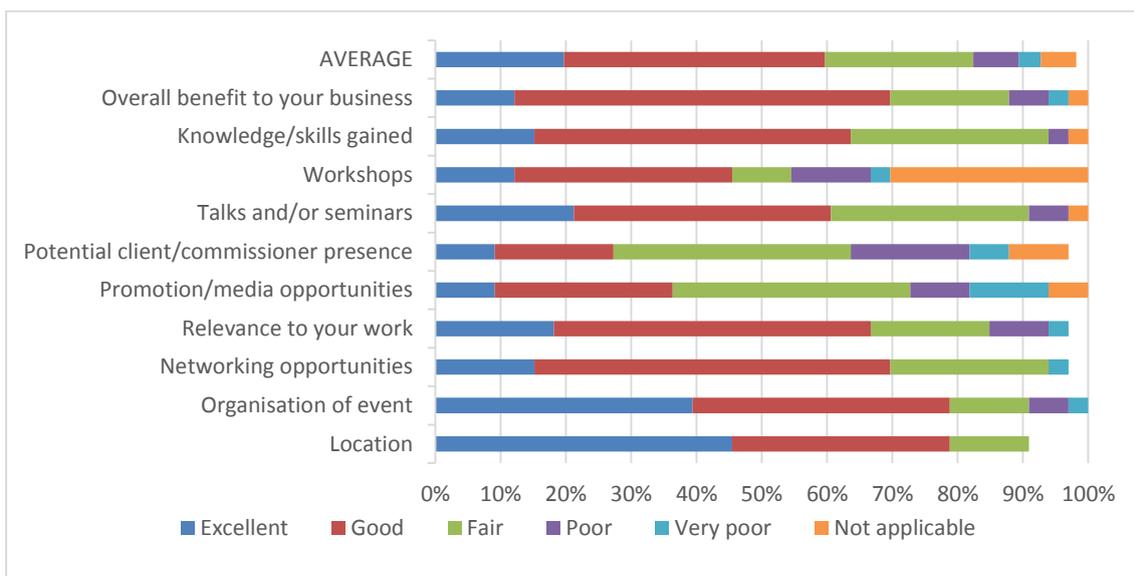
Location: For those attending the Urkult Festival and Digital DNA, location was a significantly lower attraction than the overall Creative Hotspot results. Just 1 respondent said location was an attraction in each case.

9.2 RATING OF THE CREATIVE HOTSPOT

Overall Creative Hotspots were rated positively by those who attended with the majority indicating Creative Hotspots were either excellent or good. Across the ten areas evaluated by 'a creative momentum project', on average 20% said they were excellent and 40% said they were good (see Fig. 5).



FIG. 5: RATING OF CREATIVE HOTSPOT



Location: The location of Arctic Design Week and Vaka were rated highest with attendees. 100% said the location of both events was either excellent or good. None of the Creative Hotspot locations were rated poorly. Some wider feedback did indicate the cost of day-to-day living prohibitive in relation to the Swedish context:

I was dismayed at the daily cost of eating...that was an issue for everyone attending. (Urkult participant)

Organisation of event: Arctic Design Week rated highest on the organisation of the event with 100% saying this was either excellent or good. Some who attended Vaka experienced poor organisation with 33% saying it was poor or very poor, however the remaining 67% said organisation was either excellent or good. Also 40% who attended Digital DNA said organisation was fair to poor, but most (60%) said it was excellent or good.

Networking opportunities: Both Arctic Design Week and the Galway Film Fleadh were rated highest for networking opportunities with 88% saying they were either good or excellent. Vaka was the only event with some poor feedback with 1 respondent saying networking was poor, however 50% said it was good. In relation to Digital DNA, 40% said

networking was fair, but some of the wider feedback received indicated that networking opportunities were poor.

Relevance to work: Creative Hotspots were mostly well rated in relation to relevance to the work of attendees. A small proportion said Vaka and Digital DNA had poor relevance to their work (1 respondent in each case). Urkult also received some poor feedback with 33% saying it had poor/very poor relevance to their work. Wider feedback revealed craft and designer makers attending felt the Urkult Marketplace was poorly located and set up, impacting sales potential. For example:

We had very limited selling time over the three days and missed valuable opportunities to engage with the public at the busiest trading times, resulting in very few sales. (Urkult participant)

Promotion and media opportunities: The Galway Film Fleadh was the only Creative Hotspot that did not receive any poor feedback in relation to promotion and media opportunities. While all other Creative Hotspots did receive some positive feedback in relation to promotion opportunities, feedback was mixed overall. Poor feedback was highest for Urkult (50% poor), followed by Digital DNA

(40% very poor).

Potential client/commissioner presence: The Galway Film Fleadh rated highest on potential client/commissioner presence with 88% saying this was excellent or good. No other Creative Hotspot was rated as having an excellent presence of potential clients/commissioners. Urkult emerged as poorest in this regard with 50% saying this was either poor/very poor. In relation to Arctic Design Week 38% said this was poor.

Talks, workshops and skills gained: Evaluation of talks, seminars and workshops was not applicable in all cases, but where relevant, feedback was generally good. One notable exception was Digital DNA where 40% said workshops were poor/very poor and 60% said talks were fair. Feedback on knowledge and skills gained was also generally good. However, 50% said this was fair to poor in relation to Urkult, and 60% noted this was fair in relation to Digital DNA.

Overall benefit to business: Ratings were highest in relation to overall business benefit for Arctic Design Week (100% excellent/good), followed by the Galway Film Fleadh (88% excellent/good). A number of those who attended the Galway Film Fleadh had attended in previous years and felt their repeat attendance, as well as attending as part of a group, made the experience more worthwhile. The following comment helps to illustrate:

Before I had attended the marketplace on my own, whereas

through a creative momentum project I was given far more opportunities to meet up with people and attend events. The best of this was being part of a group which gave some commonality and opened up discussion. I think to get the most out of it, it would be important to be part of the event next year to continue building on what was developed this time. (Galway Film Fleadh participant)

Overall in relation to other Creative Hotspots ratings on overall benefit to business were good to fair. One notable exception was Urkult which 33% said this was poor/very poor. Those who attended had a strong motivation to make sales, which could have been improved.

9.3 TYPES OF CONNECTIONS MADE

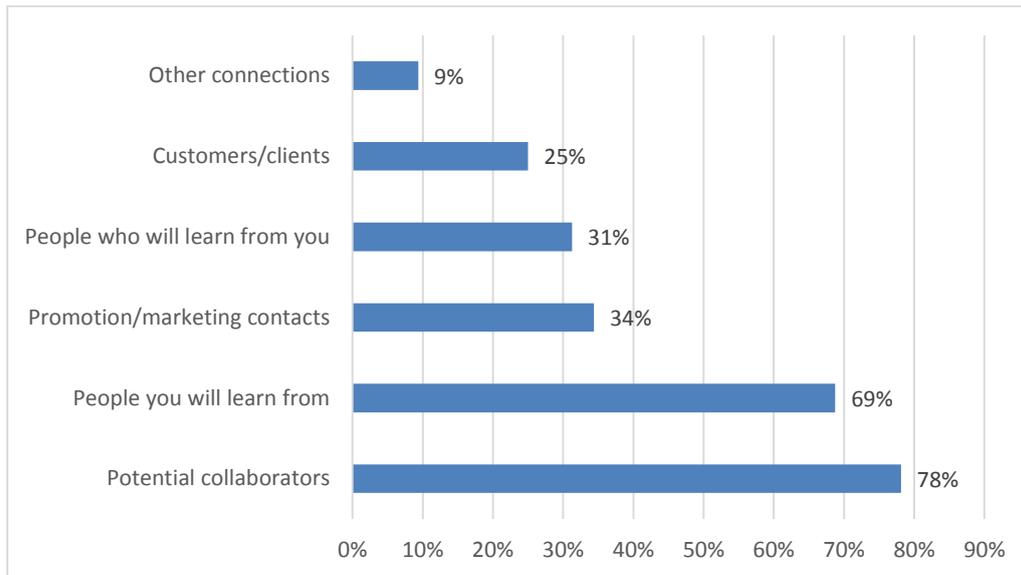
The most common type of connection made at Creative Hotspots were potential collaborators, followed by contacts participants felt they could learn from (see Fig. 6). Other connections mentioned were potential clients, like-minded people and academics. Wider comments from participants help to illustrate how connections made might play out in the future:

From the Marketplace each of the delegates I visited provided me with valuable information allowing me to continue to pursue a number of projects...I also hope to continue to develop the contacts I made. (Galway Film Fleadh participant)

It would have been fun with a get-together with everyone...at the very end of the week...we got kind of scattered and it would have been nice to meet up...to talk about the week that we had all shared. (Galway Film Fleadh participant)



FIG. 6: TYPES OF CONNECTIONS MADE



Depending on the Creative Hotspot, some notable differences to the overall trends were observed.

- Two-thirds of those attending the Galway Film Fleadh felt they made connections who would learn from them and half said they made connections with potential customers.
- None who attended Arctic Design Week said they made connections with potential clients or people who would learn from them.
- Half who attended Urkult said the connections made could be potential clients and none said connections could be people who would learn from them. Also lower numbers (half) said they connected with people who

could be potential collaborators or people they expect to learn from.

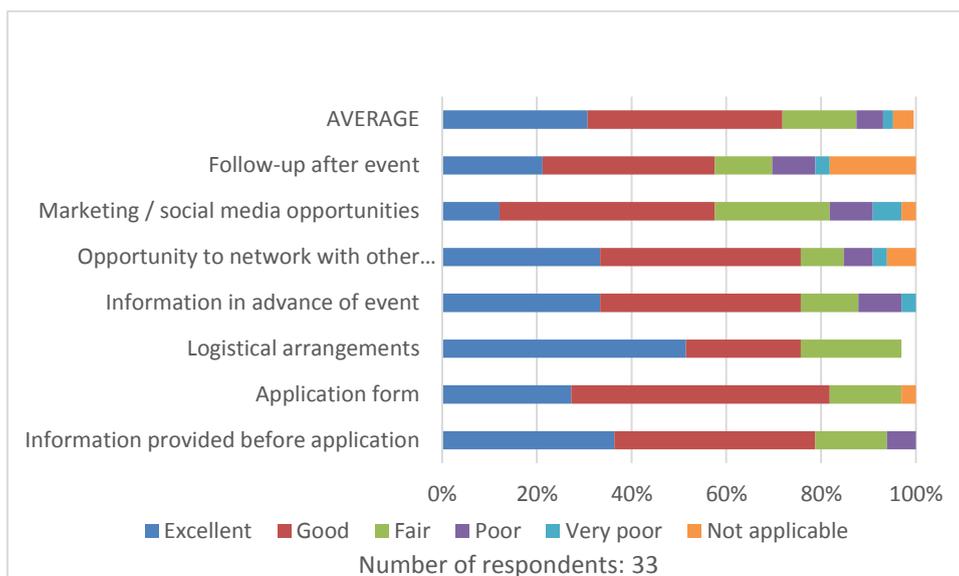
The organisers offered a good chance to spot interesting collaborators/possible future clients for the market place and did a great job in getting the meetings in the calendars. (Galway Film Fleadh participant)

9.4 OVERALL RATING OF CREATIVE HOTSPOT SUPPORT RECEIVED

To assess the organisation and delivery of the Creative Hotspot support delivered through 'a creative momentum project', seven areas were assessed (Fig. 7). On average across these areas 72% rated them excellent or good.



FIG. 7: RATING OF CREATIVE HOTSPOT SUPPORT



Application, information and follow up: Feedback on information provided before the application was rated excellent or good by 79% of respondents overall. In relation to specific Hotspots this ranged from the lowest of 67% for Urkult to highest of 88% for the Galway Film Fleadh. The application form was also rated excellent or good overall, highest for Arctic Design Week and the Galway Film Fleadh (88%) and lowest for Urkult at 67%.

Feedback on information received in advance of the event was generally good, but some gave poor feedback (Digital DNA – 2 respondents poor; Urkult 1 respondent poor; Vaka 1 respondent very poor). The following comments help to illustrate how this might have been improved:

It would have been nice to have some contact information in advance of all participants attending in order to know a little bit about what they did. (Digital DNA participant)

Follow-up after the event was rated highest for the Galway Film Fleadh and most felt this was not applicable for Digital DNA. Urkult had some mixed feedback on this with 33% saying this was good but also 33% said it was poor.

Logistics: Overall logistical arrangements were well rated.

No poor feedback was received. Logistics was rated as fair by 25% of those attending Arctic Design Week and 33% who attended Vaka. The comment below provides an insight for future consideration:

In the future it might be helpful to have information regarding travel arrangements prior to booking so additional business opportunities in that geographic area could be planned in conjunction with it, or so additional staff members could have been included (at our own cost). (Arctic Design Week participant)

Marketing and networking opportunities: Overall marketing and social media opportunities were rated as excellent/good by most participants at Creative Hotspots. No poor feedback was received in relation to the Galway Film Fleadh and some poor feedback was received in relation to other Creative Hotspots (Digital DNA and Vaka – 1 respondent very poor; Urkult – 2 respondents poor; Arctic Design Week – 1 respondent poor).

Most felt they had an excellent or good opportunity to network with other supported enterprises. Some rated this as poor/very poor (1 respondent in each case) in relation to Urkult, Vaka and Digital DNA. Suggestions from respondents to improve the networking potential within the group of

enterprises in attendance were:

Ask the participants to make presentations of their work during the conference...or...in advance ask all to

make a short...description of what kind of business networking they are looking for. (Digital DNA participant)





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