



**a creative
momentum
project**

CREATIVE EXCHANGES:

**A MODEL FOR CREATIVE SECTOR NETWORKING & LEARNING IN
PERIPHERAL REGIONS**

JULY 2018

**CONNECTING CREATIVITY ACROSS
EUROPE'S NORTHERN EDGE**
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SUMMARY & BEST PRACTICE MODEL

During 2015-2018, 'a creative momentum project' organised 41 Creative Exchanges across five partner regions with total attendance of over 1,600 people. Creative Exchanges are networking and information events addressing real needs identified by the target group (creative entrepreneurs).

The organisation of these 41 Creative Exchanges has inspired a best practice model for the organisation and delivery of events for the creative industries sector in the context of an EU-funded transnational project. The use of technology as a way of facilitating transnational knowledge exchange is discussed in the report as well as in the following model.

CREATIVE EXCHANGES: BEST PRACTICE MODEL

Stakeholders: It is good practice to engage with all stakeholders as early as possible. This facilitates detailed planning, proper programme development and promotion. It is good to have extra time at your disposal should organisational issues arise (e.g. cancellations, inability to contract external expert, and so on).

Some of the stakeholders who participated in the Creative Exchanges were:

- Venue managers
- Photographers
- Videographers/Live streaming technologists
- Creative entrepreneurs (audience)
- Speakers
- Public relations firms
- Media
- Politicians (if representation is required)
- Associate partners, funders and/or supporters
- Colleagues including remote 'a creative momentum project' team and people who will help on the day

Focus: It is important to identify the *right* topic for the *right* speakers. Speakers should be profiled and, if they are suitable for a given Creative Exchange, they should be briefed thoroughly so that the focus of the event is respected. When contacting speakers, it is useful to include a short event outline illustrating the scope and target audience of the event.

Marketing: A marketing plan should be in place. This should include all actions that need to be performed before, during and after the event.

If the plan includes press/media releases, make sure that quality images are taken at the Creative Exchange. The media often appreciates 'fun' shots, where subjects interact with each other. Pictures must be attention grabbing.

- In order to promote a Creative Exchange and use the marketing budget effectively, it is important to realise the limits and strengths of different marketing channels. It is important to pay attention to the target audience(s).
- If a target audience does not really read local newspapers, adverts in the local papers will not be effective. Alternatives such as social media or radio ads may be appropriate, albeit expensive.
- Social media promotion can be very effective, especially if 'influencers' (e.g. people with many social media followers and/or a respected public body) get involved.
- 'Likes' on Facebook do not necessarily translate into a large attending audience. Promotional activities should stop only after the event has taken place. If possible, organisers should engage with the people who 'liked' or engaged with the adverts. Paid ads, tailored content and re-marketing may be useful, if resources are available.
- Email marketing is a very effective way to generate trust with an audience.

Plan, plan, plan: Organising and delivering a successful Creative Exchange requires time and an eye for detail. Prepare briefs for everyone involved in the organisation of the event – everyone must be aware of roles and schedules.

Venue: Choosing the right venue can be difficult (see Section 3). Visiting the venue *before* the event allows the organisers of a Creative Exchange to 'imagine' the event and ask relevant questions (see Sections 3 and 5). Some of the issues that need addressing are:

- WiFi options
- Screen and technical equipment available
- Technician and staff available on the day
- Distance from screen to projector and from screen to attendees
- Catering (where?)
- Registration desk (where?)
- Parking facilities
- Lighting

Equipment: It is important to make sure that the technical equipment available at a venue is suitable to the Creative Exchange in question. External expertise may be required. External experts may not want to use the equipment provided by a venue, as they cannot take full responsibility for it. Hiring technical equipment and a technician can be the most expensive element of a Creative Exchange. Investigating options and asking for a detailed cost breakdown are good practice.

If a Creative Exchange includes live/video streaming and/or photography and camera work, one member of staff should focus exclusively on these activities, even if they are implemented by contracted experts.

Feedback: Good feedback helps the organisation of future Creative Exchanges (see Section 6). It is good to prepare feedback



forms in advance. These forms can be distributed at the start of the event - perhaps they can be included in a 'welcome pack'. These forms should be completed on the day - attendees are more likely to leave constructive feedback on the day than through an online survey later. Attendees are more likely to fill in form and perform other similar tasks if a reward is offered (e.g. free voucher, usb key).

Feedback can be collected through an online survey. If this is the case, it is important to send the follow-up email immediately after the Exchange. The email should include the link to the survey, as well as a link to any presentations or material from the event.

The feedback survey should question different aspects of the Creative Exchange including promotion, suitability of venue, quality of the programme and information provided, hosting, and networking opportunities.

Meet expectations: Attendees should be provided with what they expect. If pre-event research demonstrates that attendees are mainly focused on networking, networking opportunities should be a key component of the event.

Networking: Never assume that networking will happen naturally, perhaps during the coffee breaks. Dividing the audience into discussion groups facilitates networking and specific knowledge transfer.

The organisation of networking activities can be complex from an administrative point of view. It may be necessary to identify and involve a facilitator, e.g. someone who can lead the discussions and keep them on point. Professional facilitators may also organise group activities that allow creative professionals to connect with each other.

Allowing creatives to briefly present what they do may work as an effective icebreaker. Pecha Kucha presentations can be a fun format to facilitate this activity.

Variety: Organising a busy and varied event is generally well received by the audience. Some people like to attend frontal lectures; others may prefer more interaction and hands-on learning. A mix of formats can be used during the same event.

Changing room to have food or having a break-out session encourages people to stay engaged with the Creative Exchange. It is also a way of creating networking opportunities.



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This report outlines the experience of 'a creative momentum project' in developing and implementing the 'Creative Exchanges' activity during 2015-2018. It has been written by Niall Drew, Project Co-ordinator, Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon Borough Council, Silvia Guglielmini, Project Administrator, Western Development Commission and Pauline White, Project Co-ordinator, Western Development Commission. Additional inputs and views were provided by all project partner organisations.

We would like to thank all the speakers, contributors and, most of all, participants who were involved in the 41 Creative Exchange events which took place across the five partner regions. Their feedback has been very valuable in preparing this report.



1.0 INTRODUCTION

'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 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;
- 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 organisations in five partner regions:

- [Western Development Commission](#) (WDC), West of Ireland
- [Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council](#) (ACBC), Northern Ireland
- [NUI Galway](#) (NUIG), West of Ireland
- [Menningaráð Eyþings](#) (ME), North East Iceland
- [Lapland University of Applied Sciences](#) (LUAS), Northern Finland
- [Technichus](#), Mid-Sweden

Many activities developed under 'a creative momentum project' were informed by needs identified during 'Creative Edge', a 3-year (2011-2013) transnational project aimed at increasing the access of creative enterprises to international markets and developing emerging creative talent. It was co-funded by the EU's Interreg Northern Periphery Programme (NPP) 2007-2013. Several of the partners involved in 'Creative Edge' were involved in 'a creative momentum project'.

2.0 CREATIVE EXCHANGES

2.1 THE PROBLEM

Research undertaken as part of the Creative Edge project¹ found that creative entrepreneurs often operate in isolation, with limited access to peer-focused networking opportunities and knowledge sharing. Local networking events often provide prime sources of support for creative enterprises. Notwithstanding sole traders, these enterprises tend to be micro or SMEs. This means that many creative professionals must multi-task to run their business successfully, which in turn requires ongoing access to diverse networks and training.

2.2 THE SOLUTION

'Creative Exchanges' was an activity planned and implemented under 'a creative momentum project'. A 'Creative Exchange' is a networking, information and training event, addressing real needs identified by the target group (creative sector entrepreneurs). To effectively meet local needs and circumstances, the nature of individual 'Creative Exchanges' varied across partner regions by theme, size, budget and format. They took place in different types of venues including [Creative Spaces](#).

Creative Exchanges ultimately facilitate connections and knowledge transfer between creative entrepreneurs and the wider creative fields, including researchers, municipalities and support agencies. Technology could amplify the reach of Creative Exchanges, allowing transnational knowledge transfer through live-streaming or video.

2.3 A MODEL FOR CREATIVE EXCHANGES

Over the course of three years, 'a creative momentum project' organised 41 Creative Exchanges across five partner regions which had a total attendance of over 1,600 people. The experience gathered over this time has led to the development of a Creative Exchanges Model focusing on events, networking and knowledge transfer for the creative industries sector in peripheral regions.

The Model for Creative Exchanges has been developed by Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon Borough Council, which led this activity as well as the project work package under which this activity was implemented (Physical & Virtual Connections). However as each project partner organisation was very active in implementing Creative Exchange events in their own regions, considerable input to the development of the Model was provided by all project partners.

¹ mapping.creative-edge.eu

3.0 UNDERSTANDING NEEDS

3.1 COMBINING RESEARCH WITH A 'BOTTOM-UP' APPROACH

During the first Operational Management Team (OMT) meeting of 'a creative momentum project', which took place in Finland in June 2015, project partners discussed a number of topics for Creative Exchanges which were felt may address the needs of the creative industries sector across the various partner regions. Themes such as the use of social media, finance and crowd funding were identified as relevant by all partners.

However to better understand the specific needs of different creative sub-sectors (Arts, Crafts, Design and Media & Technology) and different regions, partners agreed to gather input from creative professionals, the target group for Creative Exchanges. An online survey was created and carried out in all partner regions. This not only collected information concerning training and development needs/topics for Creative Exchanges, but also provided useful data regarding suitable days and times for events, event formats and the type of tools that creatives considered as more useful to gain knowledge.

The online survey went live in four partner regions in September 2015 with some of the results shared during the official project launch event held in Ireland on 29 October 2015. In North East Iceland, the survey was held back until March 2016 as the project had not yet been introduced in the region (which had not participated in the previous Creative Edge project) and the partner organisation felt it would be better to wait until the project was officially launched.

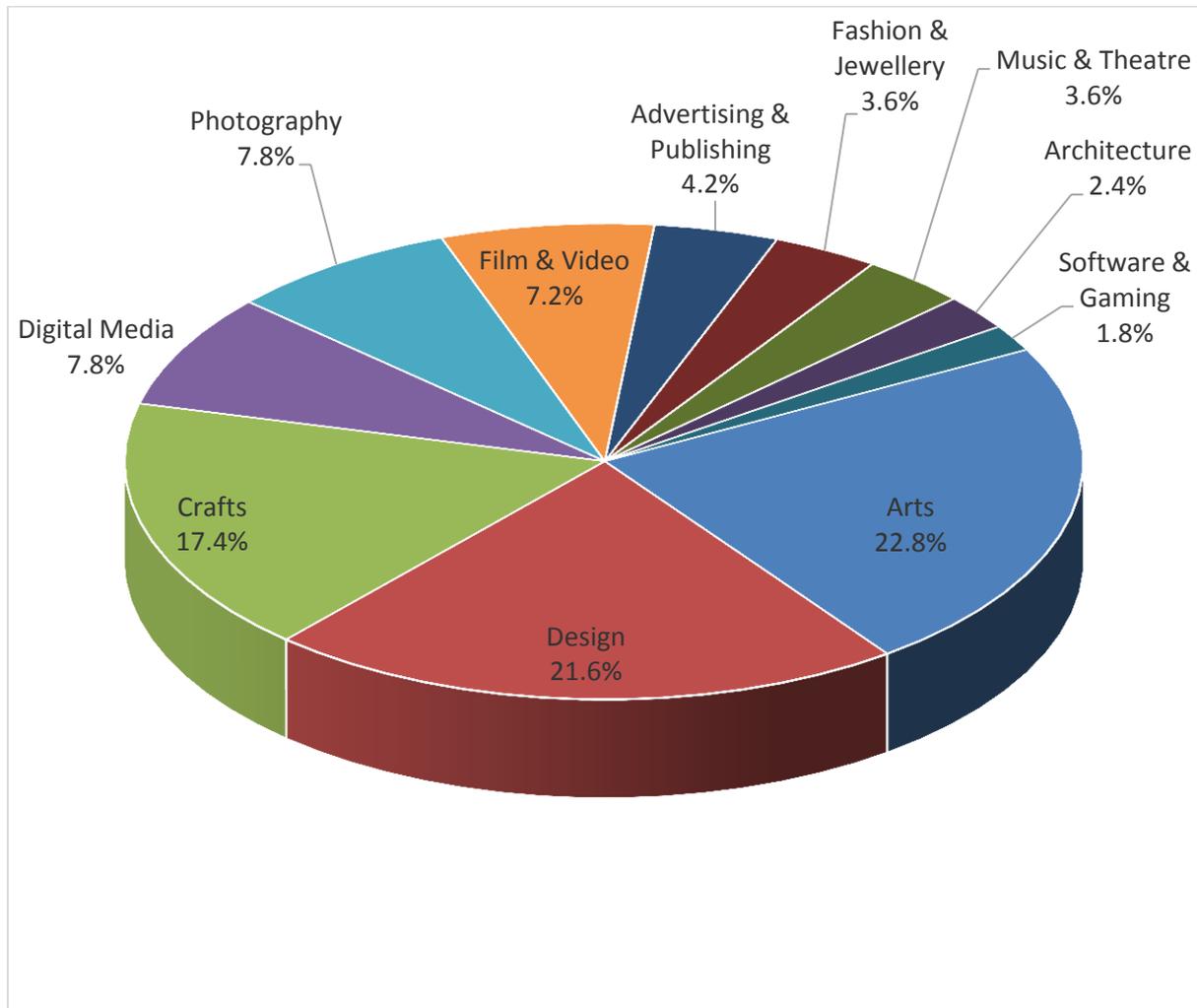
Key findings of the survey are illustrated in Section 3.1.1.

At the first OMT meeting project partners also agreed that, as far as possible, Creative Exchanges should take place in Creative Spaces including shared co-working spaces, arts and cultural venues, and innovation and enterprise centres hosting networks of creative professionals.

3.1.1 A CREATIVE MOMENTUM PROJECT SURVEY RESULTS

In total there were 225 responses to the online survey. The majority of survey respondents (aggregate) operated in the Arts, Design and Crafts sectors (Fig. 1). In addition, 28.7% of respondents came from other sectors that 'a creative momentum project' defines as Media & Technology (Digital Media, Photography, Film & Video, Advertising & Publishing, Software & Gaming).

FIG. 1: RESPONDENTS TO A CREATIVE MOMENTUM PROJECT SURVEY BY SECTOR



Some of the *key findings* from the survey:

- **Format for events:** in descending order, interactive workshops; networking events; and speakers addressing a room, were the most popular formats for delivery of events;
- **Timing:** most respondents indicated 'mornings' and 'weekdays' as the best time for Creative Exchanges. Lunch and after work events were also popular choices;
- **Preferred format for online access to information:** in descending order videos; downloadable documents; text on website; Q&A sessions; live webinar; and live chats, were the most popular choices;
- **Training needs and methods:** the survey proposed a series of 'training needs' and respondents had to mark the most urgent. In addition, for each need, respondents were asked to indicate their preferred training method/format. The options available were 'workshop', 'mentoring', 'networking' and 'online'. This exercise led to the following hierarchy of

training needs and methods:

1. Showcasing/Presenting your Work | Workshop
2. Marketing | Workshop
3. Accessing New Markets | Networking
4. Sales | Networking
5. Tech Skills in Social/Digital Media | Workshop
6. Business Management | Mentoring
7. Product/Service Development | Workshop
8. E-Commerce | Online
9. Sourcing New Business Partners | Networking
10. Targeting Tourists | Online
11. Crowd Funding | Online

3.2 TOWARDS A WORKING DEFINITION OF ‘CREATIVE EXCHANGE’

3.2.1 CREATIVE EXCHANGES AS ‘A CREATIVE MOMENTUM PROJECT’ EVENTS

At the second OMT, which took place in Ireland in October 2015, it became clear to project partners that the data gathered through the survey could guide the organisation of all events occurring under ‘a creative momentum project’. In other words, any event organised by the project had the potential to foster creative networks and generate knowledge as a Creative Exchange.

To foster transnational knowledge transfer and networks, Creative Exchanges could attract international speakers. Due to budget constraints, this solution was not always easy to implement. However, as will be discussed in Section 4, a number of Creative Exchanges were organised to coincide with other project activities e.g. Creative Hotspots, bringing together a transnational group of creative professionals from different partner regions.

3.2.2 TECHNOLOGY AND LANGUAGE

Technology, including live streaming facilities and videography, was considered as key to facilitate transnational knowledge transfer and networks. In particular, live streaming including using social media platforms such as Facebook Live, could offer opportunities for online interaction during a Creative Exchange. Section 5 outlines a number of key learnings concerning live/video streaming. Live streamed events occurred in Northern Ireland as well as in Finland, whereas video was used in other regions.

In Finland, the live streamed events that did not take place in English included an introduction in English. Most of the experts contracted as speakers in Finland were comfortable with speaking in English. In general, project partners realised that some Creative Exchanges had to occur in languages other than English, in order to best engage with creatives in Iceland, Sweden and Finland. While it is possible to add subtitle to videos, translation can be time-consuming and certainly expensive, if assigned to an external service provider. Most videos based on Creative Exchanges were from Creative Exchanges which took place in English.

Technichus in Sweden produced a series of videos from their 'The Art of Getting Paid' Creative Exchange (4 February 2016). The majority were in Swedish, but one of these called '[Highlights](#)' which focused on the panel discussion that happened during the event, featured English subtitles. The translation was carried out internally by the Swedish project manager.



'The Art of Getting Paid', 04.02.2016, Mid-Sweden

[MyCreativeEdge.eu](#), the platform developed by the project to showcase the work of creative professionals from partner regions, became an important tool to disseminate the content of Creative Exchanges. Project partners used the platform to promote keynote speakers, as well as disseminating and reflecting on the content of the Creative Exchanges. In line with the preferences expressed by creative professionals, downloadable documents (e.g. PowerPoint presentations) and videos were often added to the posts. Videos were made available on [YouTube](#), and were often promoted through other social media.

INSIGHT: VIDEO AND CREATIVE EXCHANGES – AN EXAMPLE

The art of getting paid

by Mid-Sweden (published on MyCreativeEdge.eu, 12 February 2016)

Try to fit another piece into a puzzle that has already been finished – that is how it feels when a client wants you to make 'just a small change' or add 'just one more thing' right when you think you have finished your work. In his show, the magician Arkadia tried to illustrate what it feels like to make a living out of your creativity. The show opened The Art of Getting Paid – the first public event (or Creative Exchange) organised in Mid-Sweden under 'a creative momentum project'. The event took place on 4 February and attracted 40 people.

After the show, a panel of 5 people discussed the issue of getting paid properly as creatives. In addition to Arkadia, the panel included a programmer, an accountancy consultant, a textile designer, and a business developer. According to Ingrid Nyström – Accountancy Consultant – it is unfortunately quite common that creatives do not get paid at all. To avoid this, she suggested that creatives claim their money at regular intervals and do not leave the payment until the end, when the project is completed. Ingrid also noted that, before responding to an invitation to tender, many creative entrepreneurs would negotiate their fees downwards.

A question for the panel regarded the extent to which creatives should be transparent when providing quotes for a project. There were diverging opinions. On the one hand, when creatives are too transparent, clients could ask them to 'cut down' important aspects of their work, just to get a cheaper price. On the other hand, however, transparency allows clients to immediately see what it is included in the price and what may come as an extra.

Business Developer Anders Bosenius said that negotiation is an important word for creatives looking for contracts. According to Anders, creatives should practice negotiation with people such as family and friends – anybody who can take it. Only when mastered, negotiation skills can be used on customers. Negotiation is really a skill that creatives should learn and become comfortable with, to avoid working too much for too little.

'The art of getting paid' is a challenge that needs to be discussed again and again, both to make entrepreneurs stop devaluing their work because they feel their actual fee could be considered as too high, and also to make customers more aware of what they are paying for and why.

Videos of all speakers are available [here](#)

3.2.3 VENUES AND CREATIVE EXCHANGES

It was agreed that the preference was to organise Creative Exchanges in Creative Spaces, where possible. Many Exchanges did take place in Creative Spaces such as 'Craft & Design: Pricing & Marketing' in Iceland which was held in the [Seigla creative centre](#) and included a presentation and tour by the owner of the creative space; the 'NI Creative Trails Launch' which took place at the [F.E. McWilliam Gallery](#) in Northern Ireland; and 'Showcase your Creative Work Effectively' which was held twice in the West of Ireland at both [The Model](#) creative space and [glór theatre](#). Indeed one Creative Exchange held in Northern Ireland in November 2016 focused on the topic of Creative Spaces.

The use of Creative Spaces as venues for project events is discussed in detail in the report 'Network of Shared Creative Spaces: Profiling & Connecting Shared Creative Spaces across Europe's Northern Edge' available [here](#). In relation to choosing venues for

Creative Exchanges it was found that Creative Spaces often met the needs of the event itself, excelling primarily in being able to provide:

- Reliable WiFi.
- Current reliable audio visual hardware (and the means to run them in a manner that was compatible with PCs/Macs and VGA or HDMI ports).
- The expertise on hand to ensure any unforeseen issues were addressed and smoothed out.
- Ability to promote the event itself and reach the desired target market.
- Provide accurate useful local knowledge (how to further promote/parking/who may be interested in attending or being involved in the event itself).



'Craft & Design: Pricing & Marketing' at Seigla Creative Centre, 18.03.2017, North East Iceland

However, given the number and diversity of Creative Exchanges which took place (see Section 4) it was not always possible to hold these in Creative Spaces. Exchanges were organised in different types of venues including seminar rooms in higher education institutions, conference rooms in hotels, restaurants and pubs. This is because of a number of factors, namely:

- **Availability:** Creative Spaces may not be operational during specific times of the year. In North East Iceland, for example, many Creative Spaces operate at a limited capacity during winter time.
- **Capacity:** Creatives Spaces may be unable to accommodate large audiences (e.g. more than 50 people). Others may be able to offer a space, but not catering or Internet facilities.

- **Time:** Creative Spaces include shared co-working spaces and other types of workplaces. It can be difficult to run Creative Exchanges when people are at work in these Spaces.
- **Organisation:** Organising events can be time-consuming, especially if the project team is small and involved in multiple project activities. Much time is spent on choosing the venue, making sure that technical requirements are met, putting together a programme, contacting speakers and any other relevant stakeholders, promoting the event, as well as organising payments according to the correct procurement procedures. It can be convenient to maximise time and resources by picking a venue that offers a space, technical support as well as catering facilities all together, or is at least able to accommodate the organisers according to these terms. Creative Spaces may not always offer all of these services.



'Tap into the Tourist Potential of your Region' at The Spool Factory, 14.11.2017, West of Ireland

INSIGHT: MYCREATIVEEDGE.EU AND CREATIVE EXCHANGES – AN EXAMPLE

Tap into the Tourist Potential of your Region

by West of Ireland (published on MyCreativeEdge.eu, 22 November 2017)

On Tuesday 14 November 37 participants gathered at [The Spool Factory](#), a new co-working hub in Boyle, Co Roscommon (Ireland), to learn about how creative enterprises can tap into the tourist potential of their region, while enhancing the region's competitive advantage.

This Creative Exchange information and networking event was organised by the Western Development Commission (WDC) through 'a creative momentum project', which funds MyCreativeEdge.eu. The day kicked off with an overview of the project and its activities, including the current digital marketing campaign promoting MyCreativeEdge.eu to international markets in Finland, Sweden, Iceland, Northern Ireland, Ireland, the UK, US and Canada.

Dr Aisling Murtagh, Post-Doctoral Researcher at NUI Galway, is undertaking research on the creative industries sector across Europe's Northern Edge as part of 'a creative momentum project'. She gave an overview of current trends in creative tourism, including the move to 'co-creation' where tourists actively engage in the creative process. The importance of marketing the 'experience' and not only the 'product', as a way of differentiating yourself in a market increasingly monopolised by large intermediaries e.g. Amazon, Apple. She outlined a number of examples from the partner countries, including some collective marketing approaches; Finland's Ilahu Boards, Made in Medelpad from Sweden and Boom Studios from Northern Ireland.

We then heard three business stories of varying approaches to harnessing the link between the creative sector and tourism.

Gerry Brannigan of [Blackfield Surf School & Coding Academy](#) explained how circumstances drove him to diversify his surf school business. Bad weather in summer 2015 led Gerry to establish a coding academy where kids can learn to code, working on drones and games. He emphasised the importance of putting the 'fun' into these experiences, for kids and for adults.

Following her training in textile art, [Lorna Watkins](#) first became an entrepreneur by establishing a soap-making business which she ran for six years. But she felt that she really wanted to return to her art. As well as her original paintings, Lorna produces cards and prints which she sells through selected shops, online and at Fairs. Very quickly Lorna realised that she wanted to run art workshops which were about creativity and really enjoying space. She now runs workshops at her 'Studio Near the Sea' which take place indoors and also outside on the beautiful Sligo coastline.

Emily Sachs-Eldridge is co-owner of [Artwood](#), a Leitrim-based craft business designing and making wood and crystal suncatchers. Emily explained how their business emerged during the recession when her husband Giolla, a carpenter, began looking for new opportunities. Beginning at markets, their products are now stocked in 18 retail shops, many of which have a strong tourist focus. Their suncatchers inscribed with Yeats poetry are particularly popular with tourists. They sell online and are now expanding overseas.

After the break, Nicola Doran, Retail Programme Manager with the [Design & Crafts Council of Ireland](#) outlined the services provided by DCCoI to their 3,400 clients focusing on how Irish craft is marketed in a contemporary way at home and abroad. Nicola noted the new Design Ireland website which features the best of Irish design and aims to link consumers with retailers and showcase why Irish craft is worth the price premium compared with mass produced items. The Irish Craft Studio Experience is an important opportunity for Irish craft businesses running open studios who want to connect with tourists.

Mike Hourigan, cinematographer and owner of [Mimar Media](#) explained how they relocated from Cork to Roscommon in 2011 at a time when there was a huge dip in spending by businesses on promotional video. This is now reversing. Mike emphasised how videos can tell a lot in a short space of time and that there are a lot of different approaches – ‘how to’ guides, testimonials, behind-the-scenes – which can help ‘put a face to the name’ for your business. He also noted how important video is for tourists doing research before their visit, looking at options for different activities in an area. In his presentation Mike outlined his top 10 tips for good video.

Participants then split into two discussion groups:

- How to successfully bring products/services to market, led by Nicola Doran
- Creating DIY video content, led by Mike Hourigan

The discussion groups allowed participants to share their experiences and advice. And a [Facebook Group](#) has now been established to continue the conversation and expand it to those with experience in creative tourism in the other MyCreativeEdge.eu partner regions.

So if you’re interested in learning and sharing your experience of creative tourism, why not join our Facebook Group.



‘Launch of MyCreativeEdge.eu’ at Made in Medelpad, 01.03.17, Mid-Sweden

4.0 CREATIVE EXCHANGES IN PRACTICE

4.1 LIST OF CREATIVE EXCHANGES

Over 1,600 people attended the 41 Creative Exchanges organised under 'a creative momentum project' (Table 1). As well as creative entrepreneurs, the audience of these events also included representatives from local authorities, business support agencies, students and researchers.

TABLE 1: LIST OF CREATIVE EXCHANGES (CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER)

Partner/ Country	Date	Title of Creative Exchange	Venue	Total No. Attended
WDC/NUIG (IR)	14.05.15	Cultural Heritage and Regional & Local Development: Exploring the potential of the <i>Économusée</i> approach for creative businesses (with Craft Reach project).	An Taibhdhearc Theatre	32
WDC (IR)	29.10.15	Launch of 'a creative momentum project': Launch of project with keynote creative speakers. Playlist of videos here	The Dock Arts Centre	80
LUAS (FIN)	04.11.15	Regional Launch in Tornio: Finnish launch for creative businesses and other stakeholders on the theme of mentoring (with Regional Organization of Enterprises in Lapland)	Lapland UAS	20
LUAS (FIN)	03.02.16	Co-design Workshop: Part of Creative Steps 2.0 activity to co-design an innovation process with creative entrepreneurs. Video here	Lapland UAS	14
Technichus (SE)	04.02.16	The Art of Getting Paid: How creatives can value their work and make a living. Playlist of videos here	Technichus Science Centre	38
ME (IS)	11.02.16	Skapandi Kraftur til Framtíðar: 'a creative momentum project' launch in Iceland featured key speakers from the cultural sector and was featured on local television .	Ketilhusid/ Akureyri Art Museum	40
LUAS (FIN)	25.02.16	Arctic Design Business Day, Leif Rehnström, Hello Future: The project sponsored one of the keynote sessions held during Arctic Design Week 2016. Video here	Korundi House of Culture	146
WDC (IR)	21.04.16	Showcase your Creative Work Effectively 1: How creatives can use imagery, story, advertising and Trade events to showcase their work to buyers. Playlist of videos here	glór theatre	24
WDC (IR)	26.04.16	Showcase your Creative Work Effectively 2: This Creative Exchange was held twice in the north and south of the region.	The Model	26
LUAS (FIN)	09.05.16	Identify your Expertise: How can young creative talent and final year students discover what areas / skills they should focus on in the future.	Lapland UAS	24
LUAS (FIN)	13.05.16	Northern Stars Seminar 2016: Seminar on innovative business solutions, creative entrepreneurship and opportunities in the Arctic area (with Lapland UAS)	Lapland UAS	N/A
ACBC (NI)	18.05.16	Why Are You Not Selling Online? How can creative enterprises work more effectively online to sell their products and services? Project launch in Northern Ireland.	Craigavon Civic & Conference Centre	41
Technichus (SE)	05.08.16	Pecha Kucha – Urkult: Craft makers and performers supported to take part in the Urkult Festival 'Creative Hotspot' in Sweden presented their work and practice. Playlist of videos here	Urkult Folk Festival	20

Partner/ Country	Date	Title of Creative Exchange	Venue	Total No. Attended
ACBC (NI)	18.08.16	The Practicalities of Selling Online: Hands-on advice and information about selling online.	Signal Centre	12
ACBC (NI)	28.09.16	Grow your Digital Business: Creative Exchange to coincide with Digital DNA Creative Hotspot in Northern Ireland with keynote speaker Kevin Sexton and the Lord Mayor with transnational audience.	Armagh Market Place Theatre	23
LUAS (FIN)	04.11.16	Beacons & Beyond: Exploring the opportunities of the Internet of Things. Live streamed, video is here (with DIMS project)	Lapland UAS	38
ACBC (NI)	16.11.16	Developing Creative Networks: Managers of Shared Creative Spaces shared information and advice for managing, funding or setting up a Creative Space, followed by speed networking. Playlist of videos here	Banbridge Enterprise Centre	49
ME (IS)	17.11.16	Cultural Soup: Crowd funding: A speaker from crowd funding platform the Karolina Fund outlined the crowd funding model. Icelandic creative who attended Digital DNA shared her experience.	Hotel KEA	25
WDC (IR)	29.11.16	So much data. So little time. Data analytics can cause much confusion for small businesses but used correctly are a rich source of information . Playlist of videos here	Breaffy Hotel	53
LUAS (FIN)	08.12.16	Video Pitching Toolkit workshop: The development of the Video Pitching Toolkit involved a workshop to present initial ideas and gain feedback from target group.	Lapland UAS	34
ME (IS)	24.01.17	Workshop in application making: Hands-on practical advice on preparing application forms for public funding.	Husavik	5
ME (IS)	07.02.17	Workshop in application making: This Creative Exchange took place twice.	ME offices	9
Technichus (SE)	01.03.17	Launch of MyCreativeEdge.eu: The MyCreativeEdge.eu website was re-developed and re-launched on 1 March 2017, marked by an event in Sweden.	Made in Medelpad	10
ME (IS)	18.03.17	Craft and Design: Marketing and Pricing: Speakers gave practical experience and advice on marketing and pricing for craft and design businesses.	Seigla	21
ME/Vaka (IS)	25.05.17	Folk music festivals: Their mission and influence on traditional music: This seminar took place during the Vaka Folk Festival Creative Hotspot featuring presentations from supported creatives from Finland and Ireland.	Hof Cultural Centre	12
ME (IS)	22.06.17	Cultural Soup: Design in local context: Options for incorporating local material into craft and design products as well as how this can be used as a selling point. Designers who attended ADW shared experiences.	Hotel KEA	15
ACBC (NI)	29.06.17	NI Creative Trails Launch: A new mobile app to help visitors find creative businesses in Northern Ireland was launched. Playlist of videos here	FE McWilliam Centre	41
ACBC (NI)	30.06.17	How to Make a Living as a Ceramicist? A range of speakers focused on different aspects of the pottery and ceramics sector.	Millennium Court Arts Centre	22
NUIG (IR)	07.07.17	Screen Industries on the Periphery: Policy and Practice: Creative Exchange to coincide with Galway Film Fleadh Creative Hotspot.	School of Film & Digital Media,	39

Partner/ Country	Date	Title of Creative Exchange	Venue	Total No. Attended
		Supported filmmakers from partner regions presented their work, plus key local speakers.	NUI Galway	
LUAS (FIN)	22.08.17	Do you want social media superpowers? Exclusively delivered as an online webinar	Lapland UAS	N/A
ACBC (NI)	24.08.17	Taking a Creative Business Abroad: Designers from Northern Ireland supported by the project to participate in Arctic Design Week 2017 shared their experiences. Playlist of videos here	Newtownards Town Hall	12
ACBC (NI)	06.11.17	Grow your Creative Business through Video: Advice on how small businesses can harness video to grow their business. Playlist of videos here	Marine Court Hotel	29
WDC (IR)	14.11.17	Tap into the Tourist Potential of your Region: How can creative enterprises connect with the tourism market to enhance their competitiveness?	The Spool Factory	37
LUAS (FIN)	22.11.17	Storytelling & Entrepreneurship: How storytelling could help improve or even create a company's own brand, new products and services. Event was live streamed, video here	CO-WORK BY OP LAB	13
LUAS (FIN)	01.12.17	'a creative momentum project' breakfast: Casual breakfast networking event.	Sokos Hotel	23
ACBC (NI)	21.03.18	Innovation & Creativity featuring Kevin Gaskell: First of three Innovation Workshops to mark the end of the Creative Steps 2.0 programme in Northern Ireland. Streamed on Facebook Live, video here	Craigavon Civic & Conference Centre	51
ACBC (NI)	26.03.18	Creativity & Growth featuring Jo Fairley: Second NI Innovation Workshop. Live streamed, video here	Dromantine Retreat	46
WDC (IR)	12.04.18	Closing Conference: The closing event of the project featured an overview of project activities as well as a panel discussion with creative entrepreneurs.	Electric Galway	34
LUAS (FIN)	20.04.18	Northern Stars Seminar: Annual international seminar to promote entrepreneurship among young people. Live streamed.	Lapland UAS	N/A
ACBC (NI)	23.04.18	Transnational Growth featuring Roger Saul: Final NI Innovation Workshop. Live streamed, video here	South Eastern Regional College	59
ME (IS)	17.04.18	Iceland Creative Trails app - Introduction meeting: With the start of the Summer 2018 season, ME presented the Creative Trails app to Icelandic design and craft businesses to recruit more members.	Into the Arctic Museum	13

These 41 Creative Exchanges covered all training needs identified through the survey (see Section 3.1.1), although some topics were only discussed in specific regions (e.g. crowd funding was only covered in North East Iceland). The training needs identified in the survey also inspired the content of the [Knowledge Centre](#) available on MyCreativeEdge.eu – an area including many resources such as toolkits and links to useful websites.

A number of the Creative Exchanges such as 'Cultural Soup: Design in local context' in Iceland, 'How to Make a Living as a Ceramicist?' in Northern Ireland and 'Screen Industries on the Periphery' in Ireland, focused on topics of interest to specific creative

sub-sectors. These events were conceived as a way of connecting with a specific audience in a specific region.

Creative Exchanges often featured creative professionals as speakers. In several cases the speakers had participated in other project activities including [Creative Hotspots](#), Trade Fair support, [Creative Steps 2.0](#) and the [Creative Trails](#) app.



'Co-design workshop' during the Creative Steps 2.0 activity at Lapland UAS, 03.02.2016, Northern Finland

INSIGHT: CREATIVE EXCHANGE ADDRESSING A SPECIFIC CREATIVE SUB-SECTOR – AN EXAMPLE

Crafts and design: Marketing and pricing

by North East Iceland (published on MyCreativeEdge.eu, 24 March 2017)

It was a friendly atmosphere at [Seigla](#) on Saturday 18th March where the guests were actively involved in the conversation and showed great interest in the topic of the day. Many active crafts people, members of craft groups and designers attended the creative exchange.

Anita Guttesen manager of Seigla Creative Space welcomed guests and told them a little bit about Seigla Creative Space. Then Ragnheidur Jona Ingimarsdottir from the Cultural Council of North East Iceland introduced 'a creative momentum project' and the speakers of this Creative Exchange that had the theme of marketing and pricing of craft and design.

Birna Kristin Fridriksdottir owner of the design company [Gjoska](#) talked about how Gjoska came to existence and how the company came to be a success. Birna has been working as a designer, both close to the capital area and later she moved to a farm in North East Iceland, where she has her workshop. She, along with her husband, has been expanding her business internationally with unique textile products where she connects design and traditional craft. The product lines have reference to Icelandic nature such as lava and aurora borealis. In a short time the company has been quite successful and has now five full time employees. Birna said that her experience is that it's not an obstacle to work so far from the the company's biggest market.

Sunneva Hafsteinsdottir is manager of the organization [Crafts and Design](#) that has the goal to strengthen craft and design as well as promoting its cultural, artistic and practical value. She spoke about pricing and marketing craft and design where she emphasised on the importance of working professionally and for people to find their own voice in creating craft and design.

She spoke about the difference between craft as a profession vs craft as a hobby, which is also a factor in finding the right price for the product. When selling craft, a product that is unique should have a different price than a more general product. She also encouraged craft groups to be critical when choosing products for their shops as well as how they are displayed and to find their uniqueness. She said it's also important to use the experience when developing the shops.

The last speaker was 'a creative momentum project' regional project manager Hulda Jonsdottir who talked about the benefits of MyCreativeEdge, how to register and make a profile. The guests showed great interest in registering to the website and Hulda offered assistance.

After the event the guests were invited to take a tour of Seigla.

4.2 CREATIVE EXCHANGES AND CREATIVE HOTSPOTS

'a creative momentum project' organised Creative Exchanges to coincide with several of the '[Creative Hotspots](#)'²:

- **Pecha Kucha – Urkult at Urkult Folk Festival**, Sweden, 2016
- **Grow your Digital Business at Digital DNA @ The Planetarium**, Northern Ireland, 2016

² The project selected 5 established creative and cultural events, one in each partner region, and supported a number of creative professionals from the other regions to travel to participate.

- **Folk Music Festivals: Their mission and influence on traditional music** during **Vaka Folk Arts Festival**, North East Iceland 2017. Although not officially called a 'Creative Exchange', all speakers were sponsored to participate in the Festival by 'a creative momentum project'.
- **Screen Industries on the Periphery: Policy and Practice** at the **Galway Film Fleadh**, West of Ireland, 2017



Transnational networking underway at 'Grow your Digital Business', 28.09.2016, Northern Ireland

Envisioned as an extension of the Creative Hotspots activity, and often included in the Hotspot event's official programme and website, these Creative Exchanges were an opportunity for the transnational group of creatives supported by the project to introduce themselves and get to know each other, as well as network with peers from the host region. They were also an opportunity to reflect on specialist themes which were not indicated in the survey, but appealed to specific areas of the creative industries sector nonetheless e.g. music festivals, screen industry.

'The international audience was delightful' participant at 'Screen Industries on the Periphery: Policy and Practice' 12.07.2017, West of Ireland

'Excellent event, fantastic speakers and a great group of people, very well organised' participant at 'Grow Your Digital Business' 28.09.2016, Northern Ireland



International panel discussion during 'Screen Industries on the Periphery: Policy and Practice', 12.07.2017, West of Ireland

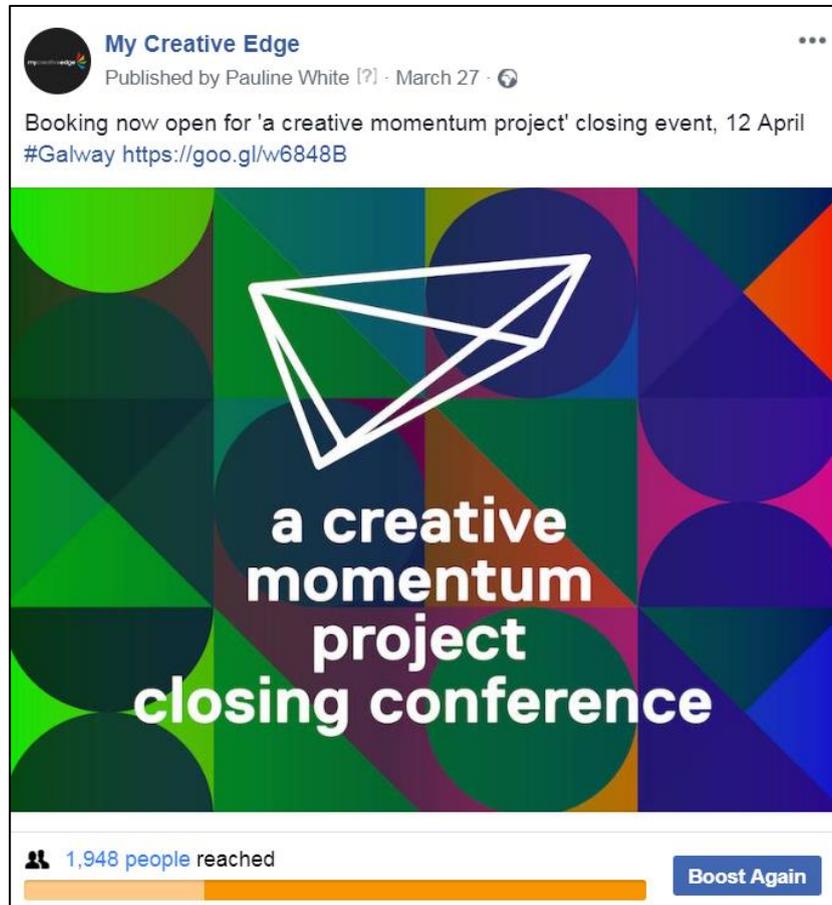
4.3 PROMOTING CREATIVE EXCHANGES

All the Creative Exchanges were public and free. However, it sometimes proved difficult to attract large audiences. For example, for those organised to coincide with a Creative Hotspot they sometimes occurred at the same time as other Festival events, with larger appeal (e.g. music concert). To ensure that such Creative Exchanges are properly attended, it is important to liaise with the organisers of the Creative Hotspot in order to maximise resources and gain exposure e.g. to promote it as an event of the Festival on their website.

If there are plans to promote a Creative Exchange on social media, it is necessary to plan this promotion well in advance, keeping in mind that unpaid promotion will mostly reach people who already have a connection with the project. To reach a wider audience it is necessary to assign additional budget to boost posts/tweets. If doing so, it is important to get appropriate visual material designed as images with too much text perform very poorly and can even be rejected for boosting by Facebook. Clear, striking images with very limited text are required for paid promotion.

Proper training for project staff in effective social media promotion (paid and unpaid) may be required to organise successful social media campaigns. Targeting specific Facebook Groups in the region can also be effective. In non-English speaking regions,

promotional activities proved far more effective if implemented through the local language.



Graphic used in a boosted Facebook post for 'closing conference', 12.04.2018, West of Ireland

It can also be useful to promote Creative Exchanges in and through existing relevant networks, by email and social media. Cross-promotion by other organisations with a wider reach, or by influential individuals in the sector, can be highly effective.

Promoting in the local press (newspaper and radio) is a good way of reaching out to local audiences. This may be a particularly convenient option for some organisations, who can avail of specialist staff dedicated to Communications and PR. Dedicating news stories / media releases about keynote speakers (especially if international or internationally known) can be a way of attracting audiences.



My Creative Edge
Published by Niall Drew [?] · March 24 · 🌐

Don't miss Jo Fairley of Green & Blacks speaking in Newry this Tuesday - Registration essential! <https://mycreativeedge.eu/event/jo-fairley-green-blacks/>

JO FAIRLEY
GREEN & BLACK'S CO-FOUNDER,
SPEAKER AND LEADING ENTREPRENEUR

HEADLINE SPEAKER
JO FAIRLEY

Leaving school at 16 with six 'O' Levels, through hard work and determination Jo Fairley went on to become the UK's youngest-ever magazine editor. At the age of 23 she set out on her entrepreneurial journey in 1991 when she co-founded Green & Black's Chocolate which is now a £100 million a year brand.

30 MINUTE Q&A SESSION WILL FOLLOW THE TALK

DROMANTINE RETREAT & CONFERENCE CENTRE
on Tuesday 27th March, from 8.15am to 12pm

Facebook post advertising 'Creativity & Growth featuring Jo Fairley', 27.03.2018, Northern Ireland

4.4 NETWORKING

Creative Exchanges can be very small events attracting a community of creatives who are already familiar with each other. Within this scenario, networking can be very informal and facilitated by the event format and room set-up. For example, in North East Iceland, the Cultural Soup³ format was used. These are informal lunchtime events hosted in venues providing a soup for lunch *during* the event. ME agreed with the venue that they would not be charged for room rental, the charge was waived based on the fact that attendees would pay for their own soup for lunch.

In November 2016, ME organised a Cultural Soup focusing on crowd funding. As shown below, the room set-up facilitated interaction as attendees did not simply sit beside each other – they also faced each other.

³ <https://mycreativeedge.eu/news-item/good-turnout-cultural-soup-creative-exchange/>





'Cultural Soup: crowd funding' at Hotel KEA, 17.11.2016, North East Iceland

When a Creative Exchange attracts a larger audience however, it may be a good idea to split attendees into different discussion groups, led by specialist facilitators/experts in a particular field. These dynamics can be presented as a selling point in the adverts promoting the Creative Exchange. This approach was used at the 'Tap into the Tourist Potential of your Region' event in Ireland in November 2017, where attendees could choose one of two group discussions depending on their area of interest.

'Liked the variety of speakers and first hand business experiences. Good to have format of presentations, panel discussion and workshops to break up the day and allow for more group interaction.' participant at 'Tap into the Tourist Potential of your Region' 14.11.2017, West of Ireland

Another possible format is to provide an additional option for participants to book a dedicated, one-to-one session with a mentor/expert after the more general presentations of the Creative Exchange. Again, this can be used as a key selling point for the event. This format was used in Finland for the 'Storytelling & Entrepreneurship' Creative Exchange in November 2017.



'How to use video as a way of promoting a creative business to tourists' group discussion, 14.11.2017, West of Ireland

Booking in advance for all Creative Exchanges should be mandatory, as numbers must be confirmed in advance with venues and caterers and for the preparation of name badges, if used. With event management systems such as [Eventbrite](https://www.eventbrite.com/), it is possible for the target audience to not only register for the Creative Exchange but to also express preferences and reserve a place in a specific group discussion, book a one-to-one session with a mentor or specify any dietary requirements. E-mail addresses should be recorded, so that organisers can contact attendees individually if they need to prepare in advance or bring equipment (e.g. laptop). Specific requirements for different group discussions or one-to-one sessions can be sent only to the relevant people.

To facilitate connections, it is important to make sure that each attendee of the Creative Exchange is aware of who is in the same room. Organisers should encourage participants to introduce themselves at the start of the event, if feasible. This can be done informally or in a more structured way. Pecha Kucha⁴ presentations can be a fun and engaging way to do this however, this presentation format can require considerable administrative work (e.g. sending guidelines, checking presentations and formats, uploading presentations ...).

'Might be introduction round of the audience at the start of the event.' participant at 'Beacons & Beyond' 04.11.2016, Northern Finland

⁴ <https://www.pechakucha.org/watch>

5.0 LIVE STREAMING AND VIDEO

At the beginning of 'a creative momentum project' it was agreed that live streaming would be used as often as possible for Creative Exchanges. In practice, for a number of reasons, live streaming was mainly used by the Finnish (see box below) and Northern Irish project partner organisations. Live streaming can be expensive, especially if an external technician must be contracted for the job. As mentioned earlier, videos were used by some other partners to record Creative Exchanges and facilitate transnational knowledge transfer after the event. These videos were uploaded to the project's [YouTube](#) channel and promoted through MyCreativeEdge.eu, Newsletters and social media.

To gain more insight on the issue of live streaming, ACBC interviewed 'a creative momentum project' partner organisations and a number of videographers in Northern Ireland, who provided some of the live streaming services for Northern Ireland events. These are the key points and suggestions that emerged:

1. **Plan ahead!** Like organising a Creative Exchange, live/video streaming takes time and organisation.
2. Live/video streaming is about details. Someone must be nominated as being **responsible for the activity** and, if the live/video streaming involves an external service provider, the same person should be the main point of contact for the service provider. The person with this responsibility should be very familiar with the venue.
3. If an external service provider carries out the live streaming, depending on the platform used, it may be necessary to provide access to **roles**/passwords. For example, with Facebook Live, it is necessary for the service provider to be set up as an 'Admin' of the project Facebook account.
4. A smooth streaming or video element depends on **lighting** and the time that the videographer has to adjust to it. When choosing a venue, ask whether there is enough natural lighting. If natural lighting is an issue, make sure that the videographer can access/install the appropriate sources of artificial lighting.
5. At least **two cameras** are always needed for a professional video or stream.
6. **Investigate the shot** especially if there is the need to include certain details, e.g. banners, logos and so on.

You can never ask too many questions

7. Never make assumptions on **sound**. The videographer will often assume that the client will be taking care of the sound, but will there be a sound technician available? Will there be a mixing desk on site?
8. Taking the audio directly from the mixing desk delivers the best audio results, but only if the speaker speaks into microphones. Establish how speakers intend to move on stage, whether they will be moving away from the microphone.
9. The choice of **microphones** depends on the speakers' habits and the format of the event. A podium with a roving microphone may be suitable for more formal events. Some speakers like to move and wander around the room. Lapel or radio microphones may be suitable in these cases. A sound/media technician can offer very useful support.
10. **Experience** is everything! Working with an external service provider (e.g. technician) who is already familiar with the venue greatly reduces the workload when it comes to ensuring smooth audio/visual elements.

11. The venue should provide specific information on **WiFi**. Will there be a dedicated WiFi line/Ethernet cable that attending delegates cannot all use causing service congestion?
12. Prepare a **detailed schedule** for the live stream. Make sure that this indicates live/non live broadcast times. It should also include a clear brief for the videographer/sound engineer.
13. The industry **format** for a recording or live file is 16:9 aspect ratio. You need to develop a title card or editable holding card that meets these dimensions. Are there cards with relevant messages e.g. *this broadcast will go live shortly*
14. The social media landscape and live streaming services are ever-changing. Having a **flexible budget** helps to deal with this issue.



'Beacons & Beyond' which was live streamed by Lapland UAS, 04.11.2016, Northern Finland

INSIGHT: LIVE STREAMING IN LAPLAND UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES

Lapland UAS's [eLearning Services](#) has experience in live streaming for instance for educational and RDI purposes. eLearning Services offers services for students and teachers for teaching and studying online.

Managing distance is a core strategy in Lapland UAS, given its remote location. The importance of using different online / eTools is crucial, because of long distances. Development of different ICT solutions and methods plays a significant role in improving reachability.

Lapland UAS has used the following live streaming techniques/methods:

1. One or two video camera(s) and camera operator (who takes care of the whole process including sound).
2. [Wirecast](#) programme for sending the live stream.
3. YouTube-live, embedded in a blog created under eLearning Services websites (<https://blogi.eoppimispalvelut.fi/project/>), the blog also has a Chat-service, by [Quick Chat](#) for real-time participation.
4. Promotion of the live-streamed event includes sharing the stream link.
5. Every event streamed online, is also recorded and can be viewed afterwards. The link to the recording is preferably hidden and only shared after the event.
6. *Wirecast* enables editing in real-time, meaning that there is no need for post-production.

Additional comments:

- Given its access to the eLearning Services department, Lapland UAS did not need to contract any external service providers to organise live streaming of Creative Exchanges.
- One camera is sometimes enough as multiple cameras mean additional costs, but on the other hand multiple cameras and angles makes the video more "alive". [Professional](#) camera operators can manage two cameras at once.
- The camera operator takes care of the whole process, sound can sometimes be a problem if no-one takes sufficient care of it.
- Good WiFi is critical.
- When organising an online stream, it is important to take into account the time difference in different countries. For example, for half the year there is a three-hour time difference between Finland and Iceland.



6.0 PARTICIPANT FEEDBACK RESULTS

As the purpose of Creative Exchanges was to provide networking, information and training events which met the real needs of the project target group – creative entrepreneurs – it was important to continually gather feedback from participants of Creative Exchanges to ensure that the events were meeting these needs, and to adjust as necessary.

As part of the 'Supports Assessment' activity of the project, NUI Galway developed feedback forms for the participants / beneficiaries of each of the project's activities. With input from all partners, they developed a feedback form for Creative Exchanges. This feedback form was handed out in hard copy on the day of the event and/or circulated afterwards for attendees to complete online. The [PollDaddy](#) online survey system was used and project partners uploaded all hand-written feedback forms to this system.

While an effort was made to collect feedback from as many of the Creative Exchanges as possible, this was not always possible. Responses were collected from a total of 263 attendees at 19 out of the total 41 Creative Exchanges.

TABLE 2: RESPONSES TO CREATIVE EXCHANGES FEEDBACK SURVEY

Creative Exchange	Country	No. responses
Showcase your Creative Work Effectively 1	Ireland	12
Showcase your Creative Work Effectively 2	Ireland	10
Identify your Expertise	Finland	15
Why Are You Not Selling Online?	Northern Ireland	32
Pecha Kucha – Urkult	Sweden	3
The Practicalities of Selling Online	Northern Ireland	13
Grow your Digital Business	Northern Ireland	18
Beacons & Beyond	Finland	7
Developing Creative Networks	Northern Ireland	16
Cultural Soup: Crowd funding	Iceland	6
So much data. So little time.	Ireland	32
Workshop in application making	Iceland	9
Craft & Design: Marketing and Pricing	Iceland	4
Cultural Soup: Design in local context	Iceland	5
Screen Industries on the Periphery	Ireland	25
Taking a Creative Business Abroad	Northern Ireland	5
Grow your Creative Business through Video	Northern Ireland	11
Tap into the Tourist Potential of your Region	Ireland	26
Closing Conference	Ireland	14
Total		263

6.1 RESPONDENT PROFILE

The majority of respondents were female (59.6%) with 36.9% male respondents and 4.1% who did not state their gender. In terms of age structure the vast majority were aged 25-44 years (42.6%) or 45-64 years (41.1%). Approximately 6% were in both the younger (under 24 years) and older (65-74 years) age categories.

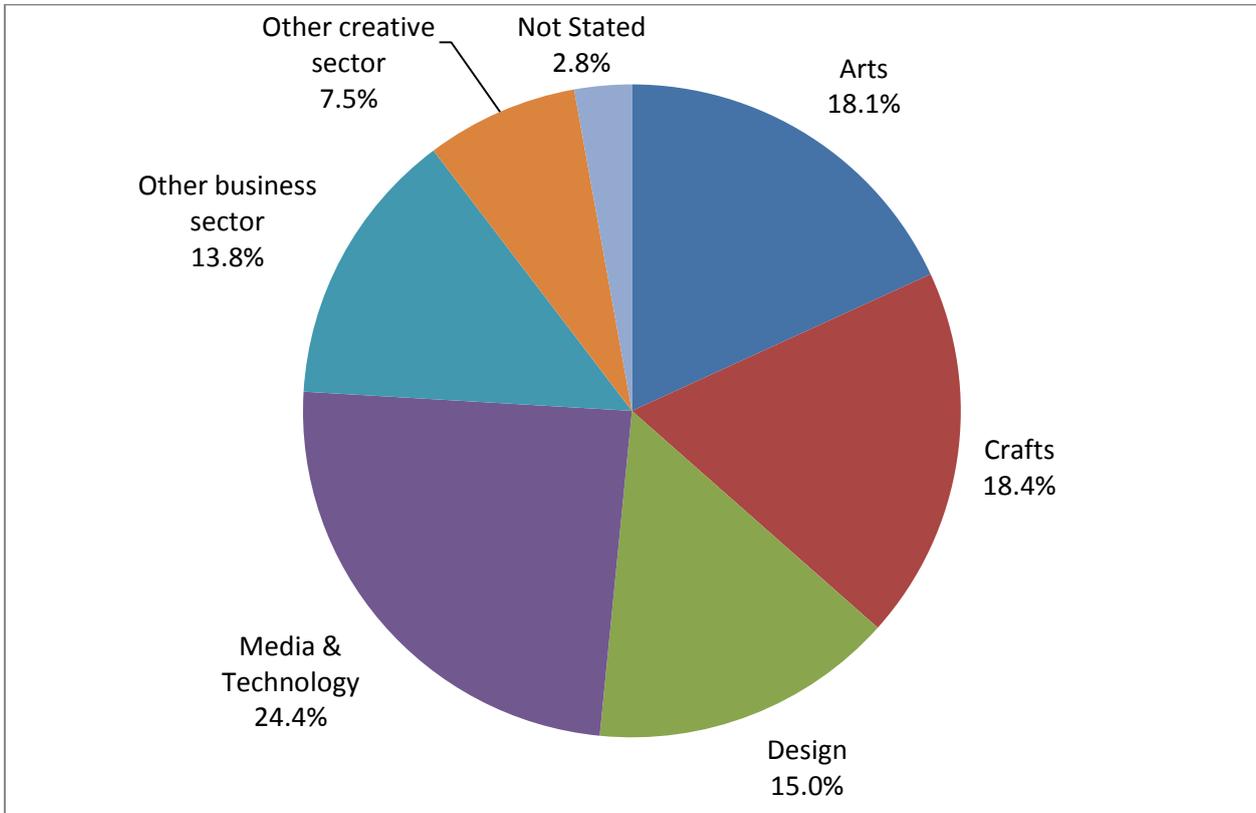
Of the 214 respondents who answered the question 'If you are an entrepreneur/work for a creative enterprise, please indicate which category is most relevant to you/your organisation', sole trader (41.1%) was the most common response. Freelancer (26.2%) and micro-enterprise (25.2%) were the next largest categories with only 7.5% of people working in a company which employed 10 or more people. Among respondents who did not fit into these enterprise categories, a number indicated that they worked for municipalities, local development groups, community groups, education institutions or were students.

'Please run events for established businesses, as opposed to beginners all the time and let people know it is for growing your business.' participant at 'Showcase your Creative Work Effectively 2' 26.04.2016, West of Ireland

When asked which sector they worked in, there were 319 responses from the 263 respondents as many selected more than one of the options provided. The most common response was Media & Technology (24.4%), followed by Crafts (18.4%) and Arts (18.1%) (Fig. 2). 15% responded that they worked in Design, with 13.8% saying they worked in 'other business sector' and 7.5% in 'other creative sector'.

Some examples of other sectors that people indicated they worked in included tourism, heritage, festivals, research, education, social enterprise, community and voluntary sector, consultancy, communications, enterprise development, marketing, health and wellbeing, food and upcycling. Therefore it is clear that these events not only provided an opportunity for networking and knowledge transfer among those working in the creative sector, but also between the creative sector and the wider business economy and society.

FIG. 2: SURVEY RESPONSES BY SECTOR

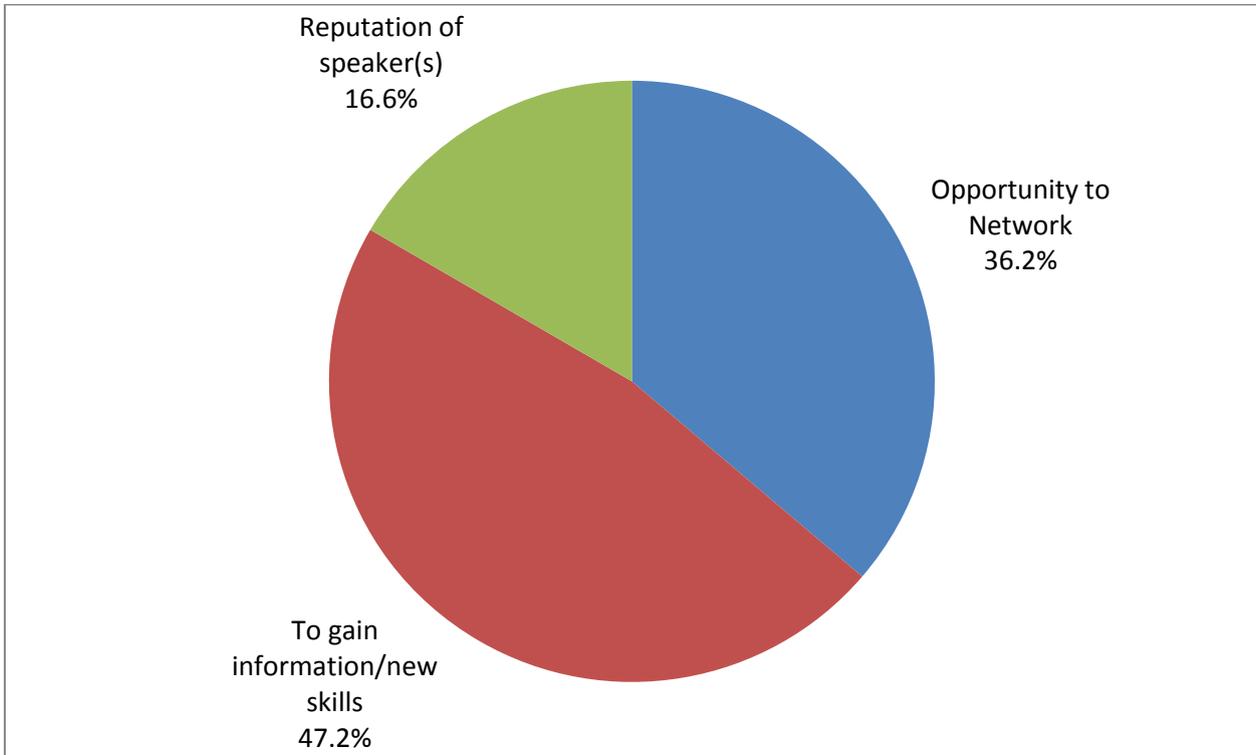


When asked if they had previously attended another event organised by 'a creative momentum project' almost three in four (73.3%) said they had not. This shows that the Creative Exchanges were useful in reaching a wide audience and engaging with new beneficiaries from the target group.

6.2 MOTIVATION TO ATTEND

The question 'What attracted you to attend the event?' offered three options, with the possibility to select more than one. Less than half (108) of respondents only selected one option, showing that most were driven by multiple motivations. In total there were 458 responses to this question. The desire to 'gain information/ new skills' was the main motivating factor, followed by the 'opportunity to network' (Fig. 3). The 'reputation of the speaker(s)' was the least important consideration.

FIG. 3: SURVEY RESPONSES ON MOTIVATION TO ATTEND

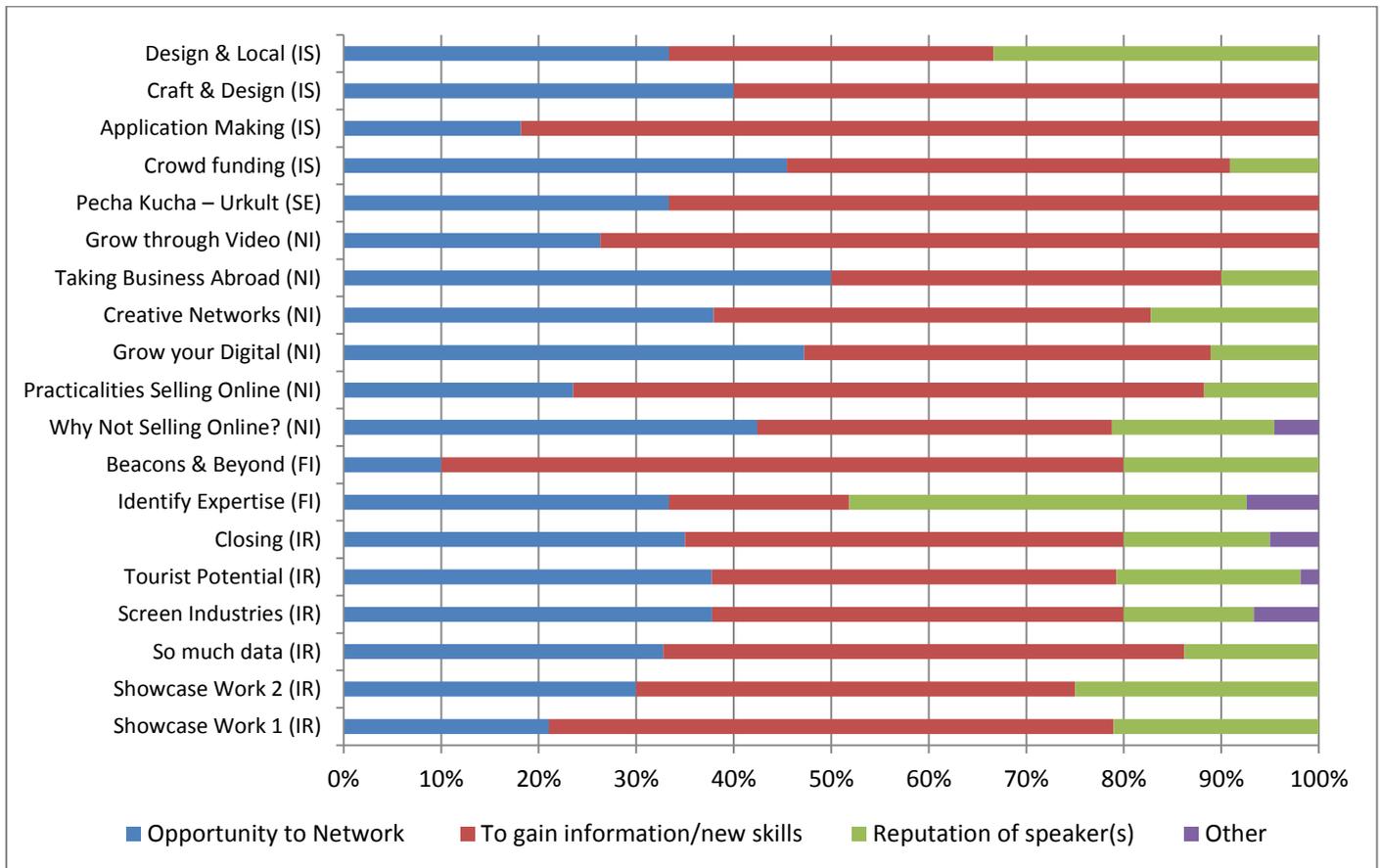


'Excellent learning event, despite the fact that I have been in business over 40 years I am still as enthusiastic as ever and need to be more proficient in the fast moving changes in marketing on line, learnt a lot today in the area' participant at 'Why are you not selling online?' 18.05.2016, Northern Ireland

Of course, given the huge diversity of the Creative Exchanges in terms of topic, speakers and format, it is useful to examine the motivation to attend for the 19 individual Creative Exchanges where feedback was collected (Fig. 4).

Gaining information/new skills was the main motivating factor for 13 out of the 19 Creative Exchanges, and it was the joint most popular with opportunity to network for a further two. Gaining new information accounted for over 50% of responses for eight of the Creative Exchanges. For events where this was not the most popular motivation, the opportunity to network was the largest and in only one case (Identify your Expertise in Finland) was the reputation of the speaker the main motivation to attend.

FIG. 4: SURVEY RESPONSES ON MOTIVATION TO ATTEND BY INDIVIDUAL CREATIVE EXCHANGE



The opportunity to network appeared particularly important in **Northern Ireland** where it was the most important factor for three out of the six Exchanges. This is a useful finding as it shows there may be limited other networking opportunities for the sector in the region. For two of the Northern Ireland events which had a very practical, technical focus (Practicalities of Selling Online and Growing your Business through Video) gaining new information/skills was dominant.

'Would love some video techniques for older people where we could leave after a couple of days with a wee one minute video that looks and sounds professional' participant in 'Grow our Creative Business Through Video' 06.11.2017, Northern Ireland

In **Iceland**, the reputation of the speakers was not a major factor except for the 'Design and local material' event, with most people looking for new information particularly at events focused on practical advice on making applications and pricing and marketing. As this is a relatively small region, there may be a closer-knit creative community so other opportunities for networking may be more common. It is interesting that the Cultural Soup format (for the Creative Exchange on crowd funding) discussed in

Section 4 was where networking was most important.

In **Finland**, the reputation of the speakers was an important factor for both events while, unsurprisingly, gaining new skills was very important for Beacons & Beyond which was a technical event focused on the relatively new and fast evolving area of the Internet of Things. For those who gave the reason 'other' for Identify your Expertise, this related to the fact that it formed a part of the curriculum for some students.

'Hyrynen was an interesting speaker to hear, as I am possibly going to engage in starting a company myself' participant at 'Identify Your Expertise' 09.05.2016, Northern Finland

In **Ireland**, gaining new information and skills was the most important factor for all six Creative Exchanges though this was relatively close to the opportunity to network in several cases. Again the Exchanges with a technical focus (So much data. So little time. and Showcase your Work Effectively) had high shares looking for new information. The reputation of the speakers was relatively important for Showcasing your Creative Work, as well as the event on tourism. The opportunity to network was also important for this event, as it was for Screen Industries on the Periphery which coincided with the Galway Film Fleadh 'Creative Hotspot' and therefore featured international speakers from all of the other partner regions.

'Really worthwhile, enjoyable + informative event. Particularly impressed by Joanne Casey - so practical + thorough.' participant at 'So much data. So little time.' 29.11.16, West of Ireland

Unfortunately feedback was only collected from one Creative Exchange in **Sweden**, the Pecha Kucha at the Urkult Festival. Gaining new information was the main motivation.

6.3 ORGANISATION AND CONTENT

Respondents were asked to rate a number of different aspects of the Creative Exchange's organisation and content. There were five options ranging from excellent to very poor (Fig. 5).

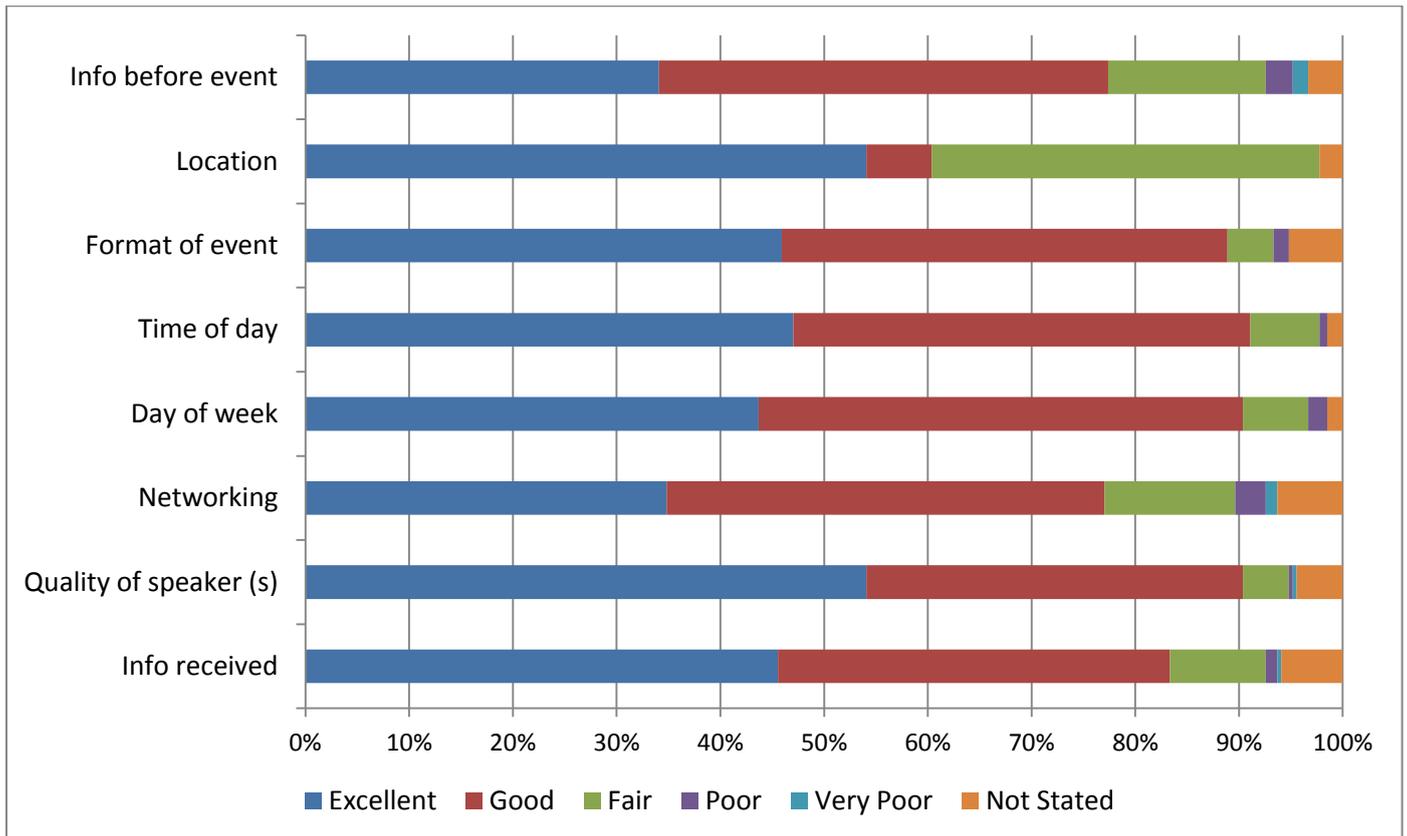
In terms of the **timing of the events**, both 'time of day' and 'day of week' were rated very highly with over 90% of respondents answering Excellent or Good. As often as possible, project partners tried to respond to the survey results (Section 3) which indicated that mornings and during a week day was the preferred timing for events. However, also in response to the survey, a number of events were organised for the evenings (directly after work) and lunchtime.

While timing of the Creative Exchanges did score well, it is necessary to bear in mind that this feedback was provided by people who attended the events. People for whom the timing did not suit were obviously less likely to attend. Therefore it is important to continue to test different options for the timing of such events to ensure as wide an audience as possible. At the same time, the working hours of project staff, the degree of flexibility permitted to staff by different organisations as well as their personal

commitments also need to be taken into account in the timing of events.

'Any events around Christmas are very bad timing for creatives.... Tough time of the year for craft' participant at 'So much data. So little time.' 29.11.2016, West of Ireland

FIG. 5: SURVEY RESPONSES ON ORGANISATION AND CONTENT OF CREATIVE EXCHANGES



In terms of the format and the content of the Creative Exchanges, these also received strong positive feedback. Over 90% of respondents rated the **quality of the speakers** as Excellent or Good, with over half rating speakers as Excellent. Some of the open ended comments indicate that participants may have had varying views on different speakers on the programme.

A slightly lower share (83.3%) rated the **information they received at the event** as Excellent or Good. Just over 9% rated the information they received at the events as Fair, which may point to some room for improvement in the way information is delivered or disseminated. There were also high levels of satisfaction with the **format of the events** with 88.9% rating it as Excellent or Good. These are quite heartening results as considerable effort was made by all project partners to take account of the survey results on the preferences of the target group in terms of topics/training needs and event format.

'Very nice with short presentations. Nice to mix personal stories from small companies with public organisations.'
participant at 'Screen Industries on the Periphery: Policy and Practice' 12.07.2017, West of Ireland

'Q&A interesting and engaging with real life examples enjoyed most' participant at 'Grow Your Creative Business Through Video' 06.11.2017, Northern Ireland

'Maybe take a project and break it down from start to finish as to how it was made from funding to pre-production, post, distribution and spend an hour within this... I'd like to see one of these workshops specifically for online opportunity.'
participant at 'Screen Industries on the Periphery: Policy and Practice' 12.07.2017, West of Ireland

The three aspects of the Creative Exchanges with the poorest feedback were location, information before the event and networking. With regard to **location**, while over 50% rated it as Excellent, 37.4% rated it Fair (no one rated it Poor or Very Poor). Obviously 'Location' can be interpreted in a number of ways and people's concerns may have related to either the location of the event (town, area etc) or the actual venue/room. From some of the open ended comments it seems that there were some issues with both.

'Sound was poor, especially when speakers faced screen. People asking questions should have been given a mic so we'd know question. Screen small - hard to read.' participant at 'So much data. So little time.' 29.11.16, West of Ireland

'I would like an event further east, e.g. in Kópasker, Svalbarð, Þórshöfn' participant at 'Craft & Design: Marketing & Pricing' 18.03.2017, North East Iceland

'Struggled to hear properly, great tips and info' participant at 'Grow Your Creative Business Through Video' 06.11.2017, Northern Ireland

'Lovely food and setup. Good change' participant at 'Closing Conference' 12.04.18, West of Ireland

When working across large geographic areas, sometimes quite remote and sparsely populated, finding a location convenient to the majority of people can be a challenge. Where possible, if a particular event can be held more than once in different areas of the region this can widen accessibility, though the added costs and organisation involved in this also have to be considered. Live streaming can help somewhat (Section 5), however this only addresses the information/training element of the Creative Exchanges and not the networking aspect. The choice of location can also be constrained by availability of suitable venues.

While 77.4% of respondents felt that the **information provided in advance** of the Creative Exchange was Excellent or Good, 19.3% rated it Fair, Poor or Very Poor. This may point to the need for greater consideration of how much advance information is provided and how it is communicated. While it is important to provide sufficient information in advance for people to decide

whether the event is worthwhile and what to expect from it, it is also important not to overload people with information they are very unlikely to read. Balancing these two objectives is important and difficult. Sometimes timing can be a challenge in providing information, if some of the details of the event and speakers are not finalised until relatively close to the day.

'Maybe better advertising for events, I found this by accident by clicking on twitter, maybe on ABC council FB page, great informative event, thank you' participant at 'Why are you not selling online?' 18.05.2016, Northern Ireland

'Plenty of signs were at display at the festival-area, which was great since I didn't get what it was in the program' participant at 'Pecha Kucha-Urkult' 05.08.2016, Mid-Sweden

Networking, which is examined in detail in section 6.4, was the other area with less positive feedback. Again, the vast majority of respondents (77%) rated this as Excellent or Good, but 16.7% rated it more poorly. This aspect, together with information before the event, had the lowest share of Excellent responses (34.8%). Again some of the open ended comments provide insight on the reasons for the poorer feedback. Insufficient time allocated to networking was raised, as well as suggestions for all attendees to introduce themselves at the start of the event, which may be more feasible at smaller events or in situations where a larger event is broken into smaller groups.

'Excellent so far, more structure to networking or one to one - business speed dating or workshops worth attending' participant at 'Grow Your Digital Business' 28.09.2016, Northern Ireland

'Time was too limited for each speaker. Maybe it's better to have less people talk to make more room for more networking.' participant at 'Cultural Soup: Crowd funding' 17.11.2016, North East Iceland

'Encourage people to exchange info contact details etc...' participant at 'Tap into the Tourist Potential of your Region' 14.11.2017, West of Ireland

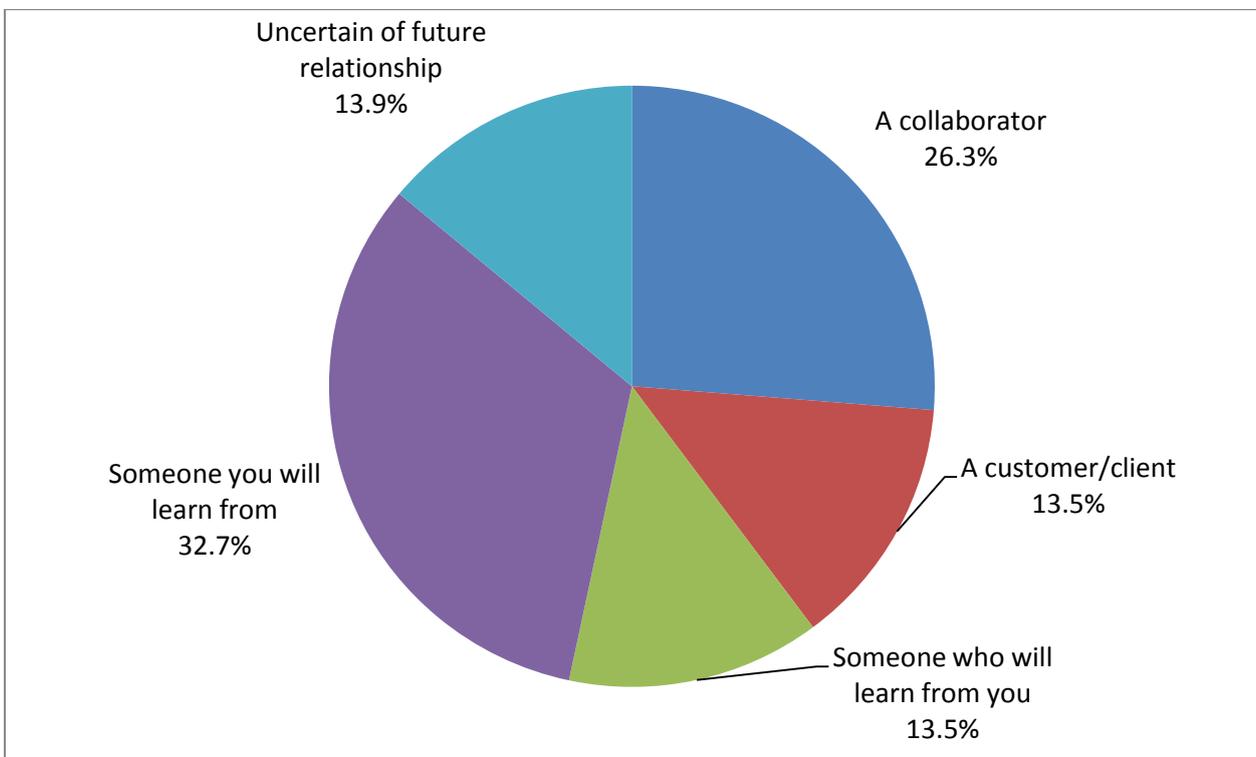
Overall, it seems that greater focus could have been given to facilitating active networking during the Creative Exchanges, though of course the extent to which networking was an integral element of a particular Creative Exchange differed across the 41 events. The next section considers networking in more detail.

6.4 NETWORKING

As networking was one of the key objectives of the Creative Exchanges, the feedback form included a specific question on the extent and nature of the networking which took place. Respondents were asked 'If you engaged in networking at this event, do you think these connections could be...' and were asked to select among a number of options, selecting as many as they felt were relevant. Of all respondents, 89% answered this question indicating they had engaged in some form of networking during the event. The high share engaging in networking is positive.

There were a total of 495 responses to this question, with the majority of people selecting more than one option perhaps indicating they had engaged in networking with a number of different people at the event. The most common response (32.7%) was 'someone you will learn from' followed by 'a collaborator' (26.3%). That over a quarter of respondents indicated they had networked with 'a collaborator' is encouraging given the profile of respondents as mainly freelancers and sole traders. For them, collaboration is an important route to business survival and growth. The fact that both of the top answers mainly relate to networking within the creative sector, shows that the objective of stimulating networking within the creative sector of the regions was fulfilled.

FIG. 6: SURVEY RESPONSES ON NATURE OF NETWORKING ENGAGED IN



The two options 'a customer/client' and 'someone who will learn from you' both received 13.5% of responses. The first of these could relate to both networking within the broader creative sector but also connecting with clients from outside of the sector. Finally 13.9% of responses indicated they were uncertain of the nature of any future relationship.

Some additional comments were made in response to the networking question which included engaging with local people about a creative project, tapping into a supportive network, finding out about possible access to support for themselves or community groups and an idea to progress for a film.

'Through networking today I ended up getting a selling pitch at a market I had been trying to get into for months. Also helped someone set up an Instagram account over lunch' participant at 'So much data. So little time' 29.11.16, West of Ireland

'More time networking, precise directive when networking, feel I missed out on not speaking with some people' participant at 'Developing Creative Networks' 16.11.2016, Northern Ireland



'Developing Creative Networks' at Banbridge Enterprise Centre, 16.11.2016, Northern Ireland

7.0 CREATIVE EXCHANGES: BEST PRACTICE MODEL

The organisation of these 41 Creative Exchanges has inspired the following best practice model for the organisation and delivery of information and networking events for the creative industries sector in the context of an EU-funded transnational project.

Stakeholders: It is good practice to engage with all stakeholders as early as possible. This facilitates detailed planning, proper programme development and promotion. It is good to have extra time at your disposal should organisational issues arise (e.g. cancellations, inability to contract external expert, and so on).

Some of the stakeholders who participated in the Creative Exchanges were:

- Venue managers
- Photographers
- Videographers/Live streaming technologists
- Creative entrepreneurs (audience)
- Speakers
- Public relations firms
- Media
- Politicians (if representation is required)
- Associate partners, funders and/or supporters
- Colleagues including remote 'a creative momentum project' team and people who will help on the day

Focus: It is important to identify the *right* topic for the *right* speakers. Speakers should be profiled and, if they are suitable for a given Creative Exchange, they should be briefed thoroughly so that the focus of the event is respected. When contacting speakers, it is useful to include a short event outline illustrating the scope and target audience of the event.

Marketing: A marketing plan should be in place. This should include all actions that need to be performed before, during and after the event.

If the plan includes press/media releases, make sure that quality images are taken at the Creative Exchange. The media often appreciates 'fun' shots, where subjects interact with each other. Pictures must be attention grabbing.

- In order to promote a Creative Exchange and use the marketing budget effectively, it is important to realise the limits and strengths of different marketing channels. It is important to pay attention to the target audience(s).
- If a target audience does not really read local newspapers, adverts in the local papers will not be effective. Alternatives such as social media or radio ads may be appropriate, albeit expensive.
- Social media promotion can be very effective, especially if 'influencers' (e.g. people with many social media followers

and/or a respected public body) get involved.

- 'Likes' on Facebook do not necessarily translate into a large attending audience. Promotional activities should stop only after the event has taken place. If possible, organisers should engage with the people who 'liked' or engaged with the adverts. Paid ads, tailored content and re-marketing may be useful, if resources are available.
- Email marketing is a very effective way to generate trust with an audience.

Plan, plan, plan: Organising and delivering a successful Creative Exchange requires time and an eye for detail. Prepare briefs for everyone involved in the organisation of the event – everyone must be aware of roles and schedules.

Venue: Choosing the right venue can be difficult (see Section 3). Visiting the venue *before* the event allows the organisers of a Creative Exchange to 'imagine' the event and ask relevant questions (see Sections 3 and 5). Some of the issues that need addressing are:

- WiFi options
- Screen and technical equipment available
- Technician and staff available on the day
- Distance from screen to projector and from screen to attendees
- Catering (where?)
- Registration desk (where?)
- Parking facilities
- Lighting

Equipment: It is important to make sure that the technical equipment available at a venue is suitable to the Creative Exchange in question. External expertise may be required. External experts may not want to use the equipment provided by a venue, as they cannot take full responsibility for it. Hiring technical equipment and a technician can be the most expensive element of a Creative Exchange. Investigating options and asking for a detailed cost breakdown are good practice.

If a Creative Exchange includes live/video streaming and/or photography and camera work, one member of staff should focus exclusively on these activities, even if they are implemented by contracted experts.

Feedback: Good feedback helps the organisation of future Creative Exchanges. It is good to prepare feedback forms in advance. These forms can be distributed at the start of the event - perhaps they can be included in a 'welcome pack'. These forms should be completed on the day - attendees are more likely to leave constructive feedback on the day than through an online survey later. Attendees are more likely to fill in form and perform other similar tasks if a reward is offered (e.g. free voucher, usb key).

Feedback can be collected through an online survey. If this is the case, it is important to send the follow-up email immediately after the Exchange. The email should include the link to the survey, as well as a link to any presentations or material from the



event.

The feedback survey should question different aspects of the Creative Exchange including promotion, suitability of venue, quality of the programme and information provided, hosting, and networking opportunities.

Meet expectations: Attendees should be provided with what they expect. If pre-event research demonstrates that attendees are mainly focused on networking, networking opportunities should be a key component of the event.

Networking: Never assume that networking will happen naturally, perhaps during the coffee breaks. Dividing the audience into discussion groups facilitates networking and specific knowledge transfer.

The organisation of networking activities can be complex from an administrative point of view. It may be necessary to identify and involve a facilitator, e.g. someone who can lead the discussions and keep them on point. Professional facilitators may also organise group activities that allow creative professionals to connect with each other.

Allowing creatives to briefly present what they do may work as an effective icebreaker. Pecha Kucha presentations can be a fun format to facilitate this activity.

Variety: Organising a busy and varied event is generally well received by the audience. Some people like to attend frontal lectures; others may prefer more interaction and hands-on learning. A mix of formats can be used during the same event.

Changing room to have food or having a break-out session encourages people to stay engaged with the Creative Exchange. It is also a way of creating networking opportunities.



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