



**a creative
momentum
project**

CREATIVE HOTSPOTS:

**A MODEL FOR BUILDING TRANSNATIONAL CONNECTIONS
THROUGH ESTABLISHED CREATIVE EVENTS**

NORTHERN IRISH CREATIVE HOTSPOT: DIGITAL DNA @ THE PLANETARIUM 2016

MAY 2018

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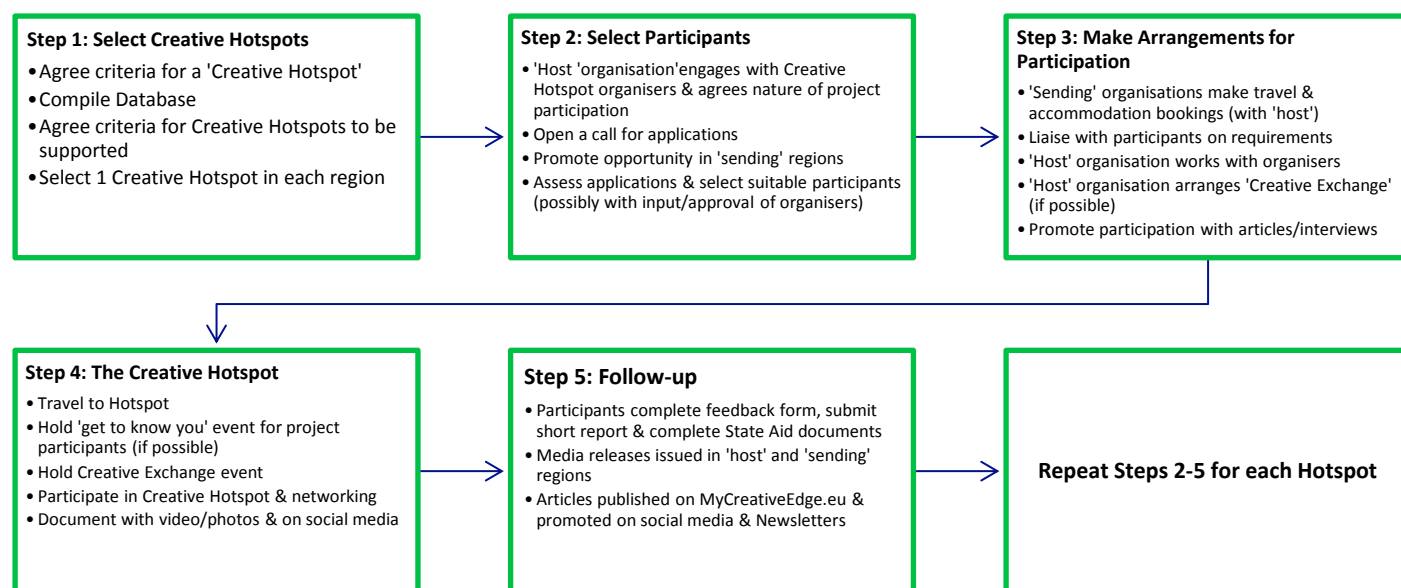
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SUMMARY: THE CREATIVE HOTSPOTS MODEL

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.

NORTHERN IRISH CREATIVE HOTSPOT: DIGITAL DNA @ THE PLANETARIUM 2016

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

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.

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 Kaarllela** ([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.

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 Oförsagd 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)

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: (I-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 Kaarliela (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.

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](#)

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

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



Sligo Champion (Irish local newspaper), 11 October 2016

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>





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