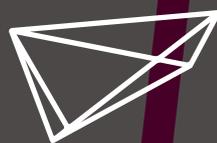


Building MyCreativeEdge.eu 2018



a creative
momentum
project

**MyCreativeEdge.eu:
Showcase.Discover.Connect**

**Building an online community to showcase
creativity from Europe's Northern Edge**

May 2018



Northern Periphery and
Arctic Programme
2014-2020



EUROPEAN UNION
Investing in your future
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WESTERN DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
COMMISSION FOR INNOVATION AND GROWTH



Damastikoru photographed by Valokuvaamo Kipinä, Kopio

Summary of Lessons Learned

DURING 2015-2017, THE TRANSNATIONAL EU CO-FUNDED 'A CREATIVE MOMENTUM PROJECT' RE-DEVELOPED THE MYCREATVIEEDGE.EU ONLINE SHOWCASE PLATFORM. THE WEBSITE'S PURPOSE IS TO SHOWCASE THE CREATIVE WORK OF ENTREPRENEURS FROM EUROPE'S NORTHERN EDGE TO POTENTIAL CUSTOMERS AND COLLABORATORS; AS WELL AS BUILDING A CREATIVE COMMUNITY ACROSS THE FIVE PARTNER COUNTRIES. ORIGINALLY LAUNCHED IN 2013, THE WEBSITE WAS TOTALLY RE-DEVELOPED AND THE NEW SITE LAUNCHED IN MARCH 2017.

This report outlines the re-development process, the structure of the new site, how the project engaged with site members (creatives working in Arts, Crafts, Design and Media & Technology) and the digital marketing activities carried out to advertise it to key target audiences. Based on the experience of re-developing, re-launching and promoting a transnational showcase website for creativity from five different countries, here is what we have learned:

Re-developing a Website

Time: Everything takes longer than you expect – however long you anticipate the re-development will take, double it or triple it!

Transnational complexity: A transnational project, with multiple partners in different countries, working in different types of organisations and with heavy workloads on other activities, makes the process considerably more complex. Ultimately many decisions have to be taken by the organisation leading the re-development. This complexity also extends to communications and marketing activities.

Hands-on input: e-mails and con-calls are useful to involve partners, but really engaging the partners in the re-development process requires face-to-face, practical hands-on input.

Regulatory requirements: Public/EU funding requirements such as state aid and publicity requirements can sometimes be in conflict with the commercial approach taken by web developers and trends in digital technology.

Quality Control of User Generated Content: A website relying on user generated content (Member Profiles) means that site administrators have limited control over the majority of the site's content and its look, as well as Search Engine Optimisation. Moderation and quality control is critical but very time consuming.

Differing needs of target audiences: Balancing the needs of different target audiences is challenging. An objective of 'a creative momentum project' was to increase the capacity of creative entrepreneurs, including those with weaker digital skills, but this needed to be balanced with the needs of website visitors (potential customers) for a highly visually appealing site with strong imagery.

Make decision to go live: A website will never be perfect, at some stage you need to make the decision to go 'live' and manage issues as they arise.

Engaging with your Audience

Communications and Marketing is not the same as an Engagement Strategy: While the first may recommend actions such as 'co-creation', the second should go into the detail as to what 'co-creation' means and how this is truly to be implemented at a regional level.

Need for a dedicated resource: Driving engagement with a new online platform, while implementing all other aspects of a project Communications Strategy is a time-consuming job – consider creating a specific role for this that may be combined with digital marketing.

Tailor to locality: Never forget the 'language barrier' and cultural differences when trying to engage audiences based in different countries! Also applies to digital ads.

Face-to-Face works best: Never forget face-to-face interaction. Events, study visits, and video interviews are good tactics to grow awareness of a newly established website and build a community of members. Participation in industry and public events is key – build a plan at the start of the project (e.g. budget your visits) and think about setting up an attractive stand. Giveaways work!

Contact influencers early: Don't be afraid to approach journalists and bloggers from the start – get them to follow you, gradually feeding them with news. Don't chase them up at the last minute.

Quality visuals rule: Check out creativity-based blogs, website and social media pages to figure out how highly visual content is published, presented and promoted.

Clear and consistent message: Make sure that you have a clear and consistent message that can be explained quickly and easily. You may need a number of different messages for different audiences but need to be clear on what these are. Keep repeating the message.

Digital Marketing

Start early: Marketing advice should be sought as soon as possible, at the start of the project. If the project activity includes the re-launch of a brand or – as in this case – a digital platform, make sure to identify re-branding tactics.

Training: If digital marketing channels are accessed by multiple people with different levels of expertise in digital marketing, it may be appropriate to set up a formal training session and openly identify who in the context of the project will have responsibility for quality control. Having too many quality controllers may not work. A quality controller should not be afraid to take down a post that does not match the style and tone of previous posts.

Be curious: In order to select the 'right' image and write the 'right' copy, check out relevant websites. Pay attention to how internationally known creative brands communicate with their audience. Watch out for adverts promoted by similar projects/organisations and see if there are any lessons that can be applied to your project.

Mind your marketing budget: Switching off a 'Campaign' on Facebook, does not necessarily mean that all adverts are switched off. Adverts may continue to run, wasting marketing budget. If a brand is not established, targeting audiences in North America may be too ambitious. Spend time on shaping your brand and the message around it. Launching an EU co-funded brand in non-EU markets, where competition is very high, may not be appropriate without the support of experts and established agencies operating in those markets and a very large budget.

Consider working with media buyers: With the right training, it is possible to run successful digital marketing campaigns without being a digital marketer. It may be advisable to set some budget aside to work with consultants with expertise in buying/selling media space (e.g. print) in different markets.

Build and refresh your image bank: Digital marketing depends on high quality visuals. As well as establishing a strong image bank, this needs to be refreshed and updated with new imagery on an ongoing basis. Imagery for specific periods e.g. Christmas, summer, is also important.



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EVENT...



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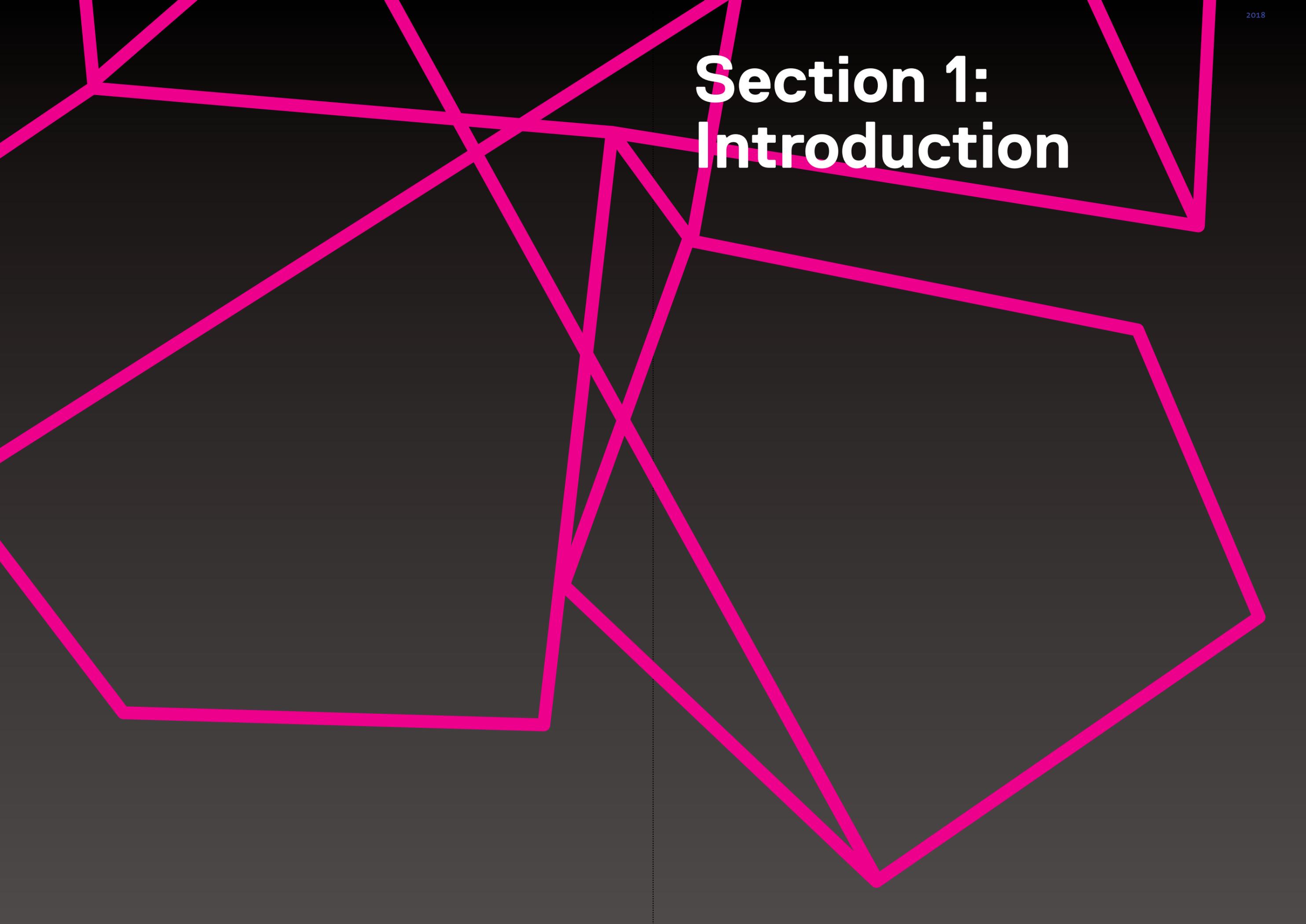
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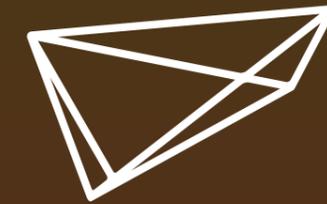
This report outlines the experience of the project partners of the EU co-funded 'a creative momentum project' in re-developing the MyCreativeEdge.eu website 2015-2018. This report was written by Dr. Silvia Guglielmini, Project Administrator and Ms. Pauline White, Project Co-ordinator for the lead project partner the Western Development Commission.

We would like to thank the MyCreativeEdge.eu regional administrators Saila Puukko, Lapland UAS, Kristina Jeppson, Technichus Mid-Sweden, Niall Drew, Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon Borough Council and Hulda Jonsdóttir, North East Iceland Cultural Council for their input to the website re-development, promotion and administration. We would also like to thank project staff and others who contributed content to the site.

We are grateful to Anthony McNamee, Daniel Craig, Richard McCullough and staff of McCadden/Minus40 for their work on the website redevelopment, as well as Joanne Casey of Glowmetrics and Camilla Long of BeSpoke Communications for their work on digital marketing and communications for the site. In particular we would like to thank all the members of MyCreativeEdge.eu.

Section 1: Introduction





a creative momentum project

North East Iceland

Eyþing

Northern Finland

Lapin AMK

Mid-Sweden

Technichus

'A CREATIVE MOMENTUM PROJECT' WAS A €2M, 3-YEAR (2015-2018) TRANSNATIONAL PROJECT TO SUPPORT THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE CREATIVE INDUSTRIES SECTOR ACROSS EUROPE'S NORTHERN EDGE. IT WAS CO-FUNDED BY THE EU'S INTERREG NORTHERN PERIPHERY & ARCTIC (NPA) PROGRAMME.

The project supported artists, craftspeople and creative sector entrepreneurs working in Arts, Craft, Design and Media & Technology to:

- develop their creative and business skills and innovate new product/service ideas by providing peer 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' also 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. For more information on 'a creative momentum project' visit MyCreativeEdge.eu.

The project was implemented by six partner organisations in five regions. The WDC in Ireland was the lead partner.

West of Ireland

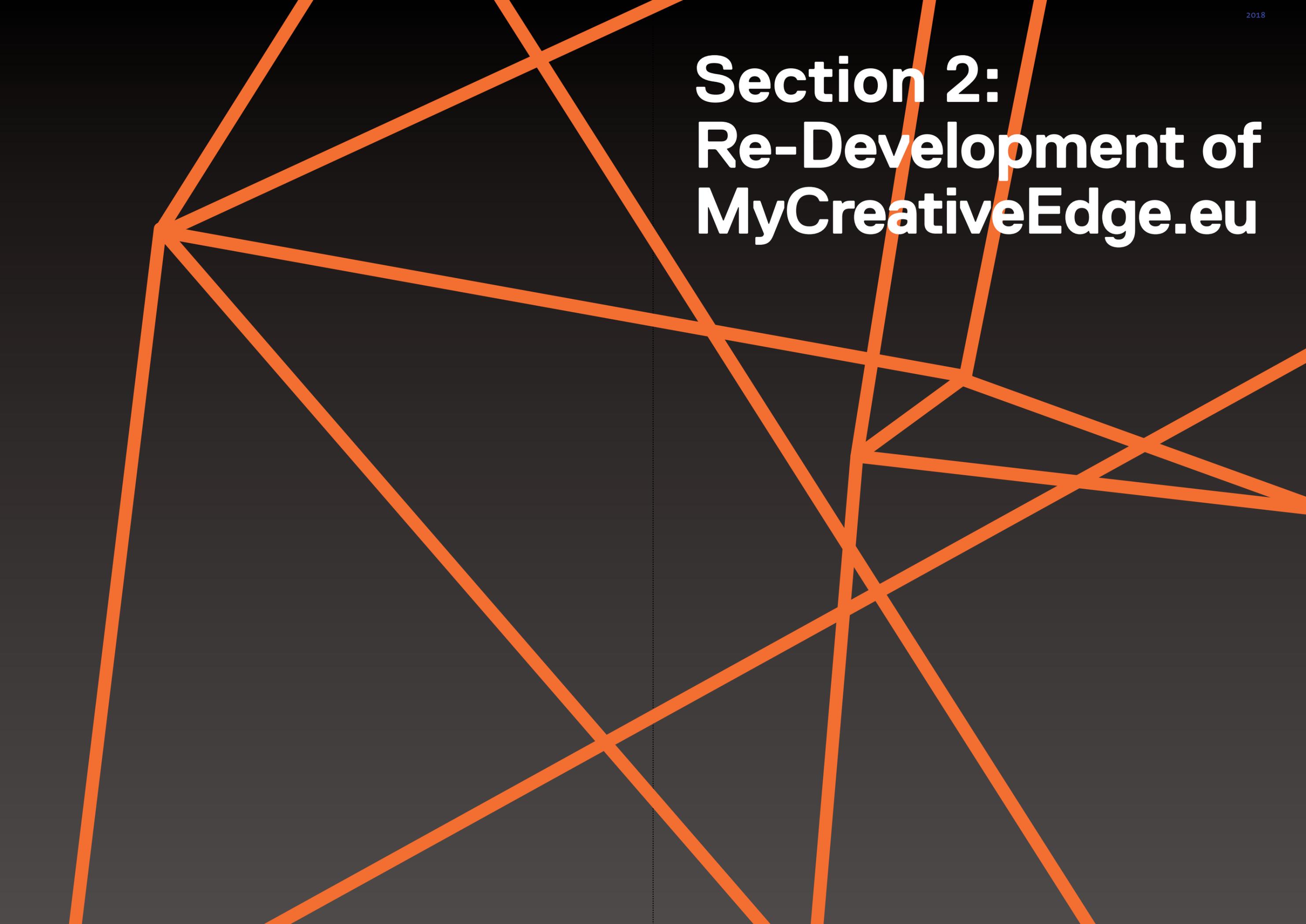
Western Development Commission

NUI Galway

Northern Ireland

South East Economic Development

Section 2: Re-Development of MyCreativeEdge.eu



2.1 Background to MyCreativeEdge.eu

Analysis of the issues facing creative entrepreneurs based in remote and sparsely populated regions across Europe's Northern Periphery found that accessing export markets was a key constraint. Limited local markets, distance from capital cities and small enterprise size meant that the future viability of these enterprises depended on expanding access to markets beyond their local area, including internationally.

To address this need, five organisations from across Europe's Northern Periphery area came together to develop a project to help increase access to export markets and employment opportunities for the creative sector. The resulting project, called [Creative Edge](#)¹ received funding from the EU's Interreg IVB Northern Periphery Programme (NPP) and was implemented during 2012-2013.

One of the main outputs of the Creative Edge project was the development of the MyCreativeEdge.eu website, launched in June 2013. The main objective was to

... ensure that an open access freely available 'export platform' will be created for all the participant regions and ultimately beyond.

The aim of the site was to facilitate access to global markets for creative goods and services from micro-enterprises and SMEs in the partner regions.

2.2 Purpose of MyCreativeEdge.eu



The site was branded 'MyCreativeEdge: The Creative Showcase for Europe's Northern Edge'. Enterprises and freelancers working in the creative industries sector could create free online profiles to showcase their work. It covered the following four regions: West of Ireland; South East of Northern Ireland; Västerbotten, Sweden; and Northern Finland.

Home page of original MyCreativeEdge.eu launched in June 2013.

It had three core objectives:

1. Showcase the work of creatives based in the partner regions with the aim of increasing international business.
2. Increase collaboration and networking between creative people and businesses within and across the regions.
3. Provide information and advice to creatives working in the regions.

The site targeted three key audiences were:

1. Consumers – individuals based in the partner countries and internationally who are interested in purchasing creative goods or services.
2. Businesses – businesses based in the partner countries and internationally who are interested in purchasing creative goods or contracting a creative service provider.
3. Creatives – entrepreneurs working, or wishing to work, in the creative industries sector in the partner regions.

¹ See <http://www.creative-edge.eu/> for more information.

Social media and email marketing were used to support the Creative Edge project and the MyCreativeEdge.eu website:

- [Facebook](#) – A Facebook page for MyCreativeEdge.eu was established in late 2012. The same Facebook page has been used for MyCreativeEdge.eu, the Creative Edge project and for 'a creative momentum project'.
- [Twitter](#) – A Twitter account for MyCreativeEdge.eu was established in late 2012. The same Twitter account has been used for MyCreativeEdge.eu, the Creative Edge project and for 'a creative momentum project'.
- [Mailchimp](#) – All registered members of MyCreativeEdge.eu were automatically added to a Mailchimp 'Members List' and site visitors could sign-up to the Newsletter through the website. Newsletters were sent approximately every two months.

2.3 'a creative momentum project'

Following the end of the Creative Edge project in December 2013, the project partners engaged with each other and potential new partner organisations to develop a new project idea to further stimulate innovation, interconnectedness and internationalisation among creative entrepreneurs on Europe's Northern Edge. This ultimately led to 'a creative momentum project' which began in May 2015 for three years. One of the key activities of 'a creative momentum project' was to expand and re-develop the MyCreativeEdge.eu website.

2.4 Why was re-development needed?

A number of factors drove the decision to re-design and re-develop the MyCreativeEdge.eu website. Among the most important were:

- **Technology:** Since the original site was launched in 2013, technology had progressed considerably, in particular the shift from desktop to mobile as the dominant way to access websites (see Figure 1). There was a need for a more mobile-friendly design with improved site speed and greater integration with social media.
- **User Experience:** There was a need to improve the user experience and encourage visitors to remain on the site for longer. We wanted to make the website more interactive with opportunities for site visitors to engage with site members and more opportunities for site members to create connections with each other (see Figure 2).
- **Link to other project activities:** 'a creative momentum project' was implementing a number of other project activities which needed to be integrated within MyCreativeEdge.eu. For example the Network of Shared Creative Spaces to support shared creative co-working spaces across the partner regions and Creative Trails to showcase and develop tourist Trails showcasing open studios and other creative locations.

The ultimate objective of the re-development was to make each and every member of MyCreativeEdge.eu more accessible both to each other and to a wider public that is in need of creative products or services. Showcasing the work of creative people from Europe's Northern Edge in a highly visual way was to remain the core function of MyCreativeEdge.eu.

2.5 Contracting a designer

The Western Development Commission (WDC), based in the Western Region of Ireland (lead partner for 'a creative momentum project') was responsible for the re-development of MyCreativeEdge.eu. They had also led the original website development. During the first project Operational Management Team (OMT) meeting in Finland in June 2015, the WDC outlined to all partners the key priorities for the re-development of the website. The next step was to contract a web design company to undertake the re-development. Before this could be done there needed to be clarity and agreement among all partners on what the exact requirements were.

Therefore during the next few months, the WDC drafted an Invitation to Tender document for the re-development seeking input from all partners. On 11 November, an Invitation to Tender for the 'Re-development of the MyCreativeEdge.eu website under 'a creative momentum project'' was issued on the Irish [government's e-tenders procurement](#) website. The value of the contract was €33,000 (ex VAT). Following assessment, a Belfast-based creative agency called McCadden, with its sister agency Minus40 was selected and appointed in late December 2015.

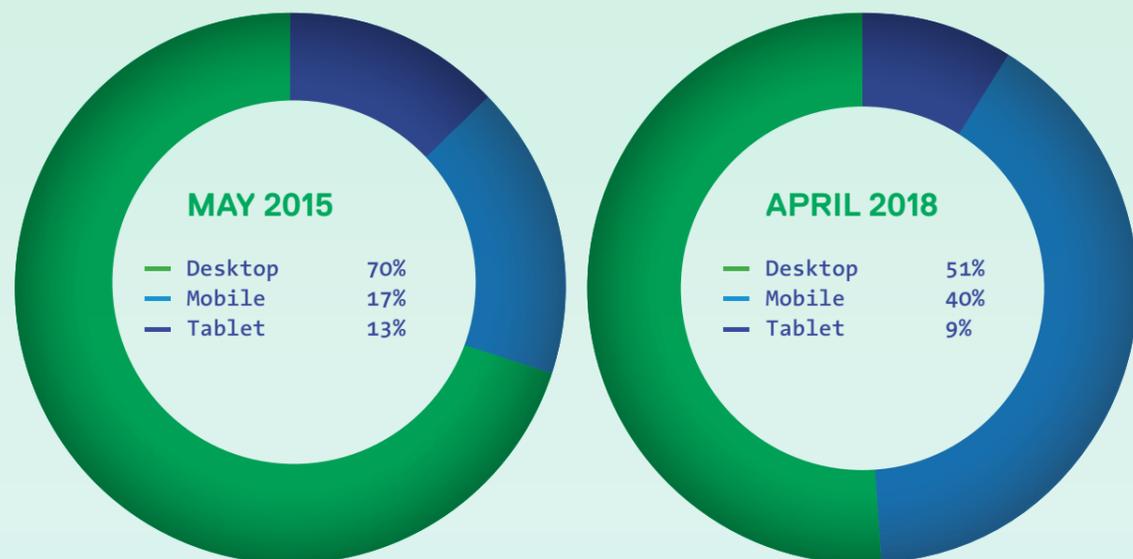


FIGURE 1:
Type of technology used by Users of MyCreativeEdge.eu in May 2015 and April 2018

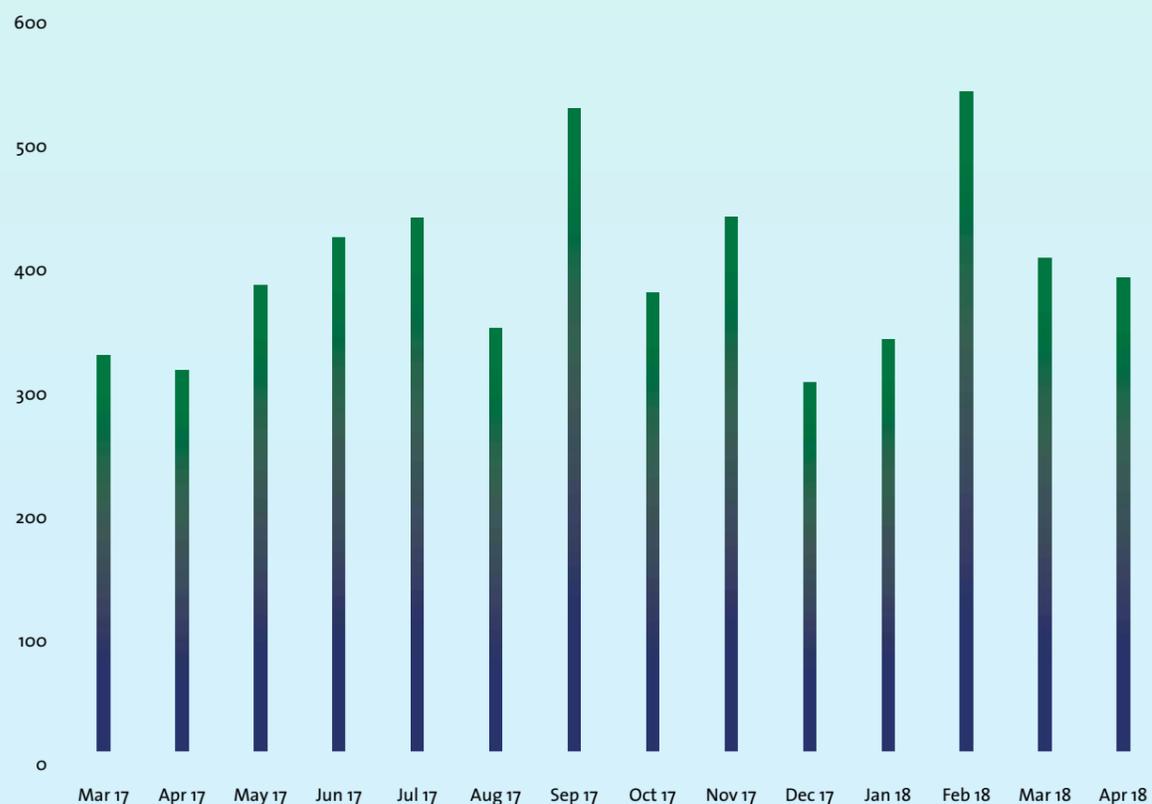


FIGURE 2:
Number of actions taken by Users of MyCreativeEdge.eu (e.g. clicking Facebook link, sending e-mail to Profile owner) 1 March 2017-30 April 2018²

² This is the period from the launch of the re-developed site to the end of the project.

SUMMARY OF KEY REQUIREMENTS OF THE INVITATION TENDER FOR 'RE-DEVELOPMENT OF MYCREATIVEEDGE.EU'

THE OBJECTIVES OF THE RE-DEVELOPMENT ARE TO:

1. Improve MyCreativeEdge.eu's effectiveness as a showcase for creatives based in the five regions covered by 'a creative momentum project', by enhancing the user experience for site visitors.
2. Increase the site's role as a facilitator of networking among members, both within and across regions, including greater integration with social media.
3. Strengthen the site's role as a source of information for members, and also for site visitors.
4. Facilitate the delivery of other activities to be implemented by 'a creative momentum project'.

THE SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS OF THE CONTRACT ARE TO:

REVIEW OF CURRENT MYCREATIVEEDGE.EU WEBSITE:

Undertake a thorough review of the current MyCreativeEdge.eu site and its functionality to improve the user experience of both site visitors and members. Some elements to be considered include:

- Site navigation to ensure a clear and easily navigated user interface.
- Creative sector categories and current search facility.
- Site speed, Search Engine Optimisation and compatibility across devices and browsers.
- Review of the current limit on the number of images/videos to be included in the gallery of each profile and the overall gallery creation process.
- Ways to make the site more interactive and dynamic including more social media integration.
- Review of the overall visual design of the site and how effectively it illustrates the marketing message of 'The Creative Showcase for Europe's Northern Edge'.
- Possibility of having landing pages filtered by region and category, with URLs that could be used for marketing purposes.

DESIGN OF NEW ELEMENTS FOR MYCREATIVEEDGE.EU:

- **Shared Creative Working Spaces:** Shared creative working spaces in the regions are to be profiled on the site. It will be necessary for users (registered members) to be able to upload details / a profile of a shared creative space and to indicate if they are looking for tenants.
- **Creative Events:** A new section on Creative Events to showcase events occurring across the regions, including a facility for users to upload events.
- **Creative Trails:** A new section showcasing existing Creative/Art/Craft Trails across the regions, as well as new Creative Trails to be developed by the project in Iceland and Northern Ireland.
- **Online Creative Knowledge Resource:** To provide a wide range of information and advice to creative members through a mix of formats. It should have flexibility to incorporate different resources e.g. documents, web links, videos, step-by-step toolkits, articles.
- **Online connections:** The current Members' Forum has proven to be ineffective at encouraging networking. This section is to be re-developed, perhaps by more closely integrating with social media.
- **Venue Matching:** A new functionality to facilitate connections between creative venues/spaces and performers/exhibitors. Creative spaces across the partner regions seeking performers and/or exhibitors, should be able to identify and connect with them.
- **Online applications:** MyCreativeEdge.eu will act as a platform to deliver other supports implemented by 'a creative momentum project'. A facility to accept online applications for multiple open calls for applications is to be developed.

DESIGN OF DIGITAL AND PHYSICAL MARKETING COLLATERAL FOR MYCREATIVEEDGE:

- New digital and physical marketing collateral will be required to match the new visual style of the site. The collateral will include: Facebook cover; Twitter cover; Banner ads; Facebook ads; Leaflets; Roll up banner; and Updated Mailchimp postcard and Newsletter templates.

2.6 Re-development Process

STEP 1: DISCOVERY

The re-development process began with an initiation meeting between the web developers and the WDC in December 2015. Based on this discussion, in January the developers outlined initial concepts for the Information Architecture Rationale and Sitemap.

An information architecture identifies and provides a path for the key user journeys through a website, and represents an intrinsic step in devising the final user experience.

The key to site re-development is to agree the information architecture and user experience, before any work is done on visual design. Feedback from the WDC, in consultation with project partners, on these documents was integrated into Key Functions and Wireframe documents.

STEP 2: CONCEPTUALISATION

Only after the overall site structure was agreed in principle were initial visual design concepts developed.

As the third project OMT was due to be held in Northern Ireland in late February 2016, it was agreed that Anthony McNamee, Project Manager for McCadden/Minus40 would make a presentation to all project partners outlining the proposed site structure and visual design. He pointed out that re-development revolves around three groups of users:

- **Members:** creatives who want to showcase their work. They also look for knowledge and want to be inspired;
- **Consumers:** people who communicate directly with members and want to purchase products and services;
- **Seekers:** people such as students or teachers or creatives from outside the partner regions who want to engage in a creative journey and learn more about the creative industries. They want to be inspired.

There were some common needs across these target groups (Searching for inspiration; Looking for knowledge) while other needs were more distinct: consumers want contact details for the businesses; site members want to increase their personal profile and understand the site's performance; and new members need to know how to join. He also presented:

- **Proposed Site Structure:** Showcase (member Profiles by region and sector, options for Profile layout); Creative Thoughts (position the site as a hub and a source of creative thinking); Connecting Creatives (News, Events, Creative Spaces, Creative Trails, Calls for Applications); Members (Login area to create Profiles, complete application forms etc).
- **Initial Design Concepts:** Dark, ambient; Feels like a native application (app) with emphasis on interactions, not scrolls; Focus of every page is the content; Core navigation is clean and simple; Supporting content is relegated in terms of prominence.

Some of the main points raised by partners during the discussion were:

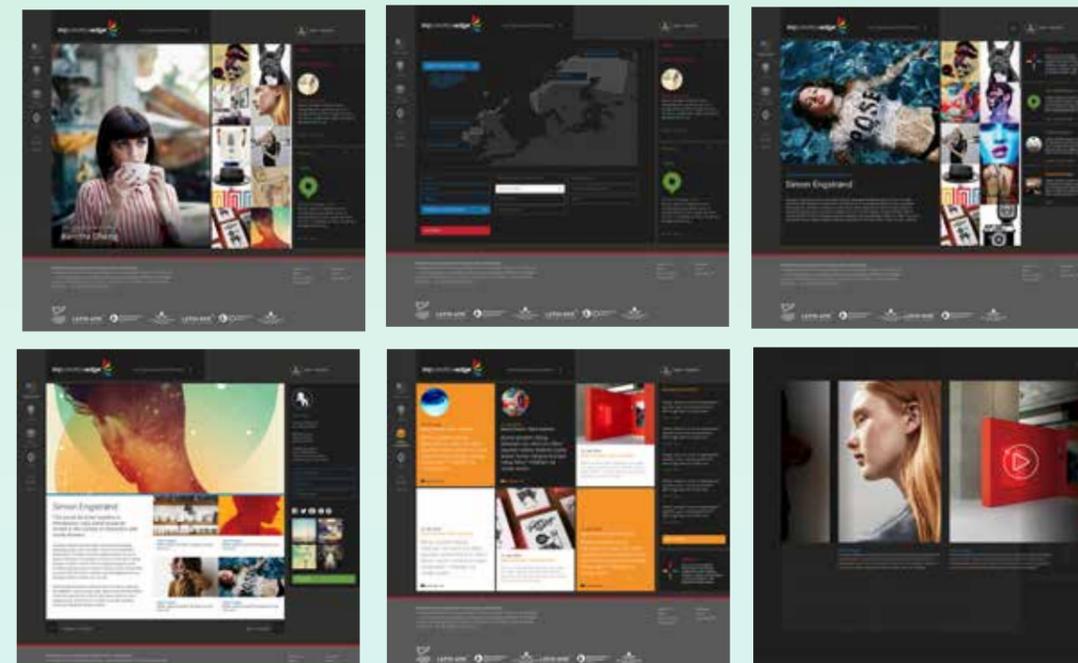
Home page: The 'Feature Image' of a member's Profile will dominate the home screen, this will be site visitors' first impression, so needs to be very strong. A poor quality image on the home screen will undermine the site and users will leave immediately. It is advisable that the regional administrators for the project partners should select which Profiles would feature on the home page, and which would only appear in the Showcase, to ensure quality of home screen image.

Quality Control: Image quality control is necessary on a showcase website. However too much focus on quality (i.e. excellent photographs) may deter some potential members. Agreed that partners would need to be proactive to help people create high quality Profiles (see Section 4).

Flexibility of Profiles: The importance of providing some flexibility for members to choose different Profile layouts to suit their work was discussed. Less visual businesses e.g. writers and publishers needed to have a Profile layout option that allows more text. Also need way for members to organise their work into different projects.

Amount of text: There is a need to minimise directional/instructional text on the site while provide enough information for site navigation. Website navigation will be icon-based to follow newest trends in website development. This option is also more suitable to multi-lingual audiences.

Examples of initial design concepts



INFORMING THE CREATIVE COMMUNITY:

It was agreed that members of the site and the creative community in the partner regions should be able to give their input on the re-design process.

INDUSTRY ADVISORY GROUPS:

A small Industry Advisory Group of private and public sector members had been established in each of the five partner countries to provide their input and advice on the implementation of project activities. During the meetings of each regional IAG during 2016, their input and views on the proposed site structure, content and visual design were sought.

MEMBER NEWSLETTERS:

An article was published on MyCreativeEdge.eu in March 2016 'The re-development of MyCreativeEdge' showing the initial visual concepts. This was promoted on social media and included in a Member Update email (856 recipients) and a Newsletter (248 recipients).

The September 2016 Newsletter included the story 'Something new is coming...' letting members know the beta site would be launched soon. This was sent in a Member Update email (931 recipients) and a Newsletter (288 recipients).

On 6 October 2016 a dedicated mail 'New MyCreativeEdge.eu on the way! Register Now & Create a New Profile' was sent to 925 recipients announcing the beta site launch. The November Member Update and Newsletter announced that the beta site had been launched.

SOCIAL MEDIA:

Regular posts to Facebook and Twitter updated the creative community on the re-development process.

STEP 3: PRODUCTION

Following ongoing discussion and feedback on the site structure and visual design concepts, actual site build began using the WordPress Content Management System. The WDC were very actively engaged with the web developers during this period, with other project partners updated through e-mails and regular project con-calls. A beta test site of the main site structure and Profile creation process was made available in a testing environment by early summer.

In order to engage all project partners in the re-development process in a hands-on way, the WDC led a half-day workshop with all project partners during the fourth project OMT meeting held in Iceland in June 2016.

Following a presentation by the WDC on the beta test site structure and design, the project partners were divided into four groups to test specific sections and functions of the beta site. A series of questions was set for each group. The combined feedback from this workshop was passed to the developers and intensive development of the beta site continued through the summer. This included uploading other site content and the WDC worked with the web developers to write copy for directional and instructional text on the site, as well as the About Us, Terms, Accessibility etc.

MYCREATIVEEDGE.EU BETA SITE WORKSHOP: QUESTIONS FOR GROUP DISCUSSION – JUNE 2016

| | |
|--|---|
| <p>CREATIVE MEMBERS: PROFILE CREATION & USER EXPERIENCE</p> <p><i>Saila Puukko (Lapland UAS) & Aisling Murtagh (NUI Galway)</i></p> <hr/> <p>The profile creation process is based on a series of tabs. Test the process. Is it clear & straightforward?</p> <p>Please note any unclear instructions that could be simplified/ explained differently.</p> <p>Do you think a short instructional video would be effective to help Creative & Space members to create their Profile? Do you have any suggestions for the video? Any examples.</p> <hr/> <p>PLACES: CREATIVE SPACES & CREATIVE TRAILS</p> <p><i>Ragnheiður Jóna Ingimarsdóttir (North East Iceland Cultural Council) & Niall Drew (Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon Borough Council)</i></p> <hr/> <p>Should other types of Creative Spaces e.g. theatres, be able to create Profiles & advertise space/seeking performers on site?</p> <p>When asking Creative Spaces to create a Profile, which key functions should be clearly communicated to them?</p> <p>How can the new Trails developed under ‘a creative momentum project’ be effectively promoted on the website?</p> <p>What minimum criteria do other Trails need to meet to be included?</p> | <p>FRONT END: OVERALL DESIGN & USER EXPERIENCE</p> <p><i>Kristina Jeppson (Technichus Mid-Sweden) & Silvia Guglielmini (WDC)</i></p> <hr/> <p>Does the home page communicate the scope & mood of the website?</p> <p>Do consumers have the necessary tools to discover & remember Profiles of interest?</p> <p>Is the site easy to navigate?</p> <p>Should a ‘Like’ or ‘Favourite’ feature be added?</p> <p>Does the current design invite/make it easy for consumers to get to know & connect with creatives?</p> <p>From the point of view of site visitors, what criteria should be used for Profiles, Spaces, Deep in Thought to be ‘Featured’ on Home Screen?</p> <hr/> <p>COMMUNICATIONS: COMMUNICATIONS & DIGITAL MARKETING</p> <p><i>Hulda Jonsdóttir (North East Iceland Cultural Council) & Anitra Arkko-Saukkonen (Lapland UAS)</i></p> <hr/> <p>Is the main scope of the website clear?</p> <p>How can we communicate the main (and new) features of the website effectively?</p> <p>How can we encourage members to contribute to other elements of the site – Events, Deep in Thought?</p> <p>If you could pick 3 features of the website that should be demonstrated through a video tutorial, which ones?</p> <p>What should be the criteria for a Profile to be considered good enough to be ‘Featured’ on the home page?</p> <p>It has been suggested that we start a Pinterest account, which could regularly be updated by showcasing the (new) work of creatives in different regions. What do you think about this?</p> |
|--|---|

KEY DECISION:

To meet the requirements for a mobile-friendly, fast, visually appealing and more dynamic site, direct migration of member Profiles from the current MyCreativeEdge.eu to the re-developed site was not possible. All existing members of MyCreativeEdge.eu would need to register again on the new site and create a new Profile.

STEP 4: QUALITY ASSURANCE

The next step was user experience testing. During September 2016, a number of creative entrepreneurs in each region were invited to test registering and creating a Profile on the beta site of MyCreativeEdge.eu. In most regions members of the Regional Industry Advisory Group and others involved in the project were among the testers selected. This feedback was incorporated into the beta site where possible.

At the same time, selected News and Success Story content from the existing website had to be uploaded again to the beta site. The WDC prepared a ‘MyCreativeEdge.eu Manual: Guidelines for Regional Administrators’ and circulated to all project partners. The WDC then prepared spreadsheets for each partner organisation of the articles from their own region they needed to transfer from the old to the new site. The WDC did the transfer for all general articles.

As well as helping to populate the re-developed site, this allowed the regional administrator in each partner region to become more familiar with the process of uploading articles to the site.

In October 2016 the beta site went live. The existing site continued to operate with a link to the ‘beta version’ clearly visible on all pages. An e-mail was sent to all registered members of MyCreativeEdge.eu asking them to register on the beta site and create a new Profile.

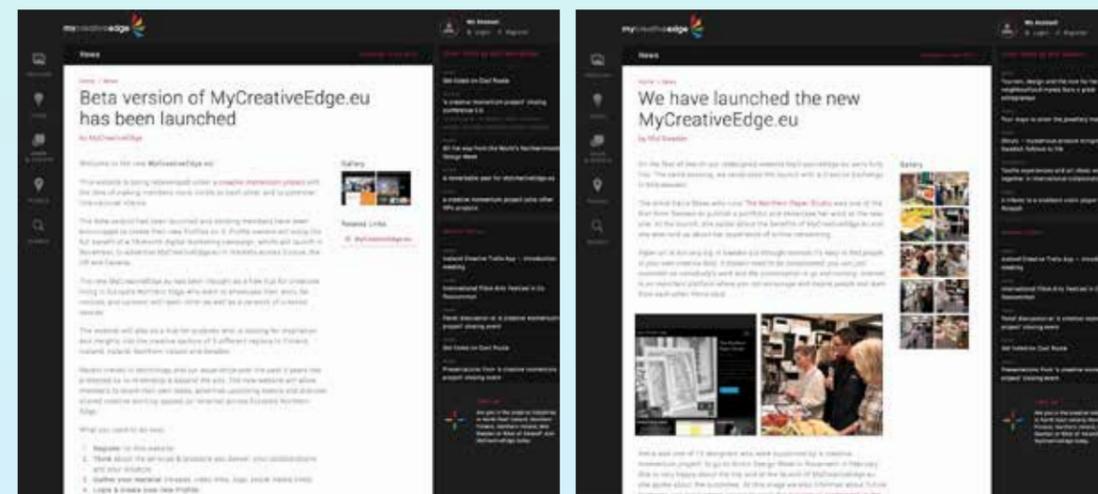
[Beta version of MyCreativeEdge.eu has been launched](#)

The target was that when 100 Profiles had been published, the re-developed site would replace the existing site. Through the beta phase, feedback from members and regional site administrators would continue to be gathered to address any ‘bugs’.

STEP 5: DEPLOYMENT

The new MyCreativeEdge.eu website formally went ‘live’ on 1 March 2017. The occasion was marked with a ‘ribbon cutting’ ceremony in Sweden. The final structure of the website is outlined in the next section.

[We have launched the new MyCreativeEdge.eu](#)



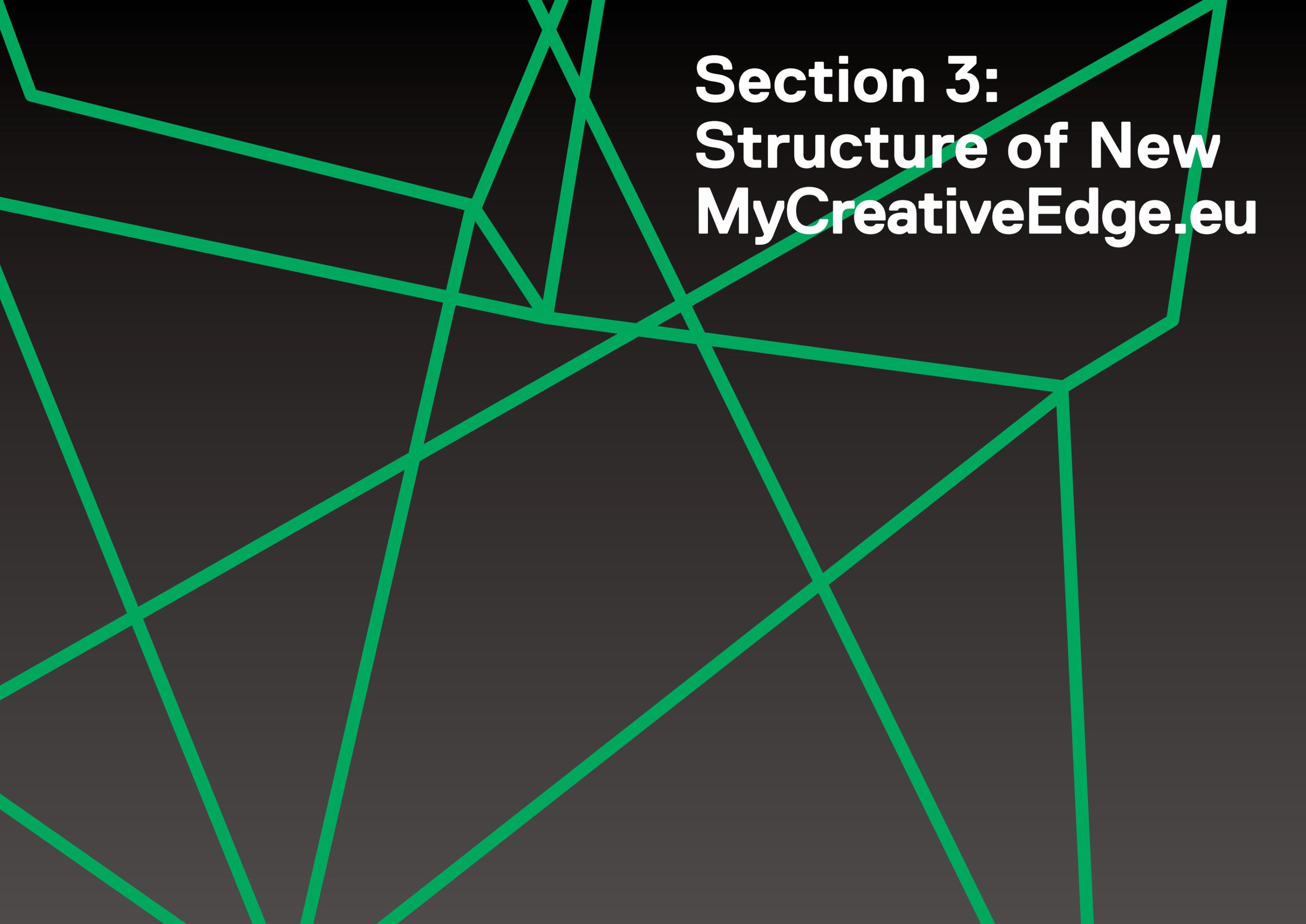
LESSONS LEARNED

1. **Time:** Everything takes longer than you expect – however long you anticipate the re-development will take, double it or triple it!
2. **Transnational complexity:** A transnational project, with multiple partners in different countries, working in different types of organisations and with heavy workloads on other activities, makes the process considerably more complex. Ultimately many decisions have to be taken by the organisation leading the re-development.
3. **Hands-on input:** e-mails and con-calls are useful to involve partners, but really engaging the partners in the re-development process requires face-to-face, practical hands-on input.
4. **Regulatory requirements:** Public/EU funding requirements such as state aid and publicity requirements can sometimes be in conflict with the commercial approach taken by web developers and trends in digital technology.
5. **Quality Control of User Generated Content:** A website relying on user generated content (Member Profiles) means that site administrators have limited control over the majority of the site's content and its look, as well as Search Engine Optimisation. Moderation and quality control is critical but very time consuming.
6. **Differing needs of target audiences:** Balancing the needs of different target audiences is challenging. An objective of 'a creative momentum project' was to increase the capacity of creative entrepreneurs, including those with weaker digital skills, but this needed to be balanced with the needs of website visitors (potential customers) for a highly visually appealing site with strong imagery.
7. **Profile Creation Process:** The 'Profile Creation Process' was one of the most difficult aspects of the re-development. The same process would be used by members with very high technical skills and people with extremely limited digital knowledge, by native and non-native English speakers and needed to allow flexibility in the Profile layout. This process continued to create challenges.
8. **Need to create new Profile:** The requirement for members of the existing site to re-register and create a new Profile from scratch, rather than content being migrated over to the new site, proved to be very challenging to communicate to members and to manage. The strategy for managing this should probably have been more clearly developed.
9. **Make decision to go live:** A website will never be perfect, at some stage you need to make the decision to go 'live' and manage issues as they arise.
10. **Positive feedback:** Receiving positive feedback from members of the creative community on the visual concept and style of the site was very satisfying.



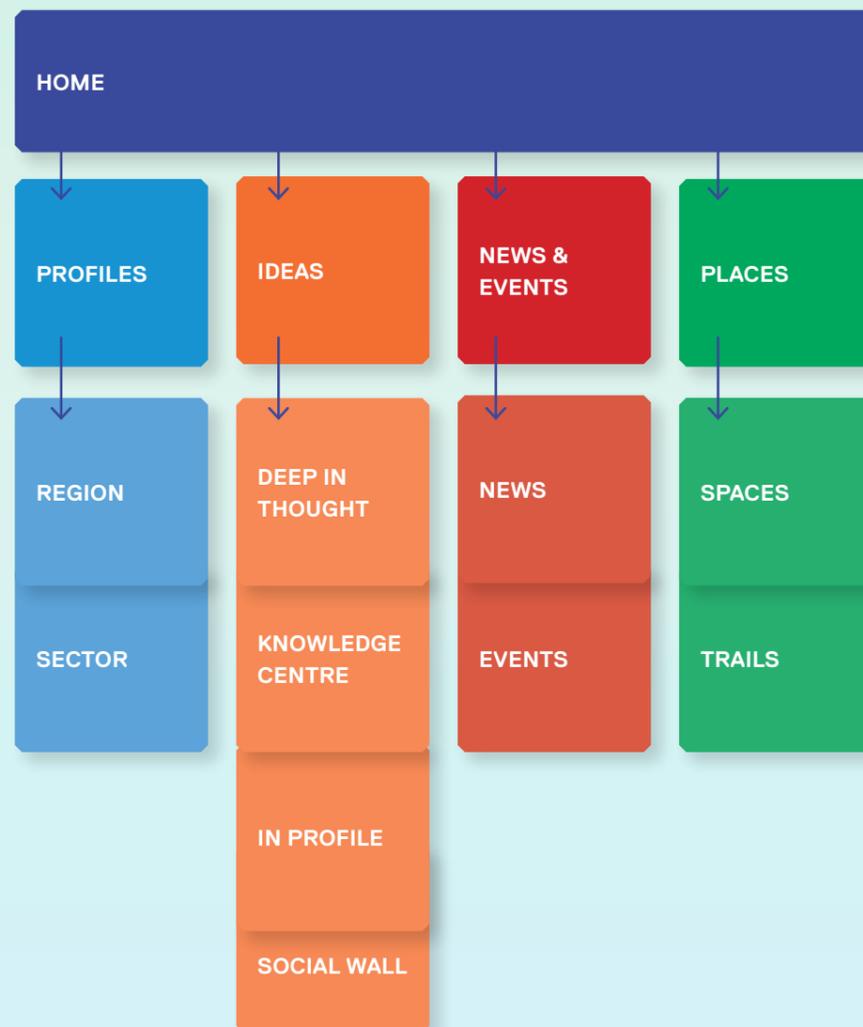
FIGURE 3: No. of Users per month to MyCreativeEdge.eu 1 May 2015-30 April 2018 (Year = 1 May - 30 April)





Section 3: Structure of New MyCreativeEdge.eu

Sitemap of re-developed MyCreativeEdge.eu

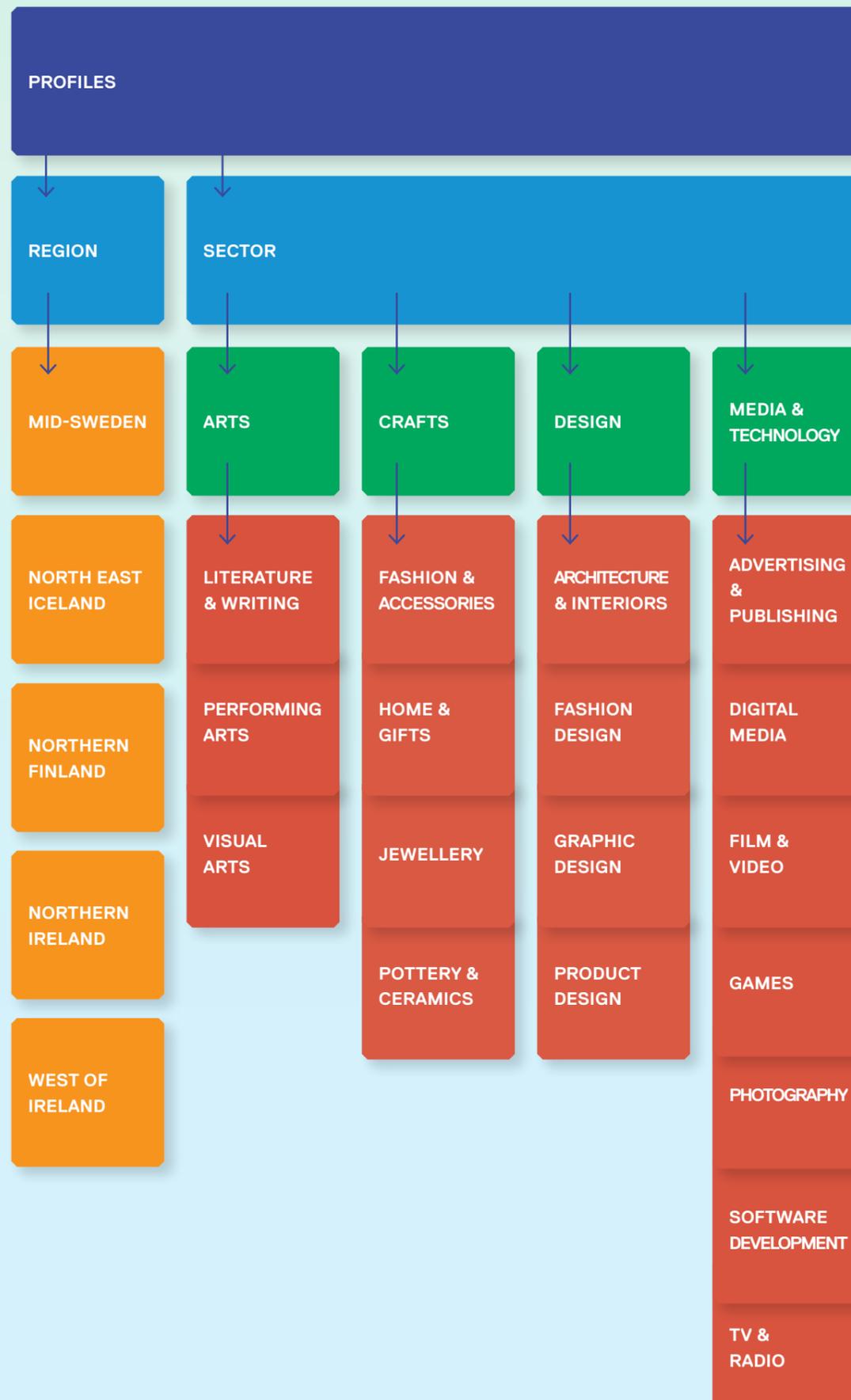


3 Types of MyCreativeEdge.eu Member

On the previous MyCreativeEdge.eu website, there was only one type of member. When [registering](#) on the new site there are three options:

- Creative Member:** Individuals and enterprises working in Arts, Crafts, Design and Media & Technology and based in the five partner regions. Can upload and manage Profiles, Events and Deep in Thought blog posts. Can make Comments on posts when logged in. Can apply for specific funding opportunities when logged in.
- Space Member:** Owners and managers of shared creative spaces located in the five partner regions. Can upload and manage Space Profiles, Events, Deep in Thought blog posts. Can make Comments on posts when logged in. Can link to Creative Members who are tenants /associated with their Space.
- Contributor:** Academics, municipality staff, sectoral agency staff and others with general interest in the creative sector based both inside and beyond the five partner regions. Can upload and manage Events and Deep in Thought blog posts. Can make Comments on posts when logged in.

Region and Sector sitemap of re-developed MyCreativeEdge.eu Showcase



3.1 Profiles Member Profiles

Anyone working in Arts, Crafts, Design and Media & Technology in the partner regions can register as a Creative Member and publish a free Profile to showcase their work. All Profiles share some common elements:

- Title, Short Description, Feature Image – What displays when a Profile appears on the Home or Showcase screen, should be strongest image.
- Sectors – Choose up to three creative sectors, used for search and Showcase filtering (see below).
- Contacts – Avatar image, name, phone etc.
- Social – Social media links

Optional feature:

Featured Items Slideshow – A slideshow of images/video at the top of a Profile page (alternatively this is the Feature Image).

MEMBERS CAN THEN CHOOSE BETWEEN THREE LAYOUT OPTIONS:

Option 1: Standard Profile – Main content area of Profile has 'About' text with all images/videos/quotes showing beside text (or below it on mobile).

Option 2: Multi-Portfolio Profile – Main content area of Profile has 'About' text with images/videos/quotes organised into a number of 'Albums' e.g. for different projects, exhibitions, product lines. These show beside (or below) text.

Option 3: Text-focussed Profile – Main content area of Profile only has 'About' text.

<https://mycreativeedge.eu/profile/isle-jewellery/>

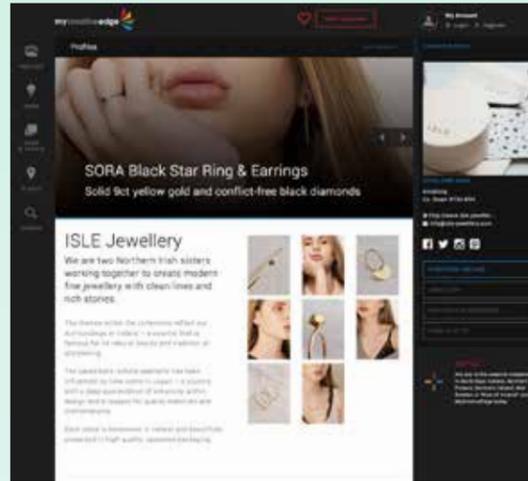
<https://mycreativeedge.eu/profile/shane-omalley/>

<https://mycreativeedge.eu/profile/viestintatoimisto-lapin-loitsu/>

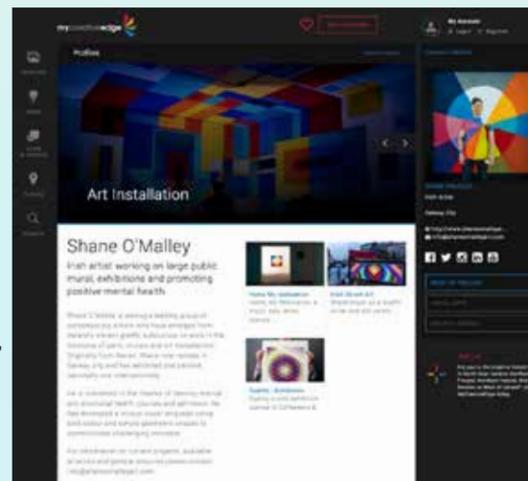
A Creative Member can publish more than one Profile e.g. if they run a number of separate businesses. A new feature of the site is the Joint Profile. A Creative Member can choose to allow another Creative Member to manage and edit a Profile. This option allows two or more members to establish a Joint Profile e.g. for a joint project, for a collective/network of creatives.

There are currently 242 Profiles published on MyCreativeEdge.eu:

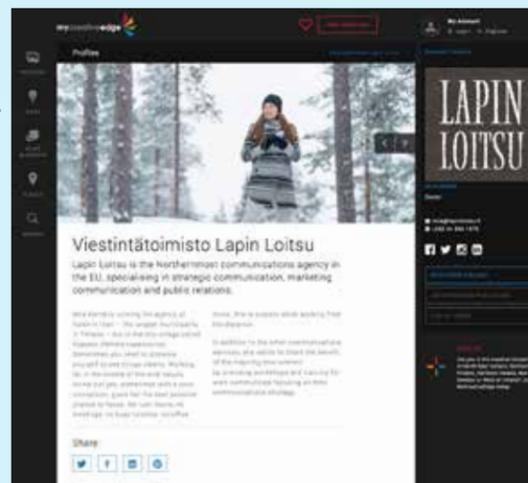
- Mid-Sweden 12
- North East Iceland 18
- Northern Finland 38
- South East of Northern Ireland 52
- West of Ireland 121



MyCreativeEdge.eu Standard Profile of ISLE Jewellery, jewellery designers from Northern Ireland



MyCreativeEdge.eu Multi-Portfolio Profile of Shane O'Malley, visual artist from the West of Ireland



MyCreativeEdge.eu Text-focussed Profile of Viestintätoimisto Lapin Loitsu, communications agency from Northern Finland

242 Member Profiles | Received 23.5% of total Page Views

Top 10 Member Profiles²

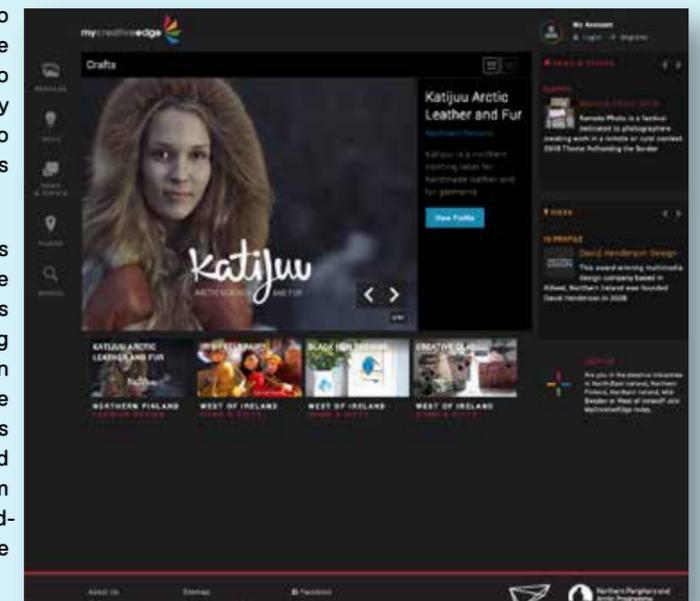
| PROFILE | REGION | SECTORS | NO. OF PAGE VIEWS | AVERAGE TIME ON PAGE (MINS:SECS) |
|--|------------------------|---|-------------------|----------------------------------|
| Jonna Hyttinen Artist | Northern Finland | Visual Arts | 606 | 5:01 |
| smyth knives – irish handmade knives | West of Ireland | Fashion & Accessories; Product Design; Visual Arts | 527 | 2:26 |
| Sallyann's Handmade Bags | West of Ireland | Fashion & Accessories; Home & Gifts | 335 | 2:21 |
| NI Silver Jewellery – Northern Ireland | SE of Northern Ireland | Jewellery; Fashion & Accessories; Product Design | 308 | 1:10 |
| Wild Cocoon, Hand woven in Ireland | West of Ireland | Fashion & Accessories; Home & Gifts; Fashion Design | 293 | 1:54 |
| The Northern Paper Studio | Mid-Sweden | Visual Arts; Advertising & Publishing; Home & Gifts | 274 | 1:51 |
| Bernie Dignam Artist | West of Ireland | Visual Arts; Home & Gifts | 247 | 2:07 |
| Saara Sarparanta Design | Northern Finland | Visual Arts; Home & Gifts; Product Design | 244 | 1:47 |
| LAURA JEAN ZITO | West of Ireland | Visual Arts; Advertising & Publishing; Photography | 242 | 5:15 |
| McKernan Woollen Mills | West of Ireland | Fashion & Accessories | 242 | 2:46 |

Received 21.5% of total Page Views

Showcase

Member Profiles can be filtered in two ways: Region and /or Sector. Each of the four main sectors is further divided into sub-sectors. When a site visitor filters by Region and/or Sector, they are directed to a Showcase of every Profile that meets those search criteria.

The need for these Showcase pages to have a unique url was among the requirements for the re-development. This arose from a challenge when conducting digital marketing of the previous version of MyCreativeEdge.eu. Each Showcase has a unique url which allows digital ads to direct visitors to a specific filtered Showcase on the site e.g. Jewellery from Northern Finland or Visual Arts from Mid-Sweden. See Section 5 for details of the digital marketing campaign.



² Number of Page Views 1 March 2017-30 April 2018

Top 10 Showcase pages³

| SHOWCASE | NO. PAGE VIEWS | AVERAGE TIME ON PAGE (MINS:SECS) |
|-----------------------|----------------|----------------------------------|
| CRAFTS | 4,576 | 1:33 |
| FASHION & ACCESSORIES | 3,490 | 1:09 |
| ARTS | 1,884 | 1:23 |
| HOME & GIFTS | 1,806 | 1:12 |
| WEST OF IRELAND | 1,660 | 1:09 |
| JEWELLERY | 1,172 | 1:00 |
| NORTHERN FINLAND | 1,041 | 1:32 |
| NORTHERN IRELAND | 790 | 1:03 |
| MID-SWEDEN | 368 | 0:45 |
| NORTH EAST ICELAND | 360 | 0:57 |

3.2 Ideas

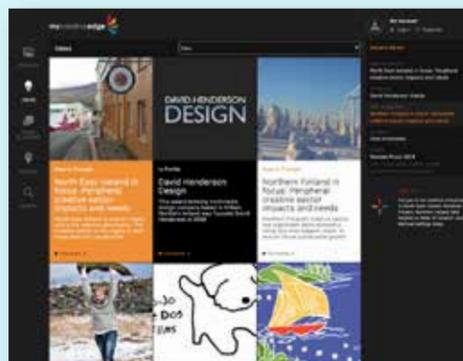
One of the activities to be implemented by 'a creative momentum project' was to establish an 'Online Creative Knowledge Resource'. Its purpose was to facilitate online access to knowledge resources to assist the professional development of creative start-ups and SMEs. The [Ideas](#) section of MyCreativeEdge.eu provides this knowledge resource.

In Profile

The [In Profile](#) section contains interviews and case studies of creatives working across the five partner regions. These stories share the experiences of companies, individuals, freelancers, entrepreneurs, artists, musicians, crafters and more, working across Europe's Northern Edge. These stories have the advantage of giving a personal perspective when discussing business and creativity.

The articles are written and uploaded by project staff from all the partner organisations. A total of 92 In Profile articles were published.⁴ In Profile articles feature:

- [Entrepreneurs who have received support from 'a creative momentum project'](#) for example support to travel to participate in a Creative Hotspot, a professional photoshoot (see Section 4), participating in the Creative2Creative Matching programme.
- [Interviewees for the Creative Business Model Toolkit research.](#)
- [Speakers at Creative Exchange information and networking events.](#)
- [Organisers of festivals or events taking place in the regions.](#)
- [Other creatives working in the regions.](#)



92 In Profile Stories | Received 3.8% of total Page Views

Top 10 In Profile stories⁵

| IN PROFILE | REGION | 'A CREATIVE MOMENTUM PROJECT' ACTIVITY | NO. OF PAGE VIEWS | AVERAGE TIME ON PAGE (MINS:SECS) |
|--|------------------------------------|---|-------------------|----------------------------------|
| 'I discovered weaving totally by accident and fell in love', Frances Crowe, Fibre Artist | West of Ireland | Professional Photoshoot | 202 | 3:34 |
| Artist Yst makes the most of her remote Icelandic location | North East Iceland | Business Model Toolkit | 197 | 2:50 |
| Birna Pétursdóttir, Flugá Hugmyndahús | North East Iceland | Creative Hotspot: Galway Film Fleadh / Business Model Toolkit | 143 | 2:59 |
| What do wallets, wetsuits and waves all have in common? LX-upcycle | West of Ireland | Business Model Toolkit / Creative Steps 2.0 | 142 | 5:51 |
| 'Scent is a Powerful Memory' Bernice Cooke, Canvas to Candle | West of Ireland | Professional Photoshoot | 119 | 1:22 |
| 'This photoshoot captured the soul of the pottery' – Lowry Wasson, Merville Pottery | West of Ireland | Professional Photoshoot | 113 | 2:07 |
| Michael Chang | West of Ireland | N/A | 111 | 3:53 |
| With Creative2Creative matching you can find more than good advice online | Northern Finland / West of Ireland | Creative2Creative Matching | 102 | 2:36 |
| Textile experiences and art ideas weaved together in international collaboration | Mid-Sweden / West of Ireland | Creative2Creative Matching | 88 | 3:16 |
| Finding the right balance: Ruth Graham Design & Illustration | West of Ireland | Professional Photoshoot | 84 | 2:55 |

Deep in Thought

The intention of the [Deep in Thought](#) blog was to create a space where members of MyCreativeEdge.eu could share and exchange ideas, inspiration and knowledge on any topic relevant to working as a creative on Europe's Northern Edge. Any member of MyCreativeEdge.eu can upload a Deep in Thought blog post and comment on others.

The challenge of encouraging members to post blogs on the website was discussed by the web developers, Industry Advisory Groups and project staff during the re-development phase. It was recognised that it would be difficult for members to see the value of posting to the site, as many already had blogs on their own website or would post to more established and popular blogs. See Section 4.

A total of 54 Deep in Thought blog posts were published. While the vast majority were published by personnel working on the project, eight blog posts were published by members of the site. Posts related to the research undertaken by NUI Galway under 'a creative momentum project' were among the most popular, as well as posts on the outcome of project activities e.g. Creative Steps 2.0.

54 Deep in Thought blog posts | Received 2.3% of total Page Views

³ Number of Page Views 1 March 2017-30 April 2018

⁴ Up to 30 April 2018

⁵ Number of Page Views 1 March 2017-30 April 2018

Top 10 Deep in Thought blog posts⁶

| DEEP IN THOUGHT | REGION | AUTHOR | NO. OF PAGE VIEWS | AVERAGE TIME ON PAGE (MINS:SECS) |
|--|--------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------|----------------------------------|
| Business models for more sustainable and competitive creative enterprises? | All | Aisling Murtagh, NUI Galway | 163 | 5:11 |
| Galway Film Fleadh from a Swedish point of view | Mid-Sweden | Technichus Science Centre | 156 | 3:06 |
| Economic impact assessment of the creative economy | All | Aisling Murtagh, NUI Galway | 125 | 3:15 |
| A Creative Momentum project launches Creative Steps 2.0 Guidelines | All | Anitra Arkko-Saukkonen, Lapland UAS | 116 | 2:40 |
| New friendship abroad through a Creative2Creative Matching Programme | Mid-Sweden/ West of Ireland | Kristina Jeppson, No Gadget Design | 112 | 3:16 |
| A tale told in numbers and stories: Reports published on creative sector impacts | All | Aisling Murtagh, NUI Galway | 89 | 4:38 |
| Help a creative momentum project shape future creative policy in the West of Ireland | West of Ireland | Aisling Murtagh, NUI Galway | 86 | 3:56 |
| Don't worry, wear a hat | West of Ireland | Silvia Guglielmini, WDC | 85 | 1:28 |
| Creative Steps and new product design: Taking a step back to move forward | West of Ireland | Aisling Murtagh, NUI Galway | 73 | 4:24 |
| Tap into the Tourist Potential of your Region | West of Ireland | Pauline White, WDC | 64 | 3:12 |

Knowledge Centre

The [Knowledge Centre](#) is the area of the website which hosts more formal knowledge resources. It contains a mix of resources and reports generated by 'a creative momentum project' as well as links to external resources. The sections containing resources generated by 'a creative momentum project' include:

- 'a creative momentum project' Output Reports
- 'How To' Guides for MyCreativeEdge.eu
- Video Pitching Toolkit
- Intelligence and Influence
- Business Model Toolkit

The other sections include links to external resources from each of the five partner regions, as well as general European and international resources. The content was gathered and uploaded by NUI Galway while they were undertaking the Supports Assessment research for each of the partner regions. The resources mainly involve links to external websites:

- Industry News and Career Development
- Funding and Investment (organised by region)
- Building Networks
- Organisations and Groups (organised by region)
- Business Development Resources (organised by region)

The Knowledge Centre had 378 page views since the re-developed site was launched on 1 March 2017 and 126 downloads of new resources created by 'a creative momentum project'.

Social Wall

The original intention of the [Social Wall](#) was to show a real time snapshot of the creative sector across Europe's Northern Edge by drawing together social media content from all website members. It was hoped this would encourage virtual connections between site members and help build a community among the creative members of the site by piggy-backing on their existing social media activity rather than establishing any dedicated 'discussion forum' on the site.

In practice, during the re-development of the site a number of popular social media platforms such as Instagram, Facebook and Pinterest, changed their protocols so it was no longer possible to 'grab' social media feeds from these sites in the way originally intended. Twitter remained the only platform where this was possible. The Social Wall, therefore it essentially became the 'Twitter Wall'.

One of the drawbacks is that, while Twitter is quite popular among site members in Ireland and Northern Ireland, it is very little used in Finland, Sweden and Iceland. This has meant that the Social Wall is quite limited as it largely displays Tweets of members from Ireland, North and South. In reality this section of the website has not met its original objective.

3.3 Places

The [Places](#) section of the website features elements related to creative activities situated in specific physical locations.

Spaces

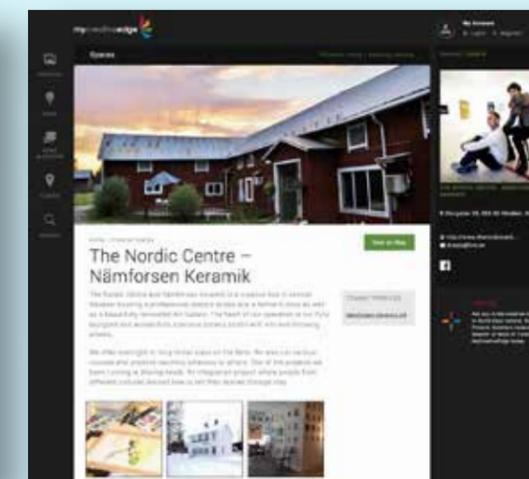
An activity of 'a creative momentum project' is to establish a Network of Shared Creative Spaces. Therefore the initial specification for the re-development of MyCreativeEdge.eu included developing a new section where shared creative co-working spaces located in the partner regions could be profiled.

One of the criteria was to allow [Spaces](#) to advertise their facilities and advertise for tenants. MyCreativeEdge.eu was to facilitate connections between spaces in the regions who were seeking tenants/exhibitors/performers and creatives who were looking for space to work/exhibit/perform.

26 Space Profiles | Received 1.2% of total Page Views



MyCreativeEdge.eu Space Profile of Seigla Creative Center, North East Iceland



MyCreativeEdge.eu Space Profile of The Nordic Centre - Nämforsen Keramik, Mid-Sweden

The owner or manager of a shared creative space can register as a Space Member and then create and publish a Space Profile. Space Profiles have several similarities to member Profiles:

- Title, Short Description, Feature Image.
- Contacts – Avatar image, name, phone etc.
- Social – Social media links
- Optional feature of Featured Items Slideshow – A slideshow of images/video at the top of a Space Profile (alternatively this is the Feature Image).
- About – Main text describing the Space, can include images, videos and quotes.

There are a number of features unique to Space Profiles however:

- **Location Map** – When the owner/manager inserts the address of the Space an icon ‘View on Map’ shows on the Space Profile which opens a Google Map showing location.
- **Facilities** – A list of facilities the Space offers e.g. number of studios, number of hot-desks, capacity of auditorium. The list appears in a box to the right of the About text.
- **Related Profiles** – Option to select other published MyCreativeEdge.eu Profiles with a link appearing on the Space Profile page for: 1) Tenants – Profiles of people based in the Space appear as a list of Tenant Profiles; 2) Connections – Profiles connected with the Space e.g. someone who previously exhibited in the Space, a former tenant, appears as a list of Connections.
- **Availabilities** – A Space Member who is looking for tenants can advertise available spaces in their facility. This appears on their Space Profile and also a combined ‘Availabilities’ page of the website.

There are currently 26 Space Profiles published on MyCreativeEdge.eu:

- Mid-Sweden 4
- North East Iceland 8
- Northern Finland 2
- South East of Northern Ireland 6
- West of Ireland 6

Top 10 Space Profiles⁷

| SPACE PROFILE | REGION | NO. OF PAGE VIEWS | AVERAGE TIME ON PAGE |
|---|------------------------|-------------------|----------------------|
| Tommy Makem Arts & Community Centre | SE of Northern Ireland | 171 | 1:48 |
| Nebulosa gård | Mid-Sweden | 136 | 1:05 |
| The Nordic Centre – Nämforsen Keramik | Mid-Sweden | 70 | 3:13 |
| Bleary Business & Community Centre | SE of Northern Ireland | 55 | 3:01 |
| GMIT Innovation Hubs | West of Ireland | 54 | 0:51 |
| Creative Laboratory – Luova Laboratorio | Northern Finland | 53 | 5:33 |
| Verksmiðjan á Hjalteyri | North East Iceland | 53 | 4:08 |
| KulttuuriKauppila Art Centre | Northern Finland | 52 | 1:28 |
| PorterShed | West of Ireland | 45 | 2:29 |
| ART AK | North East Iceland | 35 | 0:30 |

7 Number of Page Views 1 March 2017-30 April 2018

Trails

Another activity of ‘a creative momentum project’ was Creative Trails. Under this activity four new Creative Trails (two in Northern Ireland and two in North East Iceland) were to be created. These Trails would include mobile apps and brochures which tourists and locals could use to plan a visit to creative businesses with visitor facilities e.g. open studios, art galleries. Therefore the specification for the re-development of MyCreativeEdge.eu included developing a new section where these four new Creative Trails, as well as pre-existing Arts/Crafts/Creative Trails in all partner regions, could be profiled. It was agreed that, when launched the four Creative Trails developed by the project would each have a Profile page similar to the Space Profile. Pre-existing Trails would be uploaded by project staff with the following information: Title, Feature Image, Short Description and website link to the Trail website.

3.4 News & Events

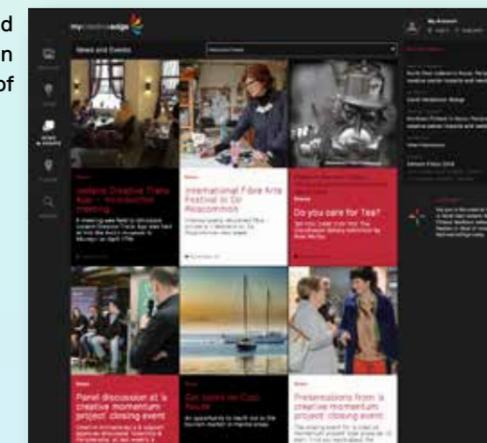
News

Project staff from all partner organisations could upload News articles. A total of 161 News items were published on MyCreativeEdge.eu. Some of the most common type of News stories were:

- Updates on MyCreativeEdge.eu re-development and its digital marketing.
- Opportunities to apply for support from ‘a creative momentum project’ e.g. Trade Fair support, professional photoshoot.
- Outcomes of project activities e.g. who was selected for support, reports on the outcome of an activity.
- Upcoming events in the partner regions, either organised by the project or by others.
- Presentations or videos from events organised by the project.
- Other relevant general news stories from the regions.

One difficulty was some lack of clarity among the project partners about the distinction between News / In Profile / Deep in Thought posts. Some posts uploaded as News items would in fact have been more suitable as In Profile stories or Deep in Thought posts. The structure of the backend of the site however meant that it was not possible to move an article from News to one of the other sections without deleting it and uploading again.

161 News items | Received 9% of total Page Views



Top 10 News Items⁸

| NEWS ITEM | REGION | 'A CREATIVE MOMENTUM PROJECT' ACTIVITY | NO. OF PAGE VIEWS | AVERAGE TIME ON PAGE |
|--|--|--|-------------------|----------------------|
| Northern Ireland – Creative Trails Opportunity | SE of Northern Ireland | Creative Trails | 461 | 4:02 |
| Apply for Video Pitching Toolkit support & create the perfect pitching video | Northern Finland/SE of Northern Ireland/ West of Ireland | Video Pitching Toolkit | 439 | 3:07 |
| Four ways to enter the jewellery market | Mid-Sweden | . | 307 | 5:34 |
| Mahdollisuus ammattivalokuvaukseen Pohjois-Suomen luovan alan yrittäjille! | Northern Finland | Professional Photoshoot | 297 | 2:35 |
| Seeking Video Production Companies | All | Video Pitching Toolkit | 280 | 4:06 |
| West of Ireland creatives – apply now for Creative Steps 2.0 | West of Ireland | Creative Steps 2.0 | 243 | 5:31 |
| 25 Video Production Companies Selected for Company Pool | All | Video Pitching Toolkit | 233 | 1:59 |
| Apply now for 'a creative momentum project' support to participate in Galway Film Fleadh | Mid-Sweden/ North East Iceland / Northern Finland/SE of Northern Ireland | Creative Hotspot | 216 | 4:21 |
| 11 creative companies looking for a match from another region | All | Creative2Creative Matching | 195 | 3:14 |
| Co-develop an idea with Creative Steps 2.0 | All | Creative Steps 2.0 | 175 | 5:11 |

Events

MyCreativeEdge.eu includes a facility to upload an upcoming [Event](#). All registered members can upload an Event to the website. An Event listing includes:

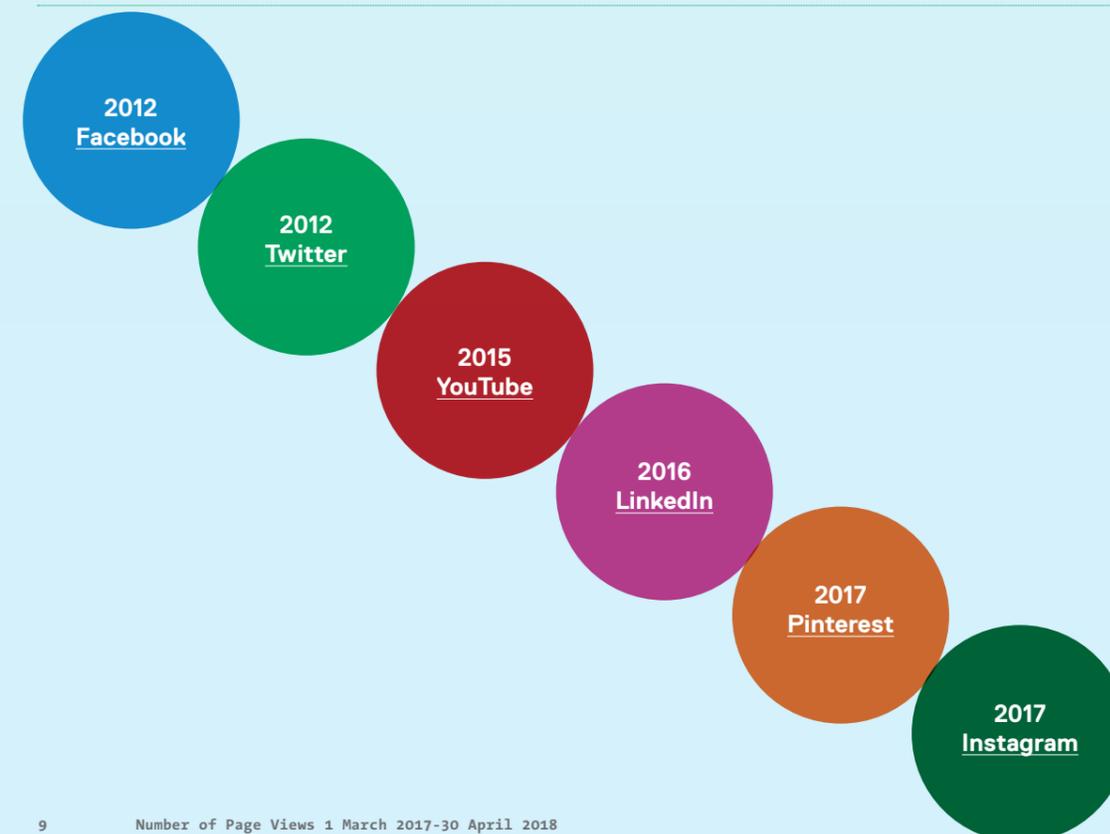
- Title, Short Description and Feature Image – Appears on the Events listings page.
- Event Start Date and Time / End Date and Time – The Event is automatically removed from the site after the end date and time.
- Event Location.
- Description – This can include text, images, video and a map.

Of the 79 Events listed on MyCreativeEdge.eu, many were Events organised as part of 'a creative momentum project' however this is the facility of the website most used by members. In total 26 Events were published by members of MyCreativeEdge.eu.

Top 10 Events⁹

| EVENT | REGION | 'A CREATIVE MOMENTUM PROJECT' ACTIVITY | NO. OF PAGE VIEWS | AVERAGE TIME ON PAGE |
|---|------------------------|--|-------------------|----------------------|
| Screen Industries on the Periphery: Policy & Practice | West of Ireland | Creative Exchange/ Creative Hotspot | 230 | 4:53 |
| Full Conference Programme Now Available (project closing event) | West of Ireland | Project Closing | 138 | 3:52 |
| Skammdegi: Open Call for Applications | North East Iceland | . | 113 | 2:40 |
| Tap into the Tourism Potential of your Region | West of Ireland | Creative Exchange | 105 | 2:35 |
| Storytelling & Entrepreneurship Workshop | Northern Finland | Creative Exchange | 97 | 5:54 |
| Northern Stars Seminar: Creative Entrepreneurship in the Arctic | Northern Finland | Creative Exchange | 94 | 3:04 |
| Grow your Creative Business through Video | SE of Northern Ireland | Creative Exchange | 74 | 2:17 |
| a creative momentum project closing conference 2.0 | West of Ireland | Project Closing (re-scheduled) | 65 | 3:07 |
| Taking your Creative Business Abroad | SE of Northern Ireland | Creative Exchange | 64 | 3:44 |
| Network of Shared Creative Spaces | All | Network of Shared Creative Spaces | 56 | 5:05 |

3.5 Social Media



Section 4: Driving engagement with MyCreativeEdge.eu

4.1 Communications and Marketing Strategy

During the second OMT meeting of all project partners in the West of Ireland in October 2015, it was agreed that the WDC would take on the task of developing a Communications Strategy for 'a creative momentum project'. During the third OMT and following the selection of a web design company for the re-development of MyCreativeEdge.eu (see Section 2), it was agreed that this strategy should guide the communications activities of both 'a creative momentum project' and MyCreativeEdge.eu. The strategy would also include a Marketing Plan for MyCreativeEdge.eu including details of digital marketing and required digital marketing collateral.

SUMMARY OF KEY REQUIREMENTS FOR 'DEVELOPMENT OF A COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY FOR 'A CREATIVE MOMENTUM PROJECT' AND MYCREATIVEEDGE.EU, AND A MARKETING PLAN FOR MYCREATIVEEDGE.EU'

THE OBJECTIVES ARE TO:

1. Design a Communications Strategy (including social media) that would address the target audiences of 'a creative momentum project':

- **End beneficiaries of the project:** Those working in the creative and cultural sector in the five partner regions. These are the end beneficiaries of supports provided by the project and would include artists, craftspeople, designers, technology businesses, micro-enterprises, SMEs, freelancers, etc.
- **Policymakers:** Civil servants, municipal authorities, enterprise agencies, funders and sector-specific support agencies in the partner regions and countries, as well as more widely across the NPA area and the EU.
- **Researchers:** Academics involved in researching the role and impact of the creative industries as drivers of local, regional and national development.

2. Design a Communications Strategy (including social media) that would address the target audiences of MyCreativeEdge.eu:

- Consumers i.e. people from within the industry, within related industries, or perhaps not at all, who have a purpose to research/find/learn more about one or more creative sectors. The end goal is that they would connect with and purchase from one or more MyCreativeEdge members.
- Members and potential members i.e. business people from within the industry who are looking for opportunities to improve their digital profile and make connections within the industry. The end goal is that they create and actively maintain a strong Profile, and engage with the associated tools for networking. They must be based in one of the five partner regions.
- (Creative) Seekers i.e. people who either work in the industry, or aspire to work in the industry, who are looking for a combination of inspiration and direction. They may be from outside the partner regions.

3. Design a Marketing Plan for MyCreativeEdge.eu including details of required digital marketing collateral to be used to promote the website.

4.1.1 Contracting a Communications and Marketing expert

The next step was to contract a suitable company to undertake the development of the Strategy. In order to do this, the WDC engaged with project all partners by email and through con-calls to clarify and agree on the exact requirements.

The WDC drafted a Request for Quote which was uploaded to the 'old' version of MyCreativeEdge.eu on 15 March 2016. On the same date, an e-mail was sent to 857 registered members of the MyCreativeEdge.eu website notifying them about the opportunity. It was also included in a Newsletter e-mail. Following assessment, the contract was awarded to Bespoke Communications & GlowMetrics – two Northern Irish creative agencies who submitted a joint proposal.

THE SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS OF THE CONTRACT ARE TO:

COMMUNICATIONS

- Develop a comprehensive Communications Strategy for 'a creative momentum project' including MyCreativeEdge.eu.
- The Strategy should identify key target audiences, communication objectives, most effective communication channels, guidelines for the project partners, key communication/media opportunities related to the project and MyCreativeEdge activities and key communication messages. The Strategy should clearly outline how communications for 'a creative momentum project' and MyCreativeEdge.eu, two distinct but inter-related entities, can most clearly be managed.
- The Strategy should include how the re-launch of MyCreativeEdge.eu can best be communicated. It should include managing communications with site members who will be required to re-create their Profiles for the site re-launch, as well as communication with the site's other target audiences.
- Within the overall Communications Strategy, develop a specific strategy for Social Media activity to maximise the existing Social Media presence as well as the potential of adding new social media channels.

MARKETING PLAN FOR MYCREATIVEEDGE.EU:

- Develop a tactical Marketing Plan, choosing the most effective and cost efficient marketing and advertising media to market the re-launched MyCreativeEdge.eu website. It should include a very strong digital element. Develop a clear, practical implementation plan for how this Marketing Plan is to be implemented by the WDC.
- Outline key target markets for MyCreativeEdge.eu advertising. These would include the five partner regions, each country's capital city area, cities in the UK and US with large diasporas from the partner countries and selected European cities.
- MyCreativeEdge.eu's media buying budget is circa €25,000 (inclusive of VAT) to cover the cost of all advertising and media spend. The Marketing Plan should target at least 80% of the budget on marketing to consumers with the remaining 20% targeting members/potential members.
- The Marketing Plan should outline performance metrics to track and monitor its effectiveness.
- Review the performance of the Marketing Plan at 6-month intervals based on agreed performance metrics and revise the Marketing Plan based on the outcome of each review.

DIGITAL AND PHYSICAL MARKETING COLLATERAL:

- Collaborate with the website design company on the design of new MyCreativeEdge.eu marketing collateral.

4.1.2 Discussing communications in the context of a transnational project on creativity

Before the fourth OMT in North East Iceland in June 2016, all partners had the opportunity to review the first draft Communications Strategy prepared by Bespoke Communications. All partners contributed to the development of this document, profiling target beneficiaries in their regions and providing information on the media policy of their organisations.

The draft was discussed and a number of issues concerning both the transnational character of the project and its focus on creativity were addressed:

- **A balance between visual and written content:** MyCreativeEdge.eu was expected to be a highly visual platform, used by many creative members who value the aesthetics of their products and services. Written content was expected to entice target audiences to use the website, create a sense of community and engage with 'a creative momentum project' activities. Communications activity should therefore balance the dissemination of quality visual material with written content. The production of quirky stories and statistics-focused articles, which could grab media attention, should be alternated with uplifting and entertaining content.
- **Language:** English was the official language of 'a creative momentum project'. However, in non-English speaking regions, target audiences may not necessarily understand or respond well to instructions given in English. It became clear that, while the idea of English being the language of an international creative community would work, alternative ways of delivering MyCreativeEdge messages should be considered.
- **Photos and illustrations:** photos and illustrations could be useful ways of overcome the 'language barrier'. A good image bank should be established. This would be useful when seeking media coverage.
- **Tourists:** As explained in Section 2, one area of MyCreativeEdge.eu would be reserved for the promotion of visitor Trails showcasing open studios and other creative locations. The vocabulary used to connect tourists with MyCreativeEdge.eu should evoke the experiences that tourists may have when they visit 'creatives at work' and purchase their art, creative products or services. Some of the words used by the partners to describe these experiences are unique, indigenous, authentic, enriching, and thought-provoking.

4.1.3 The Communications Strategy

"The Creative Momentum goal is to help you to grow your business by facilitating collaborative networks with customers and other partners, and by helping you to develop business enterprise skills. We want your growth to be a measure of our success so that policymakers will continue to support you long after the Creative Momentum project has concluded"
[Core Messaging]

The final Communications Strategy was delivered in August 2016. The document discussed the communications channels, the core messaging and the communications goals of 'a creative momentum project'. It identified promotional strategies and, for each partner region, it indicated specific goals, objectives, channels, and metrics including targets and key performance indicators. It also included five SWOT analyses i.e. one for each partner region.

MyCreativeEdge.eu was conceived as integral to the success of 'a creative momentum project' and therefore instrumental to reach project beneficiaries, celebrate project outcomes as well as creative SMEs, and promote Creative Trails. The promotional strategies and tips provided in the Communications Strategy constituted the framework used by project partners to drive audience and member engagement with MyCreativeEdge.eu.

How each of the ten rules was implemented by the project is outlined in the following.

TOP 10 RULES OF ENGAGEMENT

1. **Give-Give-Ask:** Develop links with key stakeholders including influencers, specialist media and policymakers in each region so that the project can get the word out about the website re-launch and any other activity concerning MyCreativeEdge.eu;
2. **Talk to the media:** Engage with specialist media, especially through Twitter;
3. **Influencers:** To reach creative SMEs, focus energy on recruiting influencer businesses - showcasing their success will attract their peers;
4. **Masterclasses and events:** Engage with small, aspirational businesses by proposing the opportunity to engage with successful businesses that have grown too large to benefit from 'a creative momentum project';
5. **Commercial partnerships:** Develop commercial partnerships to leverage online influence. Some influencer online channels require an advertising relationship before they offer editorial in their online content. This is particularly true of business magazines and local radio stations;
6. **Build it together:** Co-creating with beneficiaries (e.g. creative SMEs) is a good engagement strategy, as it encourages other businesses to reflect and generate ideas for their own growth;
7. **Storytelling:** Use case studies of creative SMEs to highlight the benefits of project activities to the creative community;
8. **Think 'local':** Work to develop local case studies to lead media releases. A compelling local case study will have a greater chance of being picked up by a journalist. Even better, if the case study is willing to be interviewed, then there is the possibility of picking up radio as well as print coverage;
9. **Think visual all the time:** Videos should be always short (max. 90 seconds). Videos could tell the story of creative businesses or promote events. Illustrations can support the promotion the various activities. Illustrations should be fun and uplifting. Illustrations could be used to communicate but key text should not be removed. An accessible 'media bank' can be useful;
10. **Tourists as customer base:** Develop microsites within MyCreativeEdge showcasing the product and service offerings of creative SMEs within selected eligible regions, with content optimised to the needs of tourists visiting those regions.

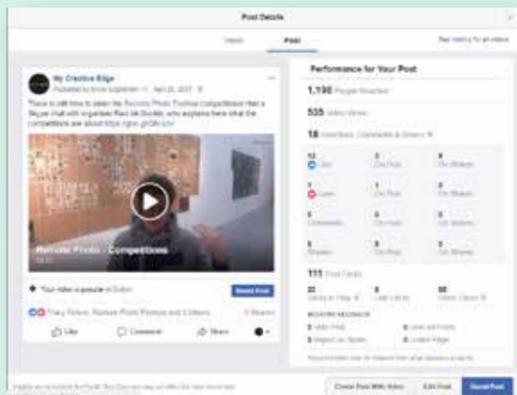
RULE 1: GIVE-GIVE-ASK

END BENEFICIARIES OF THE PROJECT: CREATIVE ENTREPRENEURS AS MEMBERS

From the outset 'a creative momentum project' has been interested in promoting the work of creative entrepreneurs in partner regions. Business stories have featured in monthly Newsletters, and the project has maintained an open policy with regard to advertising new work and activities involving creative entrepreneurs such as festivals and exhibitions. In addition, creative enterprises in all regions have been offered opportunities and supports through with 'a creative momentum project' activities. These have been advertised on MyCreativeEdge.eu and the social media connected to this website, generating both attention and engagement.

Along with the project's open policy on the promotion of creative work from the partner regions, these opportunities and supports embody the 'give-give' aspect recommended in the Strategy.

The 'ask' element was strategically linked to recruitment of MyCreativeEdge.eu members. After the launch of the beta and then the 'live' re-developed website, it became of utmost importance for the project to get creative entrepreneurs to register and create a Profile. Addressing this issue, the WDC produced a number of guides and video tutorials explaining how to register and publish on the website. The guides are saved the Knowledge Centre, while the video tutorials were promoted on social media and are available on the project's YouTube channel.



Photographer and Festival Founder Paul McGuckin promotes Donegal's Remote Photo Festival 2017

Dr Silvia Guglielmini, a creative momentum project Administrator for the West of Ireland, at the Galway Film Fleadh, West of Ireland, July 2017

When creatives applied for 'a creative momentum project' opportunities and supports, they were asked to register on the site and publish a Profile. In addition creative members were encouraged to use the Deep in Thought and Events sections of the website, publishing content addressing their involvement in project activities, the MyCreativeEdge.eu network and their own events. Project partners were available to edit and publish content on behalf of creative entrepreneurs.

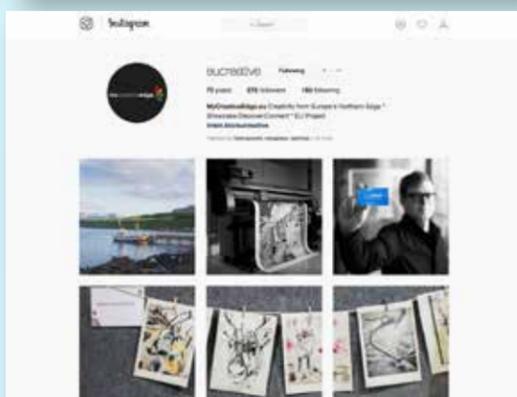
CONSUMERS

In order to engage with consumers, it was first necessary to recruit a sufficient number of creative members, generate new content, and transfer existing content (see Section 2). After these tasks were completed, the project carried out an international digital marketing campaign in three phases (Summer, Autumn, Winter) promoting MyCreativeEdge.eu as a place to discover unique, original, and hand-made creative products and services (see Section 5).



Article promoting the achievements of the digital marketing campaign (Autumn)

Consumers were asked to engage with certain areas of the website (Showcases for Arts, Crafts, Design and Media & Technology) or particular Profiles. At the end of each phase, the project published a short summary of the campaign's achievements on MyCreativeEdge.eu. This was to inform existing creative members, encouraging them to update their Profiles, while also helping to recruit potential new members. The summaries constituted content for the monthly newsletters.



A potential consumer on Instagram is invited to connect with a creative member of Crea, a Finnish advertising company

Much time and financial resources were invested in designing the collateral used for the paid digital marketing campaigns that have characterised this 'ask' phase, as well as setting-up and monitoring these digital marketing campaigns. Although digital marketing increased traffic to the website (see Figure 3, Section 2), it has been impossible to measure the extent to which consumers engaged with creative members once they left MyCreativeEdge.eu (i.e. after clicking on contact details on a Profile).

MyCreativeEdge.eu was not developed as an e-commerce platform, meaning that selling the work of creative professionals directly through the site was not one of the goals linked to the project. This was a constraint in developing the 'ask' phase involving consumers. A 'click-to-purchase' message is very effective in digital ads but would not have been truthful to the nature of the site. Through digital activities, both paid and organic, the project invited consumers to discover and connect with creative professionals.

Notwithstanding the project's goals and resources, larger-scale advertising and promotional activities, as well as a more in-depth understanding and segmentation of consumer markets, would have benefitted this aspect of the project.

(CREATIVE) SEEKERS



MyCreativeEdge.eu was presented as a 'go-to' platform for creativity in Europe's Northern Edge to people who either work in the industry or aspire to work in the industry, and are looking for a combination of inspiration and direction. This group includes policymakers, public servants and – to an extent – the media.

Publishing monthly Newsletters on social media (particularly Twitter and LinkedIn) was a step taken to engage with seekers. In July 2017, the project began to produce two distinct Newsletters. One was for registered members of the MyCreativeEdge.eu site and the second was for Creative Seekers who had signed up to receive a Newsletter on the MyCreativeEdge.eu website. The Newsletter aimed at seekers typically included business stories, research-related articles, and mentions of new MyCreativeEdge.eu Profiles.

Showcasing MyCreativeEdge.eu at industry events and festivals has been a way of engaging with seekers, as well as potential new members and consumers. Media opportunities have emerged as a result of such participation at events. A strategic approach to participating in public events to promote MyCreativeEdge.eu was not included in the Strategy but became very pertinent after the new site and marketing collateral were in place.

RULE 2: TALK TO THE MEDIA



Annika Konttaniemi from Finnish brand Susivilla being interviewed by a local radio station at Urkult Music Festival, Sweden, August 2016

Tagging local newspapers and radio stations in tweets and posts when promoting news and business stories, has helped the project to gain media attention for MyCreativeEdge.eu. As mentioned earlier, participating in events and festivals with an international dimension won media space, especially on radio. Live radio and TV reporters may attend these events, scouting for new stories.

An attractive stand (flyers, screens showcasing 'creatives at work', an interactive station to showcase the website and register members, branded giveaway items and possibly creative work on show or creative professionals in person) is useful to attract media attention.

It is advisable to prepare a few concise lines to effectively explain project goals and the purpose of any project outcome such as MyCreativeEdge.eu. It may also be useful to liaise with event organisers in advance to find out if opportunities for media coverage are available.

Getting media coverage to promote MyCreativeEdge.eu has not been simple due to limited resources such as personnel dedicated to communications, as well as the different media policies of each partner organisation. Partners who could avail of the support of an internal media office were typically more successful at getting press releases published and obtaining coverage on local and national television. It should be mentioned that generally press releases promoted specific 'a creative momentum project' activities instead of solely focusing on MyCreativeEdge.eu.

RULE 3: INFLUENCERS

Project partners compiled a list of influencers in their region who could play a key role in the promotion of 'a creative momentum project' activities including MyCreativeEdge.eu. This list included creative enterprises with a large number of social media followers, institutions and business support agencies.

'Influencers' were often tagged in social media posts concerning the project and MyCreativeEdge.eu Profiles, especially through Twitter and Facebook. Due to the seemingly low popularity of Twitter in the Nordic regions, it was more difficult to digitally engage with 'influencers' in these areas.

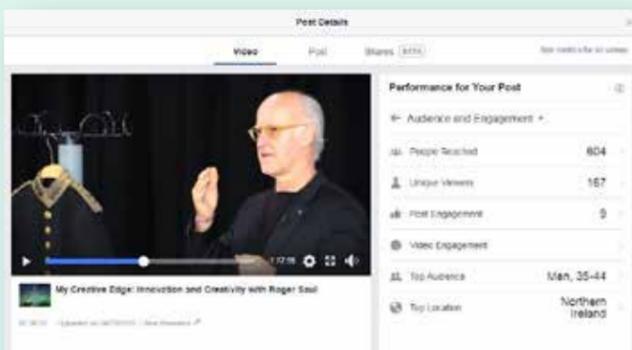
To promote Creative Trails in Northern Ireland, a partnership with travel blogger 'NI Explorer' was established. Using the Creative Trails app, the blogger visited five creative workshops in Co. Down and Co. Armagh, appreciating the usefulness of the digital tool developed under 'a creative momentum project'. Each business included on the app has a Profile on MyCreativeEdge.eu and when a user clicks on that business in the app they are directed to their MyCreativeEdge.eu Profile page.

The 'Creative Trails' app is essentially a digital version of a market. It gives you a quick profile of local creatives, showing their location in relation to where you are. It can even create an itinerary for you - but for me, the biggest advantage is it gives great ideas of experiences/products as gift ideas

RULE 4: MASTERCLASSES AND EVENTS

'a creative momentum project' ran 40 Creative Exchanges in five regions. These events featured keynote speakers including internationally established creative entrepreneurs and sectoral experts from within and outside the partner regions. They also offered opportunities for creative SMEs to network and gain advice from these experts.

Creative Exchanges were promoted on MyCreativeEdge.eu and, as shown in Section 3, were among the most viewed Events and News items on the site. On social media, the events were promoted through organic and paid posts.



'Innovation and Creativity with Roger Saul', Creative Exchange in Northern Ireland, Facebook Live, 23 April 2018

Livestreaming facilities including Facebook Live facilitated online access to the knowledge presented at these Exchanges. Adequate promotion before any livestreamed event or masterclass is necessary to make sure that audiences in different partner regions can plan to avail of these opportunities. Adequate tech support is also necessary, to facilitate attendance from international audiences.

Project partners used MyCreativeEdge.eu to share files such as presentations and videos of speakers after Creative Exchanges. Selected video content was also shared exclusively through Facebook Groups.

RULE 5: COMMERCIAL PARTNERSHIPS

As publically funded bodies, the organisations involved in 'a creative momentum project' found the development of commercial partnerships to leverage online influence problematic and did not pursue this approach.

RULE 6: BUILD IT TOGETHER

MyCreativeEdge.eu was re-developed with the idea of allowing members to publish content and interact with existing content. To help people familiarise themselves with the newly launched website, the project published a number of MyCreativeEdge.eu articles, social media posts and videos highlighting new functionalities. Different MyCreativeEdge.eu Profile Layouts, the ability to save Profiles as 'favourites', the Deep in Thought and Events sections of the website were some of the features promoted.

The [Deep in Thought](#) section is particularly important in terms of co-creating content with website users. In October 2016, the project published an article on MyCreativeEdge.eu presenting Deep in Thought as the area where registered users could "share best practice, reflect on their experience and even encourage feedback from other members".¹⁰

The project published 2 other articles titled '[Do you blog?](#)' and '[Love blogging?](#)', calling for contributions from existing or aspiring bloggers. Both articles encouraged people to share ideas, inspiration and knowledge with the international MyCreativeEdge community. They featured in Newsletters sent out in April and July 2017.

As noted in Section 3, it proved difficult to engage registered users with the co-creation of content and most content was published by 'a creative momentum project' personnel.

¹⁰ <https://mycreativeedge.eu/news-item/deep-thought-section-mycreativeedge-eu/>

RULE 7: STORYTELLING

[In Profile](#), [News](#) and [Deep in Thought](#) articles promoted positive project outcomes including success stories featuring MyCreativeEdge.eu members. Several In Profile articles were published to promote speakers at Creative Exchanges. NUI Galway carried out 35 interviews with creative professionals from all five partner regions, including MyCreativeEdge.eu members. These were instrumental in implementing project activities such as the [Business Model Toolkit](#), but also provided content for both the site and social media.

Interviews with project beneficiaries were carried out by all project partners over the phone, by email or in person. They were published as In Profile posts or social media videos. Some project partners also travelled around their regions to meet with creatives on the occasion of new product launches or international projects. In particular, Lapland University of Applied Sciences (LUAS) organised visits to creative spaces and workshops as a way of recruiting members to MyCreativeEdge.eu, as did Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon Borough Council and Technichus Mid-Sweden.

The content produced after these meetings constituted a promotional opportunity for the creatives involved, but can also be seen as a tactic to build a sense of a community on MyCreativeedge.eu. In fact, much of the content produced focused on the challenges and opportunities linked to creative entrepreneurship in peripheral areas.

Insight: Recruiting members to MyCreativeEdge.eu

My name is Jenni Kemi and I am a project worker for Creative Momentum. I graduated in 2017 from Lapland University of Applied Sciences. I hold a Bachelor Degree in Business Administration and I specialised in Marketing.

My job consisted of contacting businesses and freelancers working in the creative industries sector in Northern Finland, to promote Creative Momentum and tell them about the opportunity to showcase their work on MyCreativeEdge.eu. I have spoken over the phone with numerous creatives. In addition, the Creative Momentum team in Finland has visited several associations and creative workplaces to tell about the project. While I focused on Rovaniemi and the northern part of the region, a colleague visited places in Kemi/Tornio as well as the Southern part of region. When visiting, we tried to connect with creatives by talking about their challenges and at work. Some entrepreneurs have properly interviewed and we created articles for the News section of Mycreativeedge.eu.

The Finnish team including myself has also organised and attended various industry events. Like the visits, these aimed to establish a connection with creative entrepreneurs. For example, during Nights of Arts Handicraft Fair in Rovaniemi, we met Katijuu who then participated in the 'photoshoot' opportunity for Northern Finland. Northern Finland is a wide area so events in different places are a good way of making people aware of the project.

Events, visits and personal meetings I have participated in and/or organised:

| | |
|----------------------|--|
| 14 August 2017 | Roihub, Rovaniemi/Reddo partners Oy, Rovaniemi |
| 29 August 2017 | Culture Association Valsa Ry, Rovaniemi |
| 5 September 2017 | Varjo Gallery, Rovaniemi |
| 6 September 2017 | Arctic Design Shop, Lapland University, Rovaniemi |
| 7 September 2017 | Arctic Ceramic Centre, Posio Bjarmia Oy, Kuusamo Evening of entrepreneurs, Kuusamo High School/ELY Centre Kuusamo College, Kuusamo |
| 9 September 2017 | Night of Arts Handicraft Fair, Rovaniemi |
| 14 September 2017 | Katijuu, Rovaniemi |
| 26-27 September 2017 | Arts Promotion Centre Finland, Rovaniemi; Meetings with handicraft entrepreneurs, Inari; The Sámi Education Institute SOGSAKK, Inari |
| 1 December 2017 | Creative Momentum breakfast with: Roihub, Damastikoru, Saara Sarparanta Design, Joulupukki TV, Members of IAG (ELY Centre, House of Lapland, Lapland University) |
| 15 December 2017 | The Arctic market |
| 21 December 2017 | Arctic Design Week, Mishmash, Rovaniemi |

Other contacts via e-mail and by phone:

- Artists' Association of Lapland
- Korundi House of Culture, Rovaniemi Art Museum
- Lapland Handicraft Association, Taito Lappi
- The Federation of Finnish Enterprises, Lapland
- Arktikum museum
- Lapland Visual Arts Association Palas ry
- Performing Art Centre Lapland Letke ry
- Leader Associations of Lapland
- Student Association, Faculty of Art and Design, Lapland University
- Artists' Association of Koillismaa Region
- Ca. 60 entrepreneurs in Northern Finland

RULE 8: THINK 'LOCAL'



Local print and radio media was approached in person or through public relations platforms such as [Media HQ](#) to release stories concerning the participation of creatives in project activities. MyCreativeEdge.eu was mentioned in press releases.

RULE 9: THINK VISUAL ALL THE TIME

As mentioned in Section 2, showcasing the work of creative people from Europe's Northern Edge in a highly visual way is the core function of MyCreativeEdge.eu. To connect with potential MyCreativeEdge.eu members and grow a bank of images that could be used for the digital marketing campaign (see Section 5), the WDC formulated the idea for a selected number of creative entrepreneurs to be portrayed by professional photographers.

It was decided that the outcome would be a minimum of ten high quality shots per photoshoot/creative enterprise. While representing the key products and services of a creative enterprise, the photos were expected to primarily capture the creative process and people involved. Quality images were expected to appeal to the media, as well as to consumers and buyers interested in the 'how, why and who' of creative work. The creatives selected for the 'photoshoot opportunity' would be able to use the photos on their websites, social media pages and at Trade Events.

Therefore in October 2016, the WDC issued seven 'Requests for Quote', one for each of counties in the Western Region of Ireland (Donegal, Sligo, Mayo, Galway, Clare, Roscommon, Leitrim) to procure one photographer from each county to photograph creative enterprises in their county. All photographers were selected by January 2017.

During January and February 2017, the WDC ran two open calls for creative enterprises to apply for this 'photoshoot' opportunity. A total of 59 applications were received and following assessment, 21 (three in each of the seven counties) were selected for support. All enterprises were invited to create a Profile on MyCreativeEdge.eu. The photoshoots took place during February to April 2017.

The success of the West of Ireland photoshoot opportunity was discussed with all project partners. LUAS decided to replicate the opportunity in their region, using it as a tactic to recruit MyCreativeEdge.eu members.

The call for enterprises produced by the WDC was adapted and issued in Northern Finland, in Finnish, in August 2017. It was the fourth most viewed News item on MyCreativeEdge.eu. Three photographers were contracted to cover different areas of Northern Finland (Finnish Lapland, Kainuu and Northern Ostrobothnia). Ten photoshoots were supported and all creative enterprises are currently MyCreativeEdge.eu members.



Hewn by Michael McLaughlin Photography, Mayo. The picture was added to the bank of images to be used for Facebook ads. The EU logo was added by McCadden (see Section 5)

Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon Borough Council also decided to offer the opportunity. They supported 11 photoshoots carried out by three photographers, one in each Council area of the South East Economic Development area. Creative enterprises featuring on the Creative Trails app were first offered the 'photoshoot' opportunity so that the imagery used in the app and on their Profiles could be strengthened. These shoots took place during late 2017 and early 2018.

'a creative momentum project' participates in Digital DNA, 2016. Press Release on *The Lurgan and Portadown Examiner*, Northern Ireland, September 2016

'a creative momentum project' participates in Urkult Music Festival, 2016. Press Release on *Tidningen Ångermanland*, 9 August 2016.



Jewellery designer Ruth McEwan-Lyon of NI Silver, Northern Ireland photographed by Stephen Potts



Saara Sarpanta Design by Valokuvaamo Kipinä, Kopio

RULE 10: TOURISTS AS A CONSUMER BASE

As explained in Section 2, the newly developed MyCreativeEdge.eu included a section showcasing existing Creative/Art/Craft Trails across the regions, as well as the new Creative Trails developed in Iceland and Northern Ireland under 'a creative momentum project'.

Project partners in Northern Ireland and Iceland produced specific promotional material including posters and leaflets to target tourists. MyCreativeEdge.eu featured on print material as a logo. When using the app, when a feature business is clicked the user is directed to their MyCreativeEdge.eu Profile.

4.1.4 Marketing collateral

At the fifth OMT in Sweden in November 2016, project partners discussed the production of marketing collateral and promotional slogans to complement the re-developed website design.

It was agreed that MyCreativeEdge.eu was going to be associated to 2 slogans:

- 'Discover Creativity from Europe's Northern Edge'
- Showcase. Discover. Connect.

McCadden/Minus40 proposed concept designs for social media collateral and elaborated a concept design for print collateral.

Social media collateral

MyCreativeEdge.eu has been associated with a suite of six interchangeable images. The WDC used these images to regularly update page backgrounds on Twitter, LinkedIn and Facebook. The same images appeared in social media videos as a video cover, or in the credits.

All images were produced in three versions: one with each of the two slogans and one with no slogan. To meet publicity requirements, each image included the MyCreativeEdge.eu logo, along with 'a creative momentum project' and the EU/NPA logos.

Print marketing collateral

The WDC worked closely with McCadden to produce two different formats of flyer – a concertina fold and an A5 Portrait – and one design for rollup banners.

The concertina fold flyer aimed to engage creative professionals as potential new members of MyCreativeEdge.eu. Printed on a heavy-weight paper with a matte finish, the flyer was thought as an elegant piece of graphic design and 'nice-to-touch'. When folded out flat, the flyer has a front and a back. The design of the front has five pages, each representing a MyCreativeEdge.eu member in one of the 5 partner regions. The design of the back is black in a similar theme to MyCreativeEdge.eu. The following message is printed on this side:

Publish a Profile on MyCreativeEdge to showcase your work to international customers and connect with creatives from across Europe's Northern Edge.

Printed on uncoated paper, the overall theme of the A5 Portrait flyer is similar in colour and style to MyCreativeEdge.eu. The slogan 'Discover Creativity from Europe's Northern Edge' dominates on one side. The slogan 'Showcase.Discover.Connect' appears on the other side, which also showcases 8 images selected from Member Profiles. The design of the rollup banner resembles this design.

All project partners contributed to the selection of the images featured on the flyers. Project partners contacted Profile owners to seek their permission in relation to using their images. When the re-development of the website was underway, project partners encouraged creatives to publish a Profile because this would give them the chance to feature in marketing activities concerning the project and MyCreativeEdge.eu.

LESSONS LEARNED

1. **Communications and Marketing is not the same as an Engagement Strategy:** While the first may recommend actions such as 'co-creation', the second should go into the detail as to what 'co-creation' means and how this is truly to be implemented at a regional level.
2. **Need for a dedicated resource:** Driving engagement with a new online platform, while implementing all other aspects of a project Communications Strategy is a time-consuming job – consider creating a specific role for this.
3. **Transnational complexity:** Implementing one Communications Strategy in a transnational context is difficult and time-consuming. One designated Communications Officer in each partner organisation would ensure that all aspects of the Communications Strategy are appropriately discussed and implemented in all partner regions.
4. **Tailor to locality:** Never forget the 'language barrier' and cultural differences when trying to engage audiences based in different countries!
5. **Face-to-Face works best:** Never forget face-to-face interaction. Events, study visits, and video interviews are good tactics to grow awareness of a newly established website and build a community of members. Participation in industry and public events is key – build a plan at the start of the project (e.g. budget your visits) and think about setting up an attractive stand. Giveaways work!
6. **Media opportunities at events:** When showcasing a website at events, liaise with event organisers in advance to discuss media coverage as part of the deal. Be proactive in finding media opportunities at events.
7. **Contact influencers early:** Don't be afraid to approach journalists and bloggers from the start – get them to follow you, gradually feeding them with news. Don't chase them up at the last minute.
8. **Quality visuals rule:** Check out creativity-based blogs, website and social media pages to figure out how highly visual content is published, presented and promoted.
9. **Tourism authorities:** If tourists are a target audience, make sure to connect with tourism authorities in all partner regions. This can amplify the reach of a showcase website such as MyCreativeEdge.eu, while contributing to the sustainability of the project.
10. **Clear and consistent message:** Make sure that you have a clear and consistent message that can be explained quickly and easily. You may need a number of different messages for different audiences but need to be clear on what these are. Keep repeating the message.

The background features a complex network of thick red lines forming various geometric shapes like triangles and polygons against a dark grey background. The lines are interconnected, creating a web-like structure.

**Section 5:
MyCreativeEdge.eu
Digital Marketing
campaign**

5.1 Marketing Plan

“Irrespective of culture, digital has a significant impact on consumer’s online and offline journeys, with the majority of consumers actually browsing through options online and comparing products/services before entering the final stage of the decision-making process”

[GlowMetrics]

In September 2016, GlowMetrics delivered a Marketing Plan for MyCreativeEdge.eu. The document stressed digital marketing as an effective way of promoting MyCreativeEdge.eu as a brand associated with creativity.

Regular, *organic* digital marketing activities were acknowledged as the best tactic to communicate with project beneficiaries. For paid digital advertising, the document set out to use 80% of the budget for targeting **consumers** of creative products and services, both businesses and individuals. It was expected that the rest of the budget would be used on promoting the website to existing and potential creative members.

The Marketing Plan proposed to promote MyCreativeEdge.eu through a number of different **channels**:

Digital marketing tactics by channel

| | CONSUMERS | MEMBERS |
|--------|--------------------------------------|-----------------|
| PAID | Facebook (individuals only) | Twitter |
| | Display (individuals only) | LinkedIn |
| | SEO (business + individuals) | Remarketing ads |
| | Paid search (business + individuals) | |
| UNPAID | Email marketing | Facebook |
| | Pinterest | Email marketing |
| | Instagram | Blog |

5.2 Preparing for an international digital marketing campaign

Because of time constraints and, particularly, the considerable time required to set up and manage advertising campaigns on social media and AdWords (e.g. Google Display Network and Paid Search), the digital marketing activities undertaken by the project focused on individual consumers and members.

In 2017, the WDC ran three phases of a multi-channel international digital marketing campaign on social media and Google Display. To prepare for this campaign, the WDC worked with all partners to select at least 2 images representing creative businesses in their regions. The images were selected from the Member Profile pages published on MyCreativeEdge.eu between March 2017 (launch of new website) and April 2017. Project partners contacted the relevant site members in their regions to ask for permission to use the images and, particularly, associate these images to an EU co-funded advertising campaign. In the West of Ireland, the WDC selected a number of photographs produced through the ‘photoshoot’ opportunity (see Section 4).

5.2.1 Image bank

The image bank available to run the MyCreativeEdge.eu digital marketing campaign was comprised of 67 photos. Two suites of images were delivered to McCadden with the intent of getting these designed into visual adverts. The ‘Google Display’ suite included 29 images, while there were 38 images in the ‘Facebook’ suite. The majority of images selected for Display ads were also included for Facebook.

Notwithstanding regional representation, a number of criteria were taken into consideration by the WDC when selecting the final suites of images:

- **High quality:** recommended HD size (1920 x 1080 pixels), compelling composition.
- **Colour:** bold colours preferred, also good to include a few black & white shots.
- **Focus:** on product/artwork, ‘hands in the making’, or portraits of creative professionals at work. The Facebook folder contained a number of ‘fun’ pictures including pets and animal-shaped products.
- **Sectors:** focus on advertising sectors where there was the largest selection of MyCreativeEdge.eu Profiles from the five regions, namely Home & Gifts, Jewellery, Photography, Crafts, Fashion & Accessories and Visual Arts. It was agreed that the image bank could be reviewed to include other sectors at a later stage.

5.2.2 Copy

The WDC built an Excel database for McCadden. This included information such as the list of logos required to appear on each visual advert (see next section for more information) and the ad dimensions (300X250, 300X260, and 300X600 for Google Display Network). It also included the copy (in English) to be included for each Display and Facebook advert.

While text was embedded in all Display advert images, Facebook copy normally appears as News Feed Link Description (to emphasize why people should visit a website, this text is not visible in all placements) and Headline (to let people know what your ad is about, this text does not appear in all placements). Facebook copy was therefore not added to the images.

5.2.3 The ‘words’ issue

5.2.3.1 Facebook guidelines

Facebook advert guidelines mean that ads that run on Facebook, Instagram and Audience Network are subject to a review process that looks at the amount of image text used in your ad. Based on this review, ads with higher amounts of image text will be shown to fewer people.¹¹ In the context of an EU co-funded project, which normally requires that all marketing material showcases EU-related logos as well as project logos, this effectively means that Facebook ads must include fewer logos and focus on visuals.

Following consultation with the NPA Desk Officer responsible for ‘a creative momentum project’, it was agreed that Facebook advert images would include the EU flag, but no other logo representing MyCreativeEdge.eu, ‘a creative momentum project’, or the NPA. This was provided that the link where users were directed from the ad would include all required logos.

5.2.3.2 Keywords in AdWords (Google Display Network)

Google Display Network allows marketers to choose the specific areas across topical websites where ads can be placed. As suggested in the Marketing Plan, it is important to target consumers who can benefit from using MyCreativeEdge.eu.

Targeting the right consumer can be done through **keywords**. Keywords are useful to identify meaningful websites within the Google Display Network, and to narrow the pool of potential consumers. Keywords can be positive or negative. By saving negative keywords into AdWords, the system makes sure that campaigns are not associated to websites linked to those words e.g. cheap. The WDC elaborated lists of keywords in line with the core project messaging and the vocabulary used to speak about creativity. In addition, the lists were inspired by the text appearing on Member Profiles. A sample of keywords used to run Display ads is shown in Figure 4.

| POSITIVE | NEGATIVE |
|---------------------|----------------|
| home decoration | cheap |
| wedding gift | ugly |
| unique art | useless |
| bespoke | bad |
| handmade | unaffordable |
| Irish crafts | clearance |
| Scandinavian crafts | diy |
| Christmas gift | do it yourself |
| gifts from Ireland | hazard |
| eco-friendly | dangerous |
| sustainable | worst |
| creativity | wholesale |
| creative ideas | scam |

FIGURE 4: Sample of English keywords used in AdWords

Project partners translated the keywords in order to enhance the reach of the adverts in Finland and Sweden. Unfortunately, due to staffing issues, the keywords were never translated into Icelandic. Preparing and translating keywords required considerable time, which slowed marketing activities. Some words were hard to translate into other languages as standalone units of meaning. As only the WDC was responsible for setting-up and managing Display ads, it was difficult for partners to understand the 'keywords' mechanism and no alternative/new keywords were provided. As a result, some of the ads run in Finland, Sweden and Iceland were not as effective as those run in English-speaking countries.

5.3 International marketing campaign

5.3.1 Phase 1

The first phase of the MyCreativeEdge.eu digital marketing campaign (paid) was launched in June 2017, after a few test adverts, and ran during July and August – [the Summer Campaign](#). The campaign used Facebook ads to target individual consumers based in the 5 partner regions. The core message of the campaign was 'Discover Creativity from Europe's Northern Edge'.

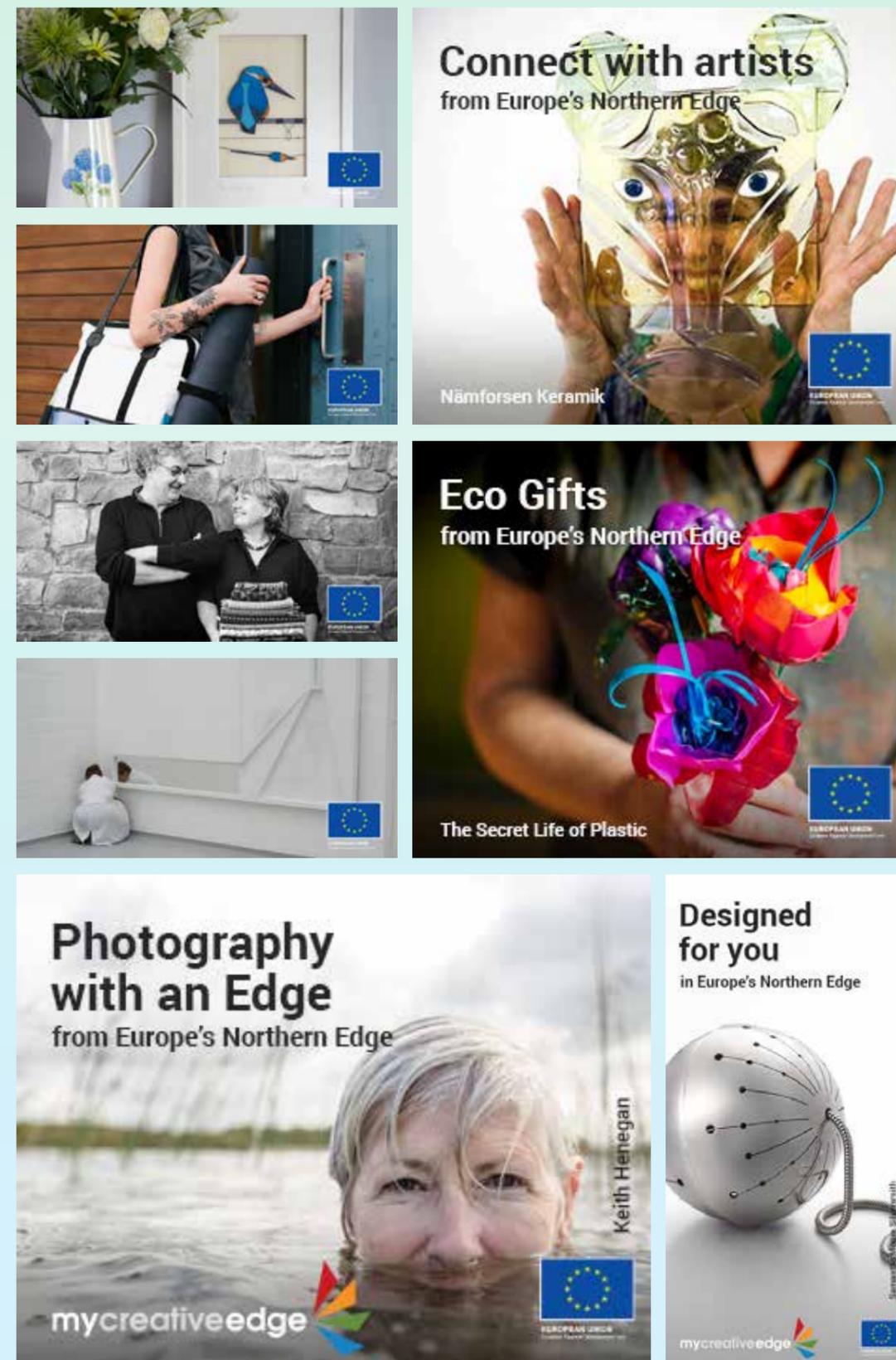
Organic posts on Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and Instagram were published with the idea of nurturing the existing MyCreativeEdge.eu community through shares and opportunities for engagement. Facebook posts (not adverts) were occasionally boosted to attract participants in specific project activities. Email marketing was carried out on a regular basis.

As mentioned earlier, Instagram was a useful channel to communicate with project beneficiaries, as well as creative professionals and creative seekers from different parts of the world.

During July-August 2017, there were **8,445 unique sessions** on the MyCreativeEdge.eu website from 6,770 unique users. This was a 69% increase in the number of sessions since the same period in 2016, and a 107% increase from the previous two month period (May-June). A [review of the Summer Campaign](#) was published on MyCreativeEdge.eu in September to inform members and potential members of the impact of the ads.

5.3.2 Phase 2

The second phase was launched in September 2017 – [the Autumn Campaign](#). Adverts targeted Dublin, Stockholm, Belfast, Reykjavik and Helsinki, as well as cities in the UK, US and Canada. In addition to Facebook ads, Google Display ads were also used. The site registered a **100% increase** in the number of sessions since the same period a year previously. A [review of the Autumn Campaign](#) was published on MyCreativeEdge.eu in November. In addition, this phase of the campaign aimed to grow the community of creative enterprises showcasing on MyCreativeEdge.eu, by promoting website sign-ups, Profiles and the Newsletter on Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn.



Black Hen Designs, West of Ireland, Facebook ad
 Jump the Hedges, Northern Ireland, Facebook ad
 McKernan Woollen Mills, West of Ireland, Facebook ad
 Yst, Iceland, Facebook ad
 Keith Heneghan Photography, West of Ireland, Display ad
 Nämforsen Keramik, Sweden, Display ad
 The Secret Life of Plastic, West of Ireland, Display ad
 Samantha Moore Silversmith, Display ad

5.3.3 Phase 3

In the run up to Christmas 2017, the project promoted MyCreativeEdge.eu as a hub for unique, inspiring gift ideas. Instead of clicking through to general Showcase pages (e.g. Arts, Crafts and so on), as had been done during the first 2 phases, consumers were addressed to specific Member Profiles.

In just over a month, the Christmas campaign resulted in **4,168 sessions on the site** mostly from Ireland, the UK, Finland, the US and Canada.

Overall, as mentioned in Section 2, the 3 phases of the digital marketing campaign contributed to increasing traffic to the website (see Figure 3, Section 2).

5.4 An overview by channel: lessons learned

5.4.1 Facebook

Facebook was the primary digital channel used by the project. Much of the traffic to MyCreativeEdge.eu came from 'Social' and particularly Facebook (when it comes to Facebook activities in the 'social channels' breakdown, the figure represents traffic from paid and unpaid activities).

Considerable work went into selecting the images for Facebook adverts and preparing copy for the News Feed Link Description and the Headline. The copy evolved as the campaign progressed and the decision was taken to link consumers to specific Profiles as well as to general Showcase pages.

Once designed, the adverts were easy to set up and manage. The audience was targeted according to socio-geographic demographics. Detailed targeting (e.g. interests) was also performed. It is advisable to remarket the new audience gained through the first campaign.

**Insights:
Facebook Paid in the Marketing Plan**

- Include a clear Call-to-Action in adverts, e.g. discover, connect, find out and so on.
- Target a specific audience with each advert. Advert should be relevant to what the advert is for.
- For particularly niche products and services, adverts should be very specific in who the target audience is.
- Images and text should be visually appealing and relevant to the campaign, relating directly to the supplier, sector or product being promoted.
- Run multiple ads against each other to ensure multiple products/suppliers are being supported.
- Focus ads on a) Clicks to website b) Increased conversions on your website.

Facebook adverts attracted numerous 'Likes': between June and December 2017, the number of 'Likes' to the @eucreative Facebook page increased by 11.23%. Product shots and portraits were generally very successful, and generated great enthusiasm within the MyCreativeEdge.eu creative community, particularly among the 'friends' of the creatives represented.

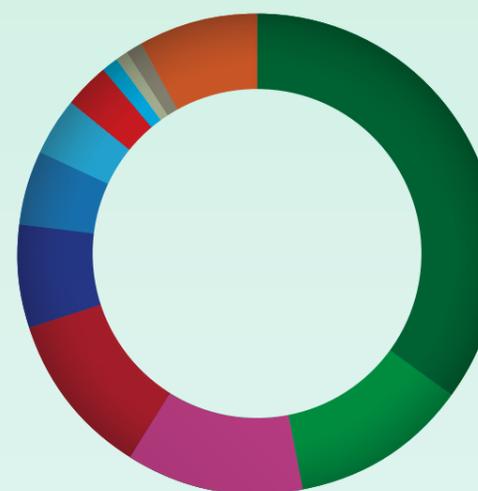
When it comes to promoting visual arts, it is best to use images of artists at work as opposed to images of their artworks alone. This ought to encourage visits to the website, so that the final results of the artistic process can be discovered. It may be difficult for individual consumers to relate to an advert when this shows a detail of a given artwork and does not associate the artwork to a specific context (e.g. a room in a home for example).

Facebook was the most effective social media channel to engage with creative professionals in all partner regions. It was mostly used organically, to promote opportunities, news and stories presented on MyCreativeEdge.eu. If Facebook is where the audience is, it is advisable to set aside part of the marketing budget to connect with members and, particularly, encourage them to publish a Profile (as opposed to register only).

As Facebook was the most popular channel among project partners, the WDC created a 'social media calendar', which was useful to plan posts over longer periods of time (usually two months). It was agreed that one post per day was enough and would avoid information overload. The social media calendar reduced information overload through Facebook.

All project partners had access to posting on the @eucreative Facebook page. Sometimes this created discrepancies in terms of post style, audience reach and engagement. At the same time, it allowed the page to address the five partner regions more homogeneously, with relevant content.

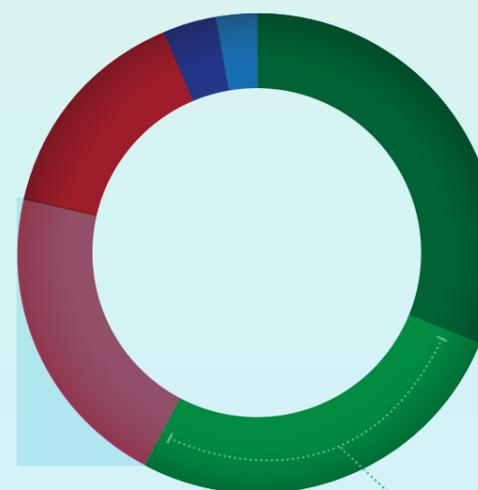
Embedding videos into Facebook feeds (as opposed to including a YouTube link) was successful in attracting engagement.



LOCATION OF WEBSITE USERS

| | |
|------------------|-----|
| Ireland | 35% |
| Northern Ireland | 12% |
| Rest of UK | 12% |
| United States | 11% |
| Finland | 7% |
| Sweden | 5% |
| Iceland | 4% |
| Canada | 3% |
| India | 3% |
| Germany | 1% |
| Australia | 1% |
| Other | 8% |

1 March 2017 - 30 April 2018



CHANNELS USED TO ACCESS WEBSITE

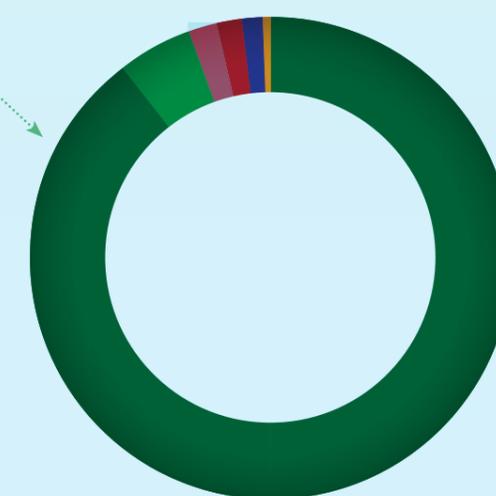
| | |
|----------------|-------|
| Organic Search | 8,622 |
| Social | 7,399 |
| Direct | 5,760 |
| Display | 4,147 |
| Referral | 1,053 |
| Other | 706 |

1 March 2017 - 30 April 2018

SOCIAL CHANNELS USED TO ACCESS WEBSITE

| | |
|-----------|-------|
| Facebook | 6,673 |
| Twitter | 375 |
| Instagram | 155 |
| Pinterest | 114 |
| Linkedin | 113 |
| Other | 24 |

1 March 2017 - 30 April 2018



5.4.2 Instagram

In the draft Marketing Plan, Instagram was proposed as a new channel to reach out to members. The management of a new channel was seen as time-consuming for the project, considering the limited project personnel in the WDC and the challenge of maintaining a highly visual channel in a consistent and entertaining way.

Following the ‘photoshoot’ experience (see Section 4) as well as conversations with creative professionals wishing to engage with MyCreativeEdge.eu, the WDC decided to set up an [Instagram](#) account @eucreative. The channel was launched in July 2017, with a mention in the July Newsletter.

The overall aim of the Instagram account was to build a visual gallery centred on creativity from Europe’s Northern Edge. For this reason, while photos and videos of creative products/services were featured, the platform focused on the idea of **creatives at work** – that is, creatives who make and promote their products/services.

Instagram predominantly ran in an organic way, with 1-2 posts per week. Thanks to a (paid) ‘Link in bio’ feature powered by [Later.com](#), users have had the opportunity to click on images and interact with MyCreativeEdge.eu content (Profiles or articles).

With regard to paid Instagram, images from the digital marketing campaign (run through Facebook) have occasionally appeared on the channel. Instagram was occasionally used to promote Creative Exchanges, especially in Ireland. The ‘stories’ feature as well as the ‘chat’ were easy and quick ways to communicate with the audience of these Exchanges.

Partly because of the late set-up of the channel, the full potential of Instagram has not been thoroughly explored.

5.4.3 Pinterest

A [Pinterest](#) account was set up in early 2017 @eucreative. As per the Marketing Plan, a number of boards for different sectors were set up, mostly to promote creative work featured on MyCreativeEdge.eu.

The channel did not seem to generate much engagement, and many creative members did not seem to have an account. The full potential of Pinterest has not been explored.

5.4.4 Twitter

[Twitter](#) was used to communicate with followers on a regular basis. Followers include creative professionals, institutions, business support agencies, researchers and journalists/media. While two paid posts were published to promote sign-ups to MyCreativeEdge.eu, these did not perform as well as expected. So it was decided that paid tweets would not be used to promote MyCreativeEdge.eu any further.

A number of project-related opportunities featured amongst the highest performing tweets according to the Marketing Activity Review conducted by GlowMetrics.

5.4.5 Paid search

Paid search through AdWords was not undertaken due to lack of time and personnel who could focus on this activity. It would have been advisable to use Paid Search to promote MyCreativeEdge.eu (particularly service providers) to business consumers.

Insights: Pinterest in the Marketing Plan

- Engage in ‘Pinning’ work by members of the site, at least once per day and consider allowing members to have access as collaborators to pin to the boards.
- Strike a balance between sharing information about MyCreativeEdge.eu and the suppliers, as well as sharing information of interest to your target audience.
- Create boards for different sectors.
- Add collaborators to boards, so they are able to share content within that board.
- Include pin captions explaining why this content is useful to your customers and mention website in the caption. You should also always include a Call-to-Action.

5.4.6 SEO

MyCreativeEdge.eu was re-developed with enhanced SEO, with a strong emphasis on landing pages and on individual member companies. This meant that the project would only partially be able to control SEO activities, as they would be mostly dependent on the copy uploaded by the members showcasing on the website.

5.4.7 Google Display Network

Using Google AdWords is not as intuitive as using Facebook Campaigns Manager. Although Google offers numerous tutorials and even certifications, if one is not familiar with AdWords, it may be a good idea to organise a training session with an experienced marketer or colleague.

In the context of this project, the complexity of AdWords has been linked mostly to three aspects:

- **Targeting:** there are different, combined ways of setting up a target audience for specific content (Keywords, Topics, Placements and Demographics).
- **Keywords:** do they really work in countries that do not speak English as the first language?
- **Placement:** ads need to be placed effectively i.e. on the right online resource, at the right time. Identifying placement opportunities as well as eliminating ineffective or ‘wrong’ placements (automated targeting) requires time and constant monitoring.

5.4.8 Email marketing

Email marketing was managed through Mailchimp. Monthly newsletters were sent out quite regularly to a ‘Members List’ and the ‘Newsletter List’; a more heterogeneous group including researchers, policy-makers and institutions and creatives outside the partner regions, the Creative Seekers discussed earlier. In the course of the project,¹² 24 newsletters were issued to both lists.

| | MEMBERS LIST | NEWSLETTER LIST | INDUSTRY AVG. |
|---------------|--------------|-----------------|---------------|
| OPEN RATE (%) | 37.8 | 31.6 | 16.8 |
| CLICKS (%) | 6.1 | 7.2 | 2.2 |

FIGURE 5:

Performance of newsletters. Source: Mailchimp¹³

As mentioned in Section 4, in July 2017, the project started to produce two different Newsletters: one for creative members, and the other targeting the more varied Newsletter List.

The idea of creating two Newsletters was suggested in the Marketing Plan. This document recommended creating a suite of emails targeting different sectors and regions, so more personal information could be sent to the correct people. The WDC decided to focus on the two existing lists.

However, emails promoting Creative Exchanges, Creative Hotspots and other project-related opportunities were sent out on an occasional basis to Members in relevant regions. These emails drove traffic to MyCreativeEdge.eu, as they often included links to online articles.

Newsletters were used to promote MyCreativeEdge.eu in a number of ways. First of all, the Newsletter template – re-designed by McCadden – was in line with the MyCreativeEdge.eu branding. Newsletters generally promoted new Profiles (mostly to the Newsletter List) and exemplary Profiles (to creative members). They always connected readers with MyCreativeEdge.eu by inviting to ‘Read more’ about the stories featured.

MyCreativeEdge.eu website-related stories often featured as a ‘top story’, the most important and attention-grabbing part of the Newsletter. Top stories have provided members with updates regarding the re-development of the website, the launch, digital marketing and analytics.

¹² 1 May 2015-30 April 2018.

¹³ 1 May 2015-30 April 2018.



Member Newsletter, November 2017

5.4.8 YouTube

In 2015 MyCreativeEdge.eu developed a [YouTube](#) channel as a resource for creative members and creative seekers. The channel was conceived as a video archive instead of a dynamic social media channel driving engagement.

The channel hosts **85 videos**, attracting **6,145 views** since its establishment.¹⁴ The majority of videos were produced in-house by project partners. Many videos were produced specifically for social media purposes. Others – normally the longest – are accounts of Creative Exchanges.

The themes of the videos vary from interviews with creative entrepreneurs, MyCreativeEdge.eu tutorials and toolkits, videos focusing on project activities and short promos. Part of the content, e.g. the MyCreativeEdge.eu tutorials, are organised into playlists.

Top 10 YouTube videos by views

| TITLE | PRODUCED BY | DURATION | VIEWS |
|--|-------------------------------------|----------|-------|
| a creative momentum project video | puredesigns | 1:56 | 677 |
| Gary Reddin, Creative Momentum Project Launch 29 10 2015 | Brian Duignan Media | 16:58 | 668 |
| Lina Stein Millinery | WDC | 1:42 | 478 |
| Airmid Irish Natural Skincare @ Urkult festival 2016 | WDC | 2:18 | 232 |
| How to deliver a persuasive video pitch | LUAS | 2:15 | 216 |
| Duo Systrami at Vaka Folk Arts Festival | WDC | 3:17 | 198 |
| Creative Momentum Project Launch 29_10_2015 | Brian Duignan Media | 1:58 | 184 |
| #mycreativeedgers The Secret Life of Plastic | WDC | 1:51 | 156 |
| Step 1: Getting Started - MyCreativeEdge Profile Tutorials | WDC | 2:15 | 154 |
| NI Creative Trails – Helen Fitzpatrick Jewellery | Profile Tree | 0:35 | 151 |

14 Number of Views 7 Dec 2015-7 May, 2018

Insights: Email marketing in the Marketing Plan

Split out the audience into sectors and regions. Create multiple emails that target the correct people.

Send out email content around once per month:

1. A monthly Newsletter demonstrating Profiles published in the past month. In the case where there are a lot of profiles published, this would be segmented by sector.
2. Targeted emails with a detailed Newsletter, highlighting latest news and updates from current MyCreativeEdge member businesses.
3. Each email should have an effective and relevant subject heading and should contain information on several of the following:
 - Highlight where a list of site members can be found.
 - Raising awareness of new members.
 - Documenting member success stories
 - Tell a supplier's story: Who are they, what do they do, where are they from, etc.?

LESSONS LEARNED

1. **Start early:** Marketing advice should be sought as soon as possible, at the start of the project. If the project activity includes the re-launch of a brand or – as in this case – a digital platform, make sure to identify re-branding tactics.
2. **Need for a dedicated resource:** Managing marketing activities while implementing all other aspects of the project is a time-consuming job – consider creating a specific role for this and perhaps link it to the Communications role.
3. **Transnational complexity:** Implementing Marketing Activities in a transnational context is difficult and time-consuming. One designated Communications Officer in each partner organisation would ensure that Marketing activities could be accurately and effectively discussed, planned and implemented.
4. **Training:** If digital marketing channels are accessed by multiple people with different levels of expertise in digital marketing, it may be appropriate to set up a formal training session and openly identify who in the context of the project will have responsibility for quality control. Having too many quality controllers may not work. A quality controller should not be afraid to take down a post that does not match the style and tone of previous posts.
5. **Tailor to locality:** Never forget the 'language barrier' and cultural differences when trying to engage audiences based in different countries!
6. **Be curious:** In order to select the 'right' image and write the 'right' copy, check out relevant websites. Pay attention to how internationally known creative brands communicate with their audience. Watch out for adverts promoted by similar projects/organisations and see if there are any lessons that can be applied to your project.
7. **Mind your marketing budget:** Switching off a 'Campaign' on Facebook, does not necessarily mean that all adverts are switched off. Adverts may continue to run, wasting marketing budget.
8. **Ambitious marketing:** If a brand is not established, targeting audiences in North America may be too ambitious. Spend time on shaping your brand and the message around it. Launching an EU co-funded brand in non-EU markets, where competition is very high, may not be appropriate without the support of experts and established agencies operating in those markets and a very large budget.
9. **Consider working with media buyers:** With the right training, it is possible to run successful digital marketing campaigns without being a digital marketer. It may be advisable to set some budget aside to work with consultants with expertise in buying/selling media space (e.g. print) in different markets.
10. **Build and refresh your image bank:** Digital marketing depends on high quality visuals. As well as establishing a strong image bank, this needs to be refreshed and updated with new imagery on an ongoing basis. Imagery for specific periods e.g. Christmas, summer, is also important.



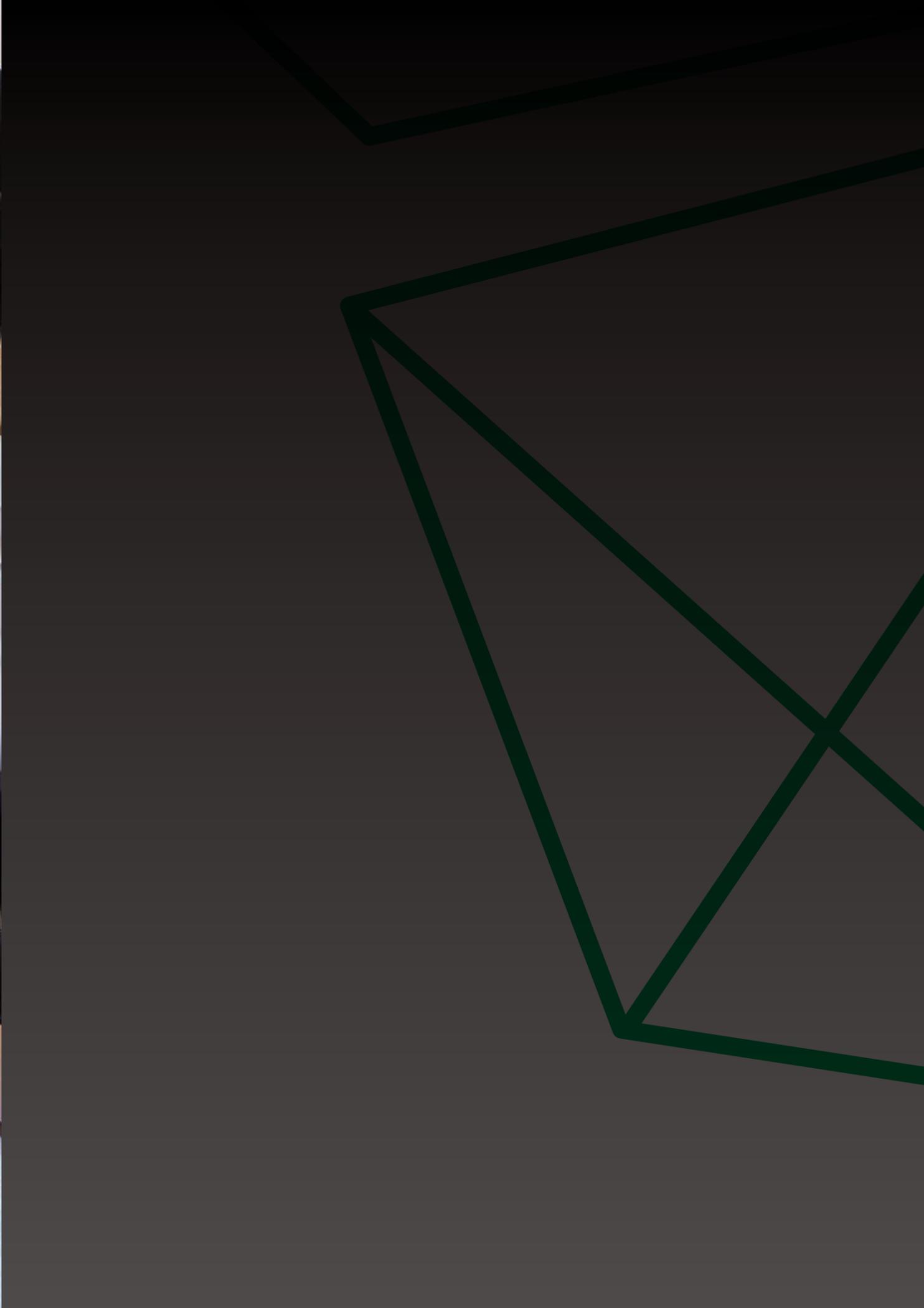
Crea photographed by Terhi Ylimäinen Photography

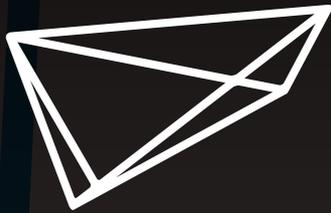


Lynsey DeBurca photographed by Julia Dunin Photography



Arctic Factory photographed by Valokuvaamo Kipinä, Kopia





a creative momentum project

CONNECTING CREATIVITY ACROSS
EUROPE'S NORTHERN EDGE

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