



a creative
momentum
project

ACCESSING TRADE FAIRS:

MODEL FOR PERIPHERAL CREATIVE ENTERPRISES TO ACCESS
INTERNATIONAL TRADE EVENTS

JULY 2018

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SUMMARY & LESSONS LEARNED

A strategic aim of 'a creative momentum project' was to increase internationalisation among creative SMEs and micro-enterprises based in peripheral and remote locations to compensate for lack of critical mass and small local markets. While online and virtual routes to market are very important, a physical presence at a Trade event in the target market is the most effective route to export markets for many creative sub-sectors (e.g. craft, film) and in particular for sourcing distributors. However the cost of exhibiting at such Trade events can be prohibitively high for some creative enterprises, especially those located in remote and sparsely populated areas across Europe's Northern Periphery.

The 'Model for Accessing International Trade Events (Fairs/Shows/Festivals)' was an activity implemented under 'a creative momentum project'. It involved developing a Model for a new business support solution to facilitate creative sector enterprises located in remote and sparsely populated areas to access new export markets through exhibiting their work at an overseas Trade Fair, Trade Show or Festival. The project also tested this Model by selecting and supporting a number of pilot creative enterprises to exhibit at a Trade Fair/Show/Festival in Europe during 2016, 2017 and early 2018.

A draft Model was developed in Q3 2015 and a first call for applications from pilot enterprises to test the Model was launched at the official project launch in October 2015. Selected pilot enterprises would receive support of 50% of eligible costs (to a maximum of €2,500) to exhibit at a Trade Fair/Show/Festival in Europe. Applicants had to specify which Trade event they wanted to exhibit at and justify why it was suitable for their business. A total of 34 applications were received in the first round and ultimately six pilot enterprises exhibited at Trade events in 2016.

The draft Model was adapted, based on feedback and evaluation of the first round of pilot enterprises, and a second call for applications opened in early 2017 for Trade events in 2017/early 2018. 31 applications were received and 16 pilot enterprises participated in Trade events.

Based on the experience of project partner organisations in developing and testing this Model, the following lessons were learned:

LESSONS FOR ADMINISTRATION OF THE MODEL

1. A requirement from the project funders that project partner organisations needed to pay service providers (e.g. Trade Fair organisers, hotel, etc) directly in advance, rather than refund the pilot enterprises the costs upon production of receipts, created very considerable administrative challenges.
2. If implementing this Model again (under a different funding source), payment should be based on refunding the pilot enterprises for 50% of their costs (to maximum €2,500) based on production of receipts. This procedure would address many of the administrative challenges, meet internal financial procedures and present a far smaller administrative burden.
3. Selection of the pilot enterprises needs to begin very early and bookings/arrangements made as soon as possible to get value for money for accommodation, transport and also a good Stand placement at the Show. Also if a selected pilot enterprise

does not proceed to take up the opportunity, partner organisations can consider offering support to the next highest scoring applicant (if they exceeded the minimum threshold).

4. The application form should be more specific and force applicants to illustrate more detail on the research they have done on the suitability of the Fair for their business.
5. The funding was complex (50% of eligible costs to a maximum of €2,500) and caused some confusion. It would be better to have simpler funding e.g. support of €2,500.
6. It is important to follow-up on the longer term benefit of participation in the Trade event with the enterprises e.g. a year later, but it can be difficult to get this information. Need to develop a better way to capture the longer term benefits for the pilot enterprises.

LESSONS FOR FACILITATING CREATIVE ENTERPRISES TO ACCESS TRADE EVENTS

1. This Model was particularly useful for quite early stage companies. Some reported that their selection to be supported by an EU co-funded project gave them confidence and enhanced profile. They found this was a positive marketing message for clients in advance of, and during, the Show.
2. Some enterprises suggested a collective insurance deal/preferential rates for members of MyCreativeEdge.eu as a useful support.
3. Advance research really pays off. Enterprises that put in a lot of research and advance planning for the Trade Show reaped the benefits.
4. Future iterations of the Model could incorporate some mentoring for the enterprises on making the most of the Trade Show, including a capacity building element together with the financial support.
5. It is important to maintain ongoing contact between the partner organisation and the enterprises to learn of the longer term impact/results of their participation. Build up a positive mutual relationship.

ADVICE AND TIPS FOR PARTICIPATING IN A TRADE SHOW

The pilot enterprises provided some tips and advice for other creatives planning to participate in an international Trade event.

BEFORE THE SHOW

- Engage with Trade Fair organisers as early as possible in order to try to secure a good position at the Show.
- As exhibiting at some Shows is 'invite only', it is important to ensure that your work is 'out there' to be discovered by curators.
- Find your market. Find the right Show to fit your product/service.
- Accommodation can be a challenge and very expensive, especially if it is a very large event and/or high season. It is important to book accommodation as early as possible, and to consider alternative options.
- It is critical to consider and plan very carefully in advance how to display your products and which products to display. Show your best sellers and edit what you display. Bring to the Show what is suited to that particular Show. This may involve considering a new range of products. It is also important to bring a range of work in different price ranges.
- For Trade events for services which do not have 'stands', research how other companies make their presence felt e.g. at some

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events a company will rent a house or hotel suite as a 'base' to meet clients.

- At such events (with no stands), it is important to research speakers, themes and attendance at the event in advance. Some events have specific formats (e.g. an app) to facilitate networking and business connections and it is important to capitalise on these.
- It is important to clarify insurance cover and organise appropriate cover. Some Fair organisers provide an insurance option, others require exhibitors to take out their own Public Liability insurance. Investigate options for insurance cover that may be supported by public agencies.
- Pre-show marketing is key. It is a good idea to send invitations to previous and potential clients inviting them to your stand (if relevant), offering special discounts for orders placed during the Show and perhaps attaching some samples if possible. Reaching out to new and existing buyers you want to meet, arranging meetings etc.
- When promoting your presence at the Show in advance, through your social media and website, it is critical to include your Stand number as the Shows/Fairs can be very large and it can be difficult to find an individual business without the Stand Number. Remember to update your website with details of the Show.
- It is important to develop high quality marketing material to bring to the Show. Engage a professional photographer and graphic designer. Visually appealing, professional marketing material that provides information on your work and (if relevant) some insight to your inspiration is important to build brand identity and provide contact details.

DURING THE SHOW

- Depending on your product/service, it can be a good idea to give away a little goodie bag with a few samples or some other type of branded promotional gift.
- New clients may not make a commitment at the Show. They may need more time to go through your details and offers and get back to you later. It is important to follow up very soon after the Show with any potential clients.
- Networking is very important. Also walking the Show and gathering ideas from the way in which other exhibitors display their Stands. It is an opportunity to see first-hand the variety of work being promoted and sold as well as to pick up some inside knowledge which can be incorporated in your own practice.
- If you are at an early stage in business, a Trade Show can give you direct access to other, more experienced entrepreneurs/makers who are often happy to share their experience. It can be a good opportunity to gauge how your work compares with others in your field and to get feedback from attendees as well as other exhibitors.
- Using social media throughout the Show is useful to promote your presence and connect with others at the Show.
- Having some type of activity or demonstration at your Stand can attract people.
- If there are talks/seminars during the Trade Show, these can be a good chance to network and meet collaborators/competitors, also to get an idea of emerging trends in the sector e.g. Virtual Reality.
- If at all possible get someone to help/ work with you at the Show. Trade Fairs are very intensive events and it is advisable to have at least two people at your Stand. One option is to hire somebody local to that area.
- Take the opportunity to do some more market research on that city/country while you are there, if possible.



AFTER THE SHOW

- It is recommended to send a follow up e-mail to every visitor to your Stand (whose contact details you get) on the same day as they visited your Stand. This can simply be a thank you for visiting your Stand, but is a chance to get your contact details to them. A few weeks later, follow up with more detail and information.
- Important to follow/connect with them on social media immediately during the event and continue the connection (liking, sharing, commenting).
- Invest in relationships you start to develop at a Show, as they often take time to grow and develop and do not always happen after just one meeting. It may be necessary to travel again to meet in person with potential new clients.



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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This report outlines the experience of 'a creative momentum project' in developing and implementing the 'Model for Accessing International Trade Events' activity during 2015-2018. It has been written by Pauline White, Project Co-ordinator, Western Development Commission. Significant inputs were provided by Niall Drew, Project Co-ordinator, Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon Borough Council, Saila Puukko, Project Manager, Lapland University of Applied Sciences and Silvia Guglielmini, Project Administrator, Western Development Commission.

We would like to thank all the creative enterprises who participated in the development and testing of this Model, their input and feedback has been very valuable in preparing this final report.



1.0 INTRODUCTION

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

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

- develop their creative and business skills and innovate new product/service ideas by providing mentoring, new online knowledge resources and supporting collaborative product, service and organisational innovation;
- connect with other creatives to develop new opportunities locally, regionally and transnationally by supporting shared spaces, events and gatherings; and
- get their products and services to market by supporting them to attend Trade Fairs and showcase their work online and to the tourist market.

'a creative momentum project' conducted research on the processes operating in the sector to improve understanding of the sector's needs and make the case for public policy to support the sector. Further information on the project can be found at [MyCreativeEdge.eu](#).

The project was implemented by six partner organisations:

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

It was implemented in the following regions:

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

Discovery Publications Attends an International Trade Fair

by Northern Ireland (published on MyCreativeEdge.eu on 13 June 2017)

Declan Carville is the owner of "Discovery Publications" a company he set up in 1990 to facilitate his passion for storytelling, his keen interest in illustration and to provide engaging meaningful content for educational means. One of Declan's biggest products has been his range of "Nelly Fandango" books. Written and illustrated in Northern Ireland these books have been a huge success for Discovery Publications and Declan is keen to open them up to larger audiences.

Declan Carville, owner of "Discovery Publications", shows the list of exhibitors that attended the Bologna Children's Book Trade Fair, as well as the lay out demonstrating the huge scale of the event itself



In an effort to do just this Declan successfully applied for support through 'a creative momentum project'. As a successful applicant to the "Assistance to International Trade Fair" activity, Declan was able to receive support covering half the costs of several expenses relating to attending an international trade fair.

Declan attended the Children's Book Fair in Bologna, Italy at the beginning of April 2017. The trade fair boasts over 26,000 visitors along with over 800 journalists. It plays host to 160 conferences and workshops and has on site over 1,200 exhibitors from over 100 countries from all over the world. The event attracts businesses relating to all areas of publishing such as illustrators, graphic designers, literary agents, publishers, authors, translators, app developers and teachers.

As a direct result of some well organised preparation for the trade fair, Declan was able to make the most of his time in Bologna. He made contact with several international publishing companies that would be in attendance and followed this up, as much as time would allow, while at the trade fair, "you can't overestimate the value of one to one meetings, it's all very well emailing and talking on the phone but it's in person where the real selling and exchange of ideas can take place at a faster and more productive rate."

Declan has come away from Italy with over 50 contacts to follow up on and, as a direct result of attending the trade fair through 'a creative momentum project' support he is in frequent contact with representatives of an American publishing company who are very excited about some of Declan's products and how they hold potential to address their mantra of providing intentional and purposeful teaching and a joyful experience.

"This trade fair has proved to be the perfect one for my business, it's potential to meet members of the industry is unequalled anywhere in the world and I would not have had the opportunity to attend without the support of 'a creative momentum project'" says Declan.

2.0 DEVELOPING A ‘MODEL FOR ACCESSING INTERNATIONAL TRADE EVENTS’

2.1 WHAT IS THE MODEL FOR ACCESSING INTERNATIONAL TRADE EVENTS?

The Model for Accessing International Trade Fairs (Shows/Festivals) was an activity implemented under ‘a creative momentum project’. It was planned that this activity would:

1. **Develop a Model** (guidelines) for a new business support solution to facilitate creative sector enterprises located in remote and sparsely populated areas to access new export markets by exhibiting their work at an overseas Trade Fair, Trade Show or Festival.
2. **Test the Model by supporting 18 pilot creative sector enterprises** from three ‘a creative momentum project’ partner regions (Northern Finland, Northern Ireland and West of Ireland) to exhibit at a Trade Fair/Show/Festival in Europe during 2016, 2017 and early 2018. The pilot enterprises would receive 50% funding (up to a maximum of €2,500 each). The enterprises would be selected through transparent, competitive calls for applications.
3. Refine a **final replicable Model** of the business support solution, based on the experience of the pilot enterprises, that would be widely disseminated to organisations interested in supporting the development of the creative and cultural sector across the NPA area and wider EU.

2.2 WHY WAS IT IMPLEMENTED?

A strategic aim of ‘a creative momentum project’ and the NPA Programme is to increase internationalisation among SMEs and micro-enterprises based in peripheral and remote locations to compensate for lack of critical mass and small local markets.

While online and virtual routes to market are very important, a physical presence at a Trade event in the target market is the most effective route to export markets for many creative sub-sectors (e.g. craft, film) and in particular for sourcing distributors.

However the cost of exhibiting at such Trade events can be prohibitively high for some creative enterprises, especially those based in remote and sparsely populated areas across Europe’s Northern Periphery.

This activity would develop a replicable Model to facilitate creative enterprises – that have the capacity to supply export markets and a high degree of export readiness, but who face constraints due to their peripheral location – to exhibit their products or services at an international Trade event. Therefore it would contribute to achieving the objective of ‘a creative momentum project’ to increase market reach and realise market potential.

The business support solution developed under this activity would be widely disseminated to transfer knowledge across the NPA and wider EU. The activity would be of benefit to the pilot enterprises and also the wider creative economy of their home regions because of the contacts made in the target market and the networking and learning opportunities arising from entering a new export market.

2.3 WHO IMPLEMENTED IT?

The business support solution of the Model was developed jointly by all six project partners. Three partners (Western

Development Commission, Lapland University of Applied Sciences and Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council on behalf of SEED) each funded a number of pilot creative enterprises from their regions to exhibit at Trade events in 2016, 2017 and early 2018 in order to test and demonstrate the Model.

2.4 WHO WERE THE TARGET BENEFICIARIES?

Established, export-ready, creative sector enterprises who could demonstrate their supply capacity. The Model provided a support solution for more developed creative enterprises that face barriers in taking their next step into international markets due to their peripheral location.

Pilot enterprises applying for support had to demonstrate that they had the required capacity to supply export markets and were ready to take full advantage of exhibiting at the Trade event.

2.5 HOW WAS THE MODEL DEVELOPED?

Draft guidelines for implementing the Model were developed by the WDC, in collaboration with all project partners, during Q3 2015. These guidelines were based on:

1. The details of this activity included in the application form for 'a creative momentum project' and subsequent discussions with the Joint Secretariat of the NPA on issues related to State Aid and eligibility of expenditure.
2. The previous experience of the WDC in collaborating with the Design and Craft Council of Ireland on the International Fair Fund.
3. Input from all partners on the needs of target beneficiaries in their regions.



Maria Connolly Ceramics (Ireland) at International Ceramic Fair 'Earth & Fire', England, 2017

Based on this draft Model, a first call for applications from pilot enterprises to test the Model was launched at the official 'a creative momentum project' launch on 29 October 2015 with pilot enterprises selected before the end of 2015 for Trade events taking place in 2016. The draft Model was then adapted, based on feedback and evaluation of the first round of pilot enterprises. The revised Model was tested again with a second round of pilot enterprises (selected in Q4 2016 for Trade events in 2017/early 2018). Feedback and evaluation of the second round have been incorporated into the final Model presented in this report.

EverWhatProductions received support to attend Cannes MipTV2017

by Antti Kaarlela (published on MyCreativeEdge.eu on 1 June 2017)

Our trip to Cannes MipTV 2017 started on 2 April from Oulu. Together with Antti Kaarlela and Antti Kairakari we travelled there to promote our two new live-action children's TV-shows called 'Ferdie' and 'Flippie'.

Our days at the market consisted of going round the marketplace Palais de Festival, talking to people, and taking pictures with them. In other words, we were there to be seen and interact with people. We had also made a playful survey (the person had to tell whether they'd been naughty or nice). The survey was printed on our business card so we were able to spread them nicely. We also gave out gingerbread cutters as small gifts. By doing all this, we gained a lot of attention and many, many people came to us to ask who we were and what is the thing we were doing. We also got some attention on social media: MipTV posted a picture on their Instagram profile. In addition a lot of people both inside the MipTV market area and on the streets took selfies and pictures with us.

It was really wonderful for us to be a part of this trip to Cannes. It was very interesting to get to experience a big market like this, and it was great for our group to experience it and work on our goals together. Having us elves helping with the promotion, and simply being around for potential customers and audience really helped us to stand out from others.

Thank you so much for giving us this experience!

Anna Kurttila & Vertti Aula



Hunter Paper Co sell at London's Top Drawer

by Northern Ireland (published on MyCreativeEdge.eu on 27 November 2017)

After hearing about the support through a friend, Emma Jackson of Hunter Paper Co. successfully applied through the open competitive opportunity "Assistance to International Trade Fair". This allowed her to avail of financial support from 'a creative momentum project' to attend an international trade fair.

Having researched potential international trade fairs Emma knew that Top Drawer in London would be the one that held the potential to be of most economic benefit to her business. Emma knew that in order to get the most out of her experience selling in London there was a lot of work to be done in preparation. We asked Emma what she did to prepare

"Around 4 to 5 months in advance I engaged with the fair organisers and their partners to discuss shipping. Top Drawer have a great online portal for information which helped a lot with all the organising. The only real problem I had in terms of shipping was getting a lorry to collect from a residential property as I work from home" says Emma Jackson.

Emma also engaged directly with potential new and returning customers prior to the event, specifically stockists that she knew would be present in London thanks to her research

"I sent out promotional postcards to shops I'm interested in stocking and current stockists, as well as promoting on social media. I then decided on what I would showcase at the fair itself, I displayed a sample of everything in my range. I displayed the greetings cards on thin shelves, and had a cabinet to store catalogues, with an iPad displaying a video of my process and a small printing press displayed on top" she added.

Due to Emma's organisation, hard work and professionalism she can claim that her attendance at the fair in September 2017 was worth the time and effort. She was visited by both repeat and new stockists in London. Further to her discussions she was able to take 9 wholesale orders at the actual show while also writing new orders for new stockists. Thanks to her discussions at the trade fair and subsequent follow up she has since been in conversation with several stockists from as far afield as the USA and Japan. Appreciating that successfully capitalising on trade fair attendance involves a lot of diligent follow up work Emma has already been able to add a further 12 orders as a result of this 'a creative momentum project' support. Indeed Emma's top tip for attending a trade show is

"Make the most of the opportunity to promote your business before the show. Make sure you follow up on leads afterwards" says Emma. Emma can now demonstrate significant economic upturn following her attendance at the London trade fair, she has a number of new repeat customers outside of Northern Ireland and has already taken on one new member of staff to help handle the extra workload.

Emma has already made the decision to take Hunter Paper Co. back to Top Drawer this coming January to continue the growth and development of Hunter Paper Co.

'a creative momentum project' is co-funded through the EU Northern Periphery & Arctic Programme (NPA) which aims to increase economic activity and co-operation across the regions of Europe's Northern Periphery.



3.0 SELECTING PILOT ENTERPRISES TO TEST THE MODEL

3.1 HOW WERE THE PILOT ENTERPRISES SELECTED?

In total it was originally intended that 18 creative enterprises would be selected and supported to participate in a Trade event (Fair/Show/Festival) in Europe. Two open, competitive calls for applications were held in each of the three participating regions (Northern Finland, South East of Northern Ireland and West of Ireland) one for Trade events in 2016 and one for Trade events in 2017/early 2018. It was agreed that each of the three participating partner organisations would support a minimum of three enterprises from their region in each call (3 regions x 3 enterprises x 2 calls = 18 enterprises) but had the option of selecting more depending on available budget and costs.

The open calls for applications operated online through MyCreativeEdge.eu. Applicants were required to register as members of the MyCreativeEdge.eu showcase website in order to submit their application. Registration on the site is free and registered members can publish a free online Profile to showcase their work as well as access online knowledge resources. As a member of the site they would also be notified of all 'a creative momentum project' events and support opportunities as MyCreativeEdge.eu was the main communications tool between the project and its target group.

The online application was in the Members Area of MyCreativeEdge.eu and a downloadable Word file of the questions was made available to allow applicants to prepare responses in advance of completing the form online. The questions in the application form (with a maximum character limit for replies) were:

APPLICATION FORM FOR SUPPORT TO EXHIBIT AT AN INTERNATIONAL TRADE FAIR

Your Business

1. Describe your business
2. What is your current level of business activity (turnover, sales) including any current export/international sales?
3. Outline your marketing plan including for export / international sales. Please specify if you have received any support or advice in the area of marketing or sales.

The Trade Fair/Show/Festival

4. What Trade Fair/Show/Festival do you want to attend?
5. Describe the Trade event (where is it held, what type exhibitors, who attends etc)
6. Why is this the best Trade event for your business?
7. Outline your plans for exhibiting at the Trade event (e.g. how you will identify contacts, display material).
8. Outline your capacity to fulfil any orders or contracts you may get from the Trade event
9. Outline the estimated cost of attending this Trade event – Flights, Accommodation, Stand Rental/Registration, Freight

Benefit to region

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

Each open call was widely advertised and promoted in the three regions. They were advertised early to ensure value for money on flight costs and allow participants to make necessary arrangements.

The evaluation criteria that would be used for selection were included in the notice of the opportunity, to ensure transparency and let applicants know how their application would be assessed. The Terms and Conditions for the support were also uploaded to MyCreativeEdge.eu (See Annex 1).

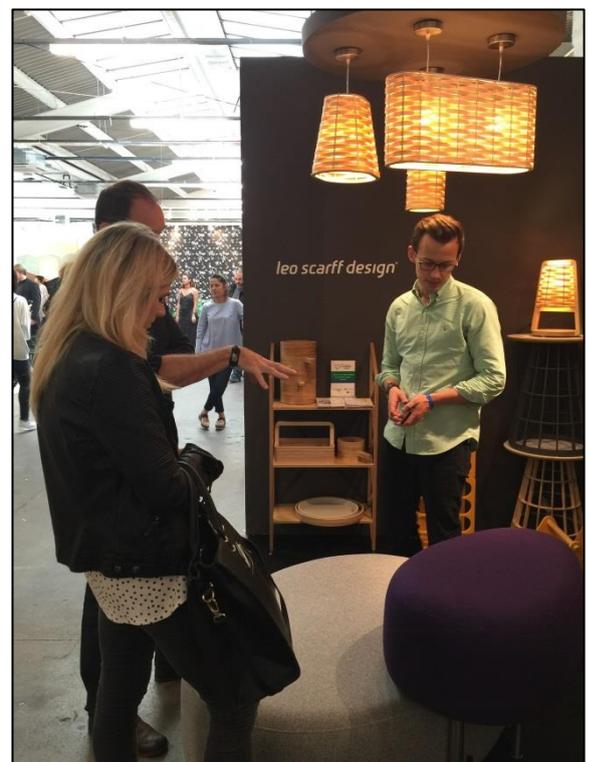
Common selection criteria were agreed and used by all partner organisations to select the pilot enterprises. Each partner established an evaluation panel to evaluate the applications received. Selection criteria were:

- a. Track record of business 30%
- b. Future marketing plans and export readiness/capacity 30%
- c. Appropriateness of the Trade Fair/Show/Festival 30%
- d. Potential to disseminate experience to others in region 10%

The top three scoring applicants in each region in each call were to be selected as the pilot enterprises. The project partner organisations reserved the right to support fewer than three pilot enterprises in their region if the top three did not exceed a scoring of 50%. Project partners could also choose to select more than three pilot enterprises per call, depending on budget and costs.

Prior to a formal offer being made to any of the selected pilot enterprises, they were required to complete a State Aid *de minimis* declaration and a 'Not in difficulty' declaration as outlined by the [NPA](#).

Leo Scarff of Leo Scarff Design (Ireland) speaking with buyers at his stand at TENT during London Design Week 2016.



3.2 ROUND 1: TRADE EVENTS IN 2016

The first call for applications for 'Support to Exhibit at an International Trade Fair in 2016' opened on 29 October 2015, the day of the project's official launch. It was the first open call for applications for any activity of the project. It opened on MyCreativeEdge.eu. The opportunity was open to members of the MyCreativeEdge website and applications were to be submitted via an online application form in the site's Members' Area. The deadline for applications was Friday, 27 November 2015.

The call for applications was promoted and disseminated in several ways:

- Announced during the launch event for 'a creative momentum project';

- Article posted on MyCreativeEdge.eu;
- Included in a Press Release issued by the WDC to local and regional media about the project launch;
- Targeted direct e-mail on 5 November to MyCreativeEdge members in the relevant regions (766 subscribers from the West of Ireland, Finland and Northern Ireland) and mailing list (223 subscribers). Reminder email on 23 November;
- Posts and reminders on Facebook and Twitter.



Joanna Zalech and Aleksandra Kieldanowicz of OLYART (Ireland) and Mary Callan of Mary Callan Knitwear (Northern Ireland) at Showcase Ireland 2016

By the deadline, 11 applications were received from the West of Ireland, 12 from Northern Ireland and 11 from Northern Finland. Following assessment by each partner, which included research on the Trade events selected by the pilot enterprises, the following pilot enterprises were selected for Round 1 (Table 1). Due to a number of reasons (see Section 6) not all of the pilot enterprises selected in the first round actually proceeded to attend the Trade event. In one such case, a selected enterprise was replaced by the next highest scoring business.

TABLE 1: PILOT ENTERPRISES SELECTED IN ROUND 1 OF 'MODEL FOR ACCESSING INTERNATIONAL TRADE EVENTS'

Region	Enterprise	Fair/Show
Northern Ireland	David Henderson Design	Web Summit , Portugal
Northern Ireland	Mary Callan Knitwear	Showcase Ireland , Ireland
Northern Finland	Flatlight Creative House	Cannes Lions , France
Northern Finland	Pirita Pernu-Lehtinen Oy (did not proceed)	Innatex Fair, Germany
Northern Finland	Dragon Dawn Productions (did not proceed)	The Essen Spiel, Germany.
West of Ireland	Willow Design & Publishing	Spring Fair , UK
West of Ireland	Leo Scarff Design	TENT, London Design Week
West of Ireland	Floating World (did not proceed)	London Artists Book Fair
West of Ireland	OLYART (next highest scoring, selected to replace Floating World)	Showcase Ireland , Ireland

OLYART at Ireland's largest international trade show

by West of Ireland (published on MyCreativeEdge.eu on 27 January 2016)

A strategic aim of 'a creative momentum project' and the NPA Programme is to increase internationalisation among SMEs and micro-enterprises. While online and virtual routes to market are very important, a physical presence at a trade event in the target market is the most effective route to export markets for many creative sub-sectors (e.g. craft, film) and in particular for sourcing distributors.

Between 2016 and 2018, a number of creative enterprises in the West of Ireland, Northern Finland and the South East of Northern Ireland will receive support from 'a creative momentum project' to attend key international trade events in Europe on the basis of their established profile, their marketing plans and export readiness, the appropriateness of the trade event they chose, and their ability to disseminate experience to other similar enterprises.

OLYART, which specialises in souvenirs inspired by contemporary Ireland, is the first company from the West of Ireland to receive support for attending Showcase – Ireland's International Creative Expo. Their beautifully designed cards, coasters, bags and magnets are hand drawn, colourful and often humorous, and represent Ireland as Aleksandra Kieldanowicz and Joanna Zalech see it: a place of great heritage and beauty, which should be discovered by taking the time to talk to people and get lost in the landscape – but also a place where people just get on with the incessant wind and the frequent rain!

Armed with a portable camera, we caught up with OLYART's Aleksandra and Joanna in a hotel in Galway, the city where OLYART is based. Check out their video interview [here](#).

Originally from Poland, Aleksandra and Joanna, trained in architecture and publishing respectively, began to make their first range of postcards in 2011 because, as Joanna explains, the economy was not going well and Aleksandra's beautiful cartoons deserved to be seen. Having started with "extremely contemporary, very minimalistic design", OLYART has progressively adapted to a souvenir and gift market demanding 'classic' themes such as "shamrocks or sheep". Along with the determination to maintain production within the EU and mainly in Ireland, it was their ability to creatively adapt to market needs that really impressed us. The OLYART brand can be found in many shops and visitor centres across the nation, including Carroll's Irish Gifts, Cliffs of Moher Visitor Centre, and Malahide Castle Visitor Centre. Aleksandra and Joanna have also built a special relationship with Le Comptoir Irlandais, which has shops in 42 locations across France.

OLYART obtained support to attend Ireland's largest international trade show, which opened in Dublin on Sunday 24 January 2016 and will run until Wednesday 27 January 2016. Over 40 years, Showcase has established itself as a must-see trade event, attracting more than 5,000 buyers from Ireland and over 20 countries keen to view the latest collections from more than 450 Irish designers, manufacturers and craftspeople across Fashion, Jewellery and Home & Giftware.

We asked Aleksandra and Joanna to tell us a little more about their relationship with the West of Ireland, internationalising their business and their experience with Showcase. We hope that their story can inspire other creatives and give a better insight into what it means to combine creativity and business acumen in Europe's Northern Edge. Learn more about OLYART by Liking their Facebook page.





Maria Gullsten of Flatlight Creative House (Finland) at Cannes Lions 2016

3.3 ROUND 2: TRADE EVENTS IN 2017/EARLY 2018

The implementing partner regions discussed the experience of the first round pilot enterprises during a project partner meeting in Sweden in November 2016. It was agreed that a number of changes to the selection process for pilot enterprises should be made for the second call for applications. Among these were:

- As it proved difficult to support businesses that are service-based (e.g. film company, web designer) who tend not to need a physical showcase 'stand' at the event, it was agreed that the cost of producing and printing marketing material (e.g. business cards, specific flyers...) designed specifically for that event, could be deemed an eligible cost.
- In the first call, there was a condition saying that only costs for a maximum of two people from the enterprise could be included. Agreed to remove this condition so the enterprise can bring more people, as long as the costs do not exceed the limit.
- Agreed that all candidates for support should be required to publish a Profile on MyCreativeEdge.eu.
- Some questions in the application form were revised slightly to make them clearer.

The second call for applications for 'Support to Exhibit at an International Trade Fair (occurring before 31 March 2018)' was opened on 31 January 2017 with an [article](#) on MyCreativeEdge.eu. The initial deadline for applications was Monday, 27 February 2017 however following agreement among partners, the [deadline was extended](#) to Sunday, 12 March 2017. Applications were to be submitted through a Google Form, as the MyCreativeEdge.eu website was being re-developed and the new version was due to

replace the old version during the period of this open call.

Ciara Silke's (Ireland) display at Scoop International 2017, London

The opportunity was promoted and disseminated as follows:

- Mailchimp (31 January) email summarising all 2017 opportunities, also promoted on Twitter and Facebook;
- Dedicated Facebook posts and Tweets;
- Facebook posts in Finnish;
- February and March MyCreativeEdge.eu Newsletters (sent to 1,396 subscribers);
- Facebook and Twitter announcement of extension of deadline;
- Presented at a number of events e.g. DCCoI export workshops in the West of Ireland.



By the deadline, there were 10 applications from the West of Ireland, 10 from Northern Ireland and 11 from Northern Finland. Following assessment the following pilot enterprises were selected (Table 2). As less money had been spent on this activity for the first round pilot enterprises than had been budgeted, and given the experience that a number of the selected enterprises did not proceed in the first round, an additional number of pilot enterprises were selected.

TABLE 2: PILOT ENTERPRISES SELECTED IN ROUND 2 OF 'MODEL FOR ACCESSING INTERNATIONAL TRADE EVENTS'

Region	Enterprise	Fair/Show
Northern Ireland	Greenans Products Ltd	Ploughing Championships , Ireland
Northern Ireland	Discovery Publications Ireland Ltd	Bologna Book Fair , Italy
Northern Ireland	Hunter Paper Co	Top Drawer , London
Northern Ireland	Jump The Hedges	Wanderlust , Germany
Northern Ireland	Design Stics (did not proceed)	Web Summit, Lisbon
Northern Ireland	Cooke Ceramics	Kuostom Kulture Forever , Germany
Northern Ireland	Algan Arts	British Craft Trade Fair , UK
Northern Ireland	Curlew Cottage Design	British Craft Trade Fair , UK
Northern Ireland	Samantha Moore Silversmith	Elements Festival , UK
Northern Ireland	Torc Product Development Ltd (did not proceed)	Media Education Conference
Northern Ireland	NI Silver	Showcase Ireland , Ireland
Northern Finland	EverWhatProductions	MipTV , Cannes, France

Region	Enterprise	Fair/Show
Northern Finland	Julius Oförsagd Company Oy	Milan Design Week 2017 , Italy
Northern Finland	e-Coach Marko Vapa	Allt För Hälsan , Stockholm
West of Ireland	Arklu-Lottie Dolls	Spielwarenmesse Nuremberg Toy Fair, Germany
West of Ireland	Ciara Silke	Scoop , London
West of Ireland	Floating World Artists Book (did not proceed)	Fruit, Art Publishing Fair , Italy
West of Ireland	gabriel furniture	DesignDay Maastricht , The Netherlands
West of Ireland	Maria Connolly Ceramics	International Ceramic Fair 'Earth & Fire' , UK
West of Ireland	MAYSONBROOK (did not proceed)	Showcase Ireland 2018, Ireland



Gabriel furniture (Ireland) stand at DesignDay, Maastricht, 2017

Niall Greenan Secures Sales at Irish Trade Fair

by Northern Ireland (published on MyCreativeEdge.eu on 25 September 2017)

Assistance to an International Trade Fair is 'a creative momentum project' support which resulted in 13 businesses from Northern Ireland receiving support to attend a Trade Fair anywhere in the world.

Niall Greenan is the founder and owner of "Greenans Products Ltd". A company that has been as successful at designing as it has at innovation, diversifying and reaching new markets. The lead product "The Smart Bunker" has evolved through several iterations each of which Niall has been able to successfully promote to its respective market. Initially presented on Ireland's version of Dragon's Den, The Smart Bunker has been a coal dispenser, wood pellet dispenser and an animal feed dispenser with current research underway aimed at facilitating new modifications to be a smart road salt dispenser.

As a Newry, Mourne & Down business Greenan Products Ltd was eligible for support as one of the SEED group of Councils that makes up the Northern Ireland partner on the EU NPA 'a creative momentum project'. The trade fair that Niall attended was the Ploughing Championships 2017 in Offaly, Republic of Ireland.

The fair has been growing in size for 70 years and this year boasted an attendance of 292,000 people. As a 3-day event this worked out about 100,000 people a day of which about 10,000 walked past Niall's stall. Niall prepared well for the event and hired a sales person to help with approaching the volume of people on the day. In addition to one-off sales, Niall made sure to get a conversation with some big stores that were in attendance, such as Drinagh (Ireland) and Horizont (Germany). "The great thing about this type of 'a creative momentum project' support is that it has allowed us to approach big-name transnational stores, and not just a sales rep but major players in major companies" says Niall.

In addition to developing a strong international contact list Niall was able to make 60 sales over the 3 days which resulted in roughly a £12,000 turnover increase. Given the strong discussions with stores Niall is very hopeful that this will result in future, repeat large orders.

When asked if Niall had any advice for anyone attending this or a similar trade fair in the future, his initial advice was; "Make a bit of noise!" Niall went on to explain that he had loaded up one of his "Smart Bunkers" with marbles, and he would pull the lever to dispense the marbles which would cause anyone within earshot to turnaround. Upon seeing the colourful dispensing of the marbles more people were interested in finding out more and while they gathered round Niall's sales colleague would engage with potential clients.

An unforeseen bonus for Niall was being able to engage with previous customers. The benefits of this were two-fold, Niall was able to make some repeat orders while also discuss with clients what aspects of the product worked well or where modifications could be made. This allowed for some very welcome constructive feedback. Another unforeseen element was the weather, the rain that began at 7:30am on the 2nd day continued for almost 12 hours making for fresh challenges!

Following on from his experience Niall is excited to have established a relationship with prominent names in major potential buyers which he is keen to follow up and maintain a productive dialogue. He has also made the decision that it would be in the company's interests to take on a sales rep going forward. Specifically looking at bringing in sales reps to address the Mayo and Dublin areas of Ireland and a third for the Scottish market.

4.0 IMPLEMENTING THE MODEL

In total the three project partner organisations who implemented this business support solution supported 22 pilot enterprises to attend and exhibit at an international trade event in order to test the 'Model for Accessing International Trade Events'.

4.1 WHAT COSTS WERE COVERED?

The exact details of the support to be provided by the project to each pilot enterprise had to be decided on a case-by-case basis. The support provided was equal to either 50% of the total eligible costs or €2,500 (per business) whichever was lower. Eligible costs were:

1. Economy return airfare, ferry or land transport;
2. Stand costs (rental, build & electrics) and/or registration fee;
3. Product transport/freight costs;
4. Accommodation (for duration of the event and up to 1 day either side of the show (max)).

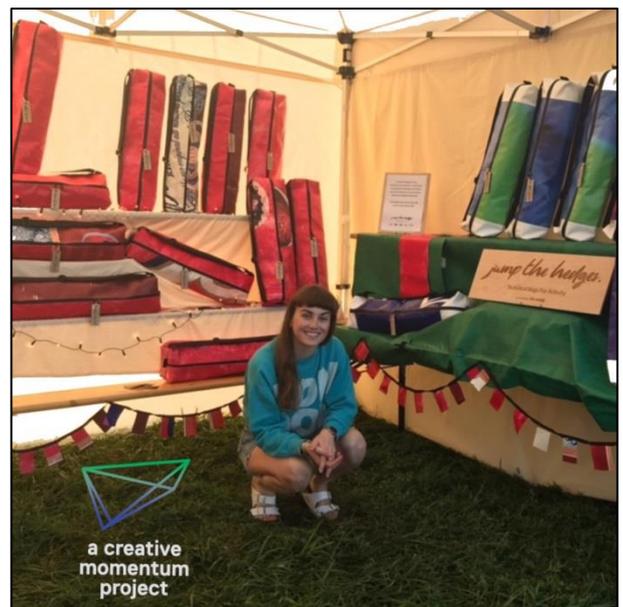
In the first call, travel and accommodation costs were limited to two staff members per enterprise, but this restriction was removed for the second call. Also for the second call, an additional eligible cost was added:

5. Promotional material designed specifically for the event.

Once each pilot enterprise was notified that they had been selected, negotiations took place between the enterprise and the relevant project partner to agree which costs would be covered by the project and which costs would be covered by the enterprise. This depended on the costs in each individual case e.g. for one enterprise the cost of flights and accommodation may be approximately half the total cost and these would be covered by the project, for another the flight costs alone could be close to the €2,500 maximum if there are two or more people travelling and the Fair is some distance, for another the Trade Fair exhibition space/stand rental cost may be covered.

Following discussions with the NPA Secretariat at the beginning of the project, project partners were instructed that they were not permitted to pay money directly to the supported pilot enterprises, even to refund vouched costs. Each partner organisation was required to pay costs directly e.g. to directly book the flights for the person travelling, to pay the Fair organisers directly for stand rental, to book and pay the hotel room directly etc.. As will be discussed in Section 6, this created additional administrative and organisational challenges for the project partners and the enterprises involved.

Siófra Caffrey of Jump the Hedges (Northern Ireland)
at Wanderlust, Germany 2017



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In advance of making their application, the pilot enterprises had to research and cost their participation in the Trade event in order to include an estimated total cost in their application form. Once they had been selected for support, the project organisation asked each enterprise to provide a more detailed cost breakdown including stand rental costs, most appropriate stand size, positioning at the Trade event, accommodation options, flights/ferry transport, freight costs, marketing material etc. Based on these costings, which the partner organisation would assess and verify (e.g. by searching for accommodation online) the organisation and enterprise agreed which costs would be covered by 'a creative momentum project' (a total of €2,500 or 50% of total costs, whichever is lower). Value for money on flights and accommodation were a priority.

A formal signed agreement was then made between the 'a creative momentum project' partner organisation and the pilot enterprise setting out the detail of the support to be provided and the responsibilities of both (see Annex 2). All supported enterprises were also required to complete two mandatory forms, a State Aid *de minimis* declaration and a 'Not in Difficulty' statement. These are required for any private enterprise receiving support from the NPA Programme.

Julius Oförsagd participated at Salone del Mobile Milano

by Julius Oförsagd (published on MyCreativeEdge.eu on 1 May 2017)

One of the world's most impressive and largest design gatherings is held annually in Milan. The event includes the Salone del Mobile Milano – an interior decoration and furniture fair, as well as a series of different events that formulates Milan Design Week. Attracting visitors in the thousands from all corners of the world, they come to get a peep at the latest trends in furniture design.

An opportunity I could not resist! I received trade fair support that allowed me the pleasure of travelling to Milan and taking part in this extraordinary experience. In this epicentre of some of the world's top designers, I was excited to be inspired by what was trending in the design scene. Walking the paths of the Salone del Mobile Milan fair was an eye opening experience. The "bigness" of it and the way it systematically worked was inspiring to say the least. It sparked courage in me to dream bigger with my own design projects and to dare to do something that stands apart from the generic style of the masses.

Another highlight and goal I had was to attend the World's Design Weeks Network Meeting. It was a collection of producers and designers discussing about future partnership and cooperation possibilities. It allowed me the opportunity to be further educated as to what is happening in other design weeks around the world as well as make valuable and enriching contacts.

The trade fair support gave me the exposure to observe Milan doing what it does best – spotlight stellar design. As the producer of the world's most northern design week – Arctic Design Week, I will take the inspiration I received from Milan and use it to spark creativity in my future projects. When something conceived inspiration, it is safe to say it was a success!

4.2 HOW WAS THE SUPPORT PROVIDED?

The project partner organisations were required to pay directly for the agreed costs e.g. to book flights and accommodation, to pay for the stand rental. As will be discussed in Section 6, this created a considerable administrative challenge in some cases and led to issues with regard to internal financial procedures as payments had to be made in advance of the enterprise actually attending the Trade event and therefore being able to provide evidence of their participation.

Some important logistical considerations in the organisation of the bookings and payments were:

- That the person (s) travelling had passports valid for 6 months after the event;
- That the correct name, as appears on passport, was used by the organisation when booking tickets;
- A maximum of accommodation for 1 night prior to and 1 night following the event could be covered (as well as the duration of the event);
- Cancellation insurance should be taken out on flights (if a reasonable cost) and the free cancellation option on accommodation bookings should be selected in case of the enterprise being unable to attend;
- The enterprise needed to provide proof of adequate insurance cover;
- Enterprise was required to provide evidence of their payment of their share of the total costs.

Implementation of this stage of the Model was quite time-consuming as it involved considerable interaction with each enterprise to check and clarify details, as well as with multiple service providers (airlines, hotels, Trade Show organisers, graphic designers etc.). Given that the Trade Shows were spread out over the course of the year, this work was also spread over the year somewhat, but in cases where several enterprises were attending Trade Shows occurring around the same time of year, it was a considerable administrative burden on project staff.

4.3 PROMOTION AND FOLLOW-UP

The project provided the pilot enterprises with display material which they were required to display publicly during the Trade event to demonstrate the support they had received to participate in the event from 'a creative momentum project' and the Northern Periphery & Arctic programme.



Project support sign and MyCreativeEdge.eu brochures at Lottie Dolls (Ireland) stand at Spielwarenmesse Nuremberg Toy Fair, Germany 2018

All enterprises supported were asked to submit a short report on their experience at the event and any outcomes or contacts made. The learnings from these reports have helped with the finalisation of the Model (see Section 6). Enterprises were also asked to complete a short feedback evaluation questionnaire. The results are given in Section 5. The project partners also provided the pilot enterprises with a statement of the value of the State Aid they received from the project.

Case study interviews with a number of the pilot enterprises were also published on MyCreativeEdge.eu, promoted on social media and included in MyCreativeEdge.eu Newsletters. These interviews are featured throughout this report.

Video interviews were conducted with some of the beneficiaries about their experience and any advice they have for others attending a Trade event. These were published on YouTube and/or Facebook and shared on social media:

- [Advice for Creative Trade Fair Attendees, by David Henderson](#) (38 views YouTube + 157 views Facebook)
- [Maria Gullsten \(Flatlight Creative House\) on Cannes Lions](#) (57 views YouTube + 351 views Facebook)
- [OLYART @ Showcase Ireland](#) (138 views YouTube)
- [Marko Vapa from e-Coach talks about Trade Fair support](#) (191 views Facebook)
- [Ciara Silke](#) (54 views YouTube + 271 views Facebook)

In addition some of the supported enterprises spoke at 'Creative Exchange' events. Here Joanna Zalech of OLYART shared her tips on planning for a Trade Fair [Planning on attending a trade show, tips by OLYART](#) (47 views YouTube + 77 views Facebook).



Donegal's ceramic artist to exhibit at international fair in the UK

by MyCreativeEdge (published on MyCreativeEdge.eu on 16 May 2017)

Maria started to work with clay in secondary school in Glasgow. She immediately loved this material for a number of reasons: "There is a tactile dimension. I immediately felt a connection with it and I love that ceramics is tridimensional art", she explains. Maria, who graduated from the Limerick School of Art & Design in 1987, has been making ceramic art since 1993. Her work is deeply influenced by the landscape, the colours and forms of Co. Donegal, where she lives.

I met Maria to talk about her future participation in Earth and Fire International Ceramics Fair. This fair, which will take place on 23-25 June in Nottinghamshire, is one of UK's premier ceramic events. It was established 20 years ago and, since then, has been attracting selected potters from across the UK and mainland Europe who sell directly to the public from outdoor market stalls. The event attracts collectors, gallery owners, enthusiasts and the general public.

"It is a one-stop shop for people who are really interested in ceramics and want to discover new names and trends", says Maria. "You need really good promotional material to showcase your work", she continues, "and this is why I have been investing in having good images taken and a new brochure designed". Maria is delighted to participate in this event, which she sees as a true opportunity to showcase and sell her work to a type of market that is not strictly commercial: "When I think about growing my business, I think about producing work that does not compromise my vision, work with a strong signature".

Making ceramic art and, at the same time, making a living out of it is not always easy. When I asked Maria what she thinks are the main skills to succeed, she agreed that craftsmanship and creativity are not enough: "You need confidence and awareness of both trends and possible markets. You need to know what is relevant, what is selling now. But you also need to be connected". And events such as Earth and Fire can be brilliant platforms to make and nurture connections.

"Working in a studio can isolate you. Even if you work in a city, you can be isolated but I guess that, when you work in a rural area, you can miss important opportunities". Of course, working far from the hustle and bustle of cities can provide artists with strong benefits: "It's peaceful, there are no distractions and this can be rewarding", Maria reminds me.

When it comes to growing a creative business in rural surroundings, it is clear that determination plays an important role: "There are many showcase events in the UK. If you want to promote and sell your work, select a couple of them, apply for a place and, if you do not get it, keep applying". And if you would like to participate in Earth & Fire but are not selected, "don't give up" urges Maria. I am really looking forward to watching Maria's determination take her enterprise far.

Check out Maria's Profile on this website!



5.0 FEEDBACK FROM PILOT ENTERPRISES

'Model for Accessing International Trade Events' pilot enterprises were asked to complete an online feedback questionnaire providing insights on their experience. Overall there were 9 responses (from a total of 22 supported enterprises), giving a small sample size.

There was a balance of male (5) and female (4) respondents. Just over half (5) were in the 25-44 age group with the remainder aged 45-64. Two-thirds (6) classified themselves as sole traders with 2 micro-enterprises (fewer than 10 employees) and 1 small enterprise (10-49 employees). The majority (56%) were working the Design sector, followed by Crafts (22%) and one each in Media & Technology and Other Creative Sector.

Four of the respondents were from the West of Ireland, three from Northern Finland and two from Northern Ireland.

5.1 MOTIVATION TO ATTEND

Respondents were asked 'What attracted you to apply to attend this Trade Fair?' and could choose between a number of options, selecting more than one if relevant. All respondents selected multiple motivations with a total of 38 responses from the 9 respondents.

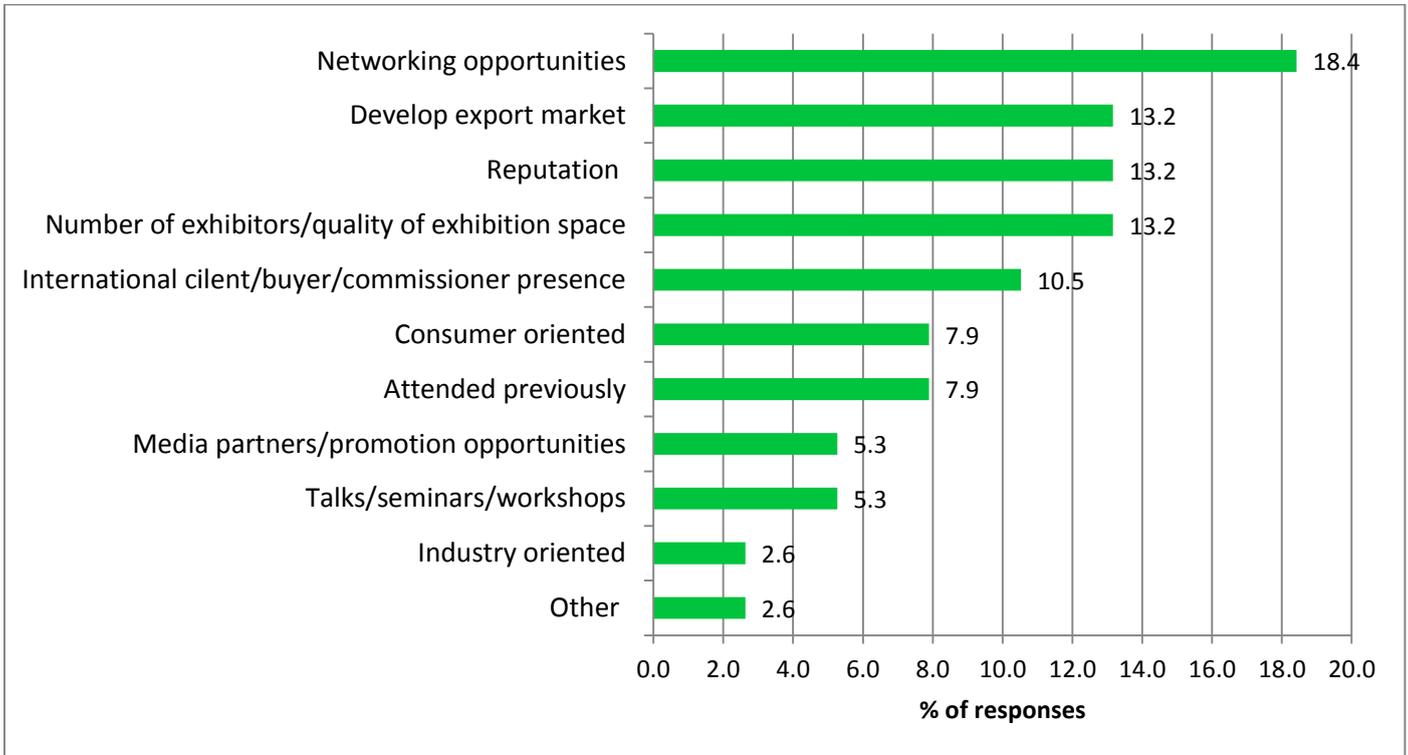
Networking opportunities was the main motivation accounting for 18.4% of responses and mentioned by all but 2 of the respondents (Fig. 1). To develop their export market, the reputation of the Trade Fair and the number of exhibitors/quality of exhibition space each accounted for 13.2% of responses. As development of export markets was the main rationale behind the development of the Model, it is positive that a high proportion selected this, which is also related to international client/buyer/commissioner presence which received 10.5% of responses. The attributes of the specific Fair in terms of its reputation and the attendance of both exhibitors and buyers were clearly a key motivation for most, clearly showing that consideration had been given to the suitability of the Fair/Show.

7.9% of responses (3 respondents) said they had previously attended the same Fair. It is generally acknowledged that repeat attendance at the same Fair (for a minimum of three years in a row) is extremely important to build confidence among international buyers in the sustainability of your business. International buyers are reluctant to enter into an agreement with a business if they are uncertain if it will survive. Repeat attendance builds confidence and reputation. Some comments on motivation to attend:

'We were asked to go there.' Participant at Trade Fair

'Good sales, nice show to do, well organised and it is on the borders of Netherlands, Germany, Belgium, so you get visitors from at least 3 countries.' Participant at Trade Fair

FIG. 1: SURVEY RESPONSES ON MOTIVATION TO ATTEND



5.2 OUTCOMES

When asked 'Which of the following outcomes were achieved because of attendance at the Trade Fair?' there were a range of responses. Again most selected more than one option with a total of 30 answers from the 9 respondents. The top three all received 23.3% of responses (and were given by 7 of the 9 respondents) (Fig. 2). Gaining useful knowledge and skills is to be expected. Developing and expanding links with potential international clients and collaborators is a positive outcome, as facilitating small-scale, peripherally-based creative entrepreneurs to identify and connect with potential clients and collaborators beyond their local area is the main objective of this Model.

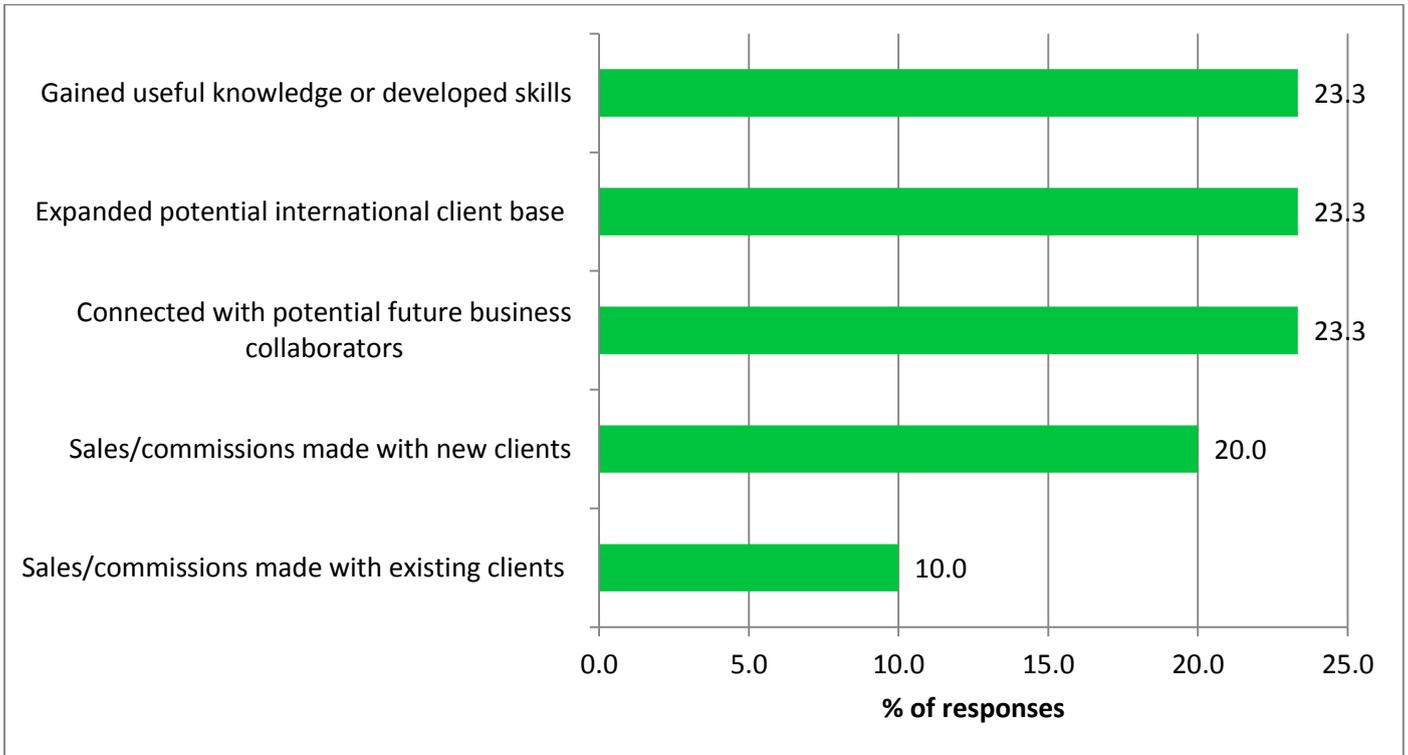
Even more positive is that the majority (6 of the 9) of respondents made actual sales/commissions during the Trade event to new clients with 3 of these also making sales/commissions to existing clients. As this is the ultimate goal of this Model, expanding export opportunities, this result is very positive. Some comments from the enterprises:

'My sales have increased by approx. 15-20% from exhibiting at the show.' Participant in Trade Fair

'It's a 3 day show and the first day of the show was very quiet but other than that I met very good buyers.' Participant at Trade Fair

'Great exposure to international design audience. Good chance to meet similar businesses and learn from them. Some sales and new contacts made.' Participant at Trade Fair

FIG. 2: SURVEY RESPONSES ON OUTCOME OF TRADE FAIR



5.3 THE FAIR IN FUTURE

When asked if they would attend this Fair again, 3 respondents were uncertain with 6 saying that they would. The open ended comments give more insight on this

'If the focus and goal is clear then yes. First time was great case to learn but second time need to have ready plan and goals.' Participant at Trade Fair

'Not sure because the attendance with the trade fair was down from the year before, might try to research the competitors to this trade fair.' Participant at Trade Fair

'[XX] is a very large event, you need to focus on your interests and visit several years in a row in order to have big picture.' Participant at Trade Fair

'We were asked to come back also next year.' Participant at Trade Fair

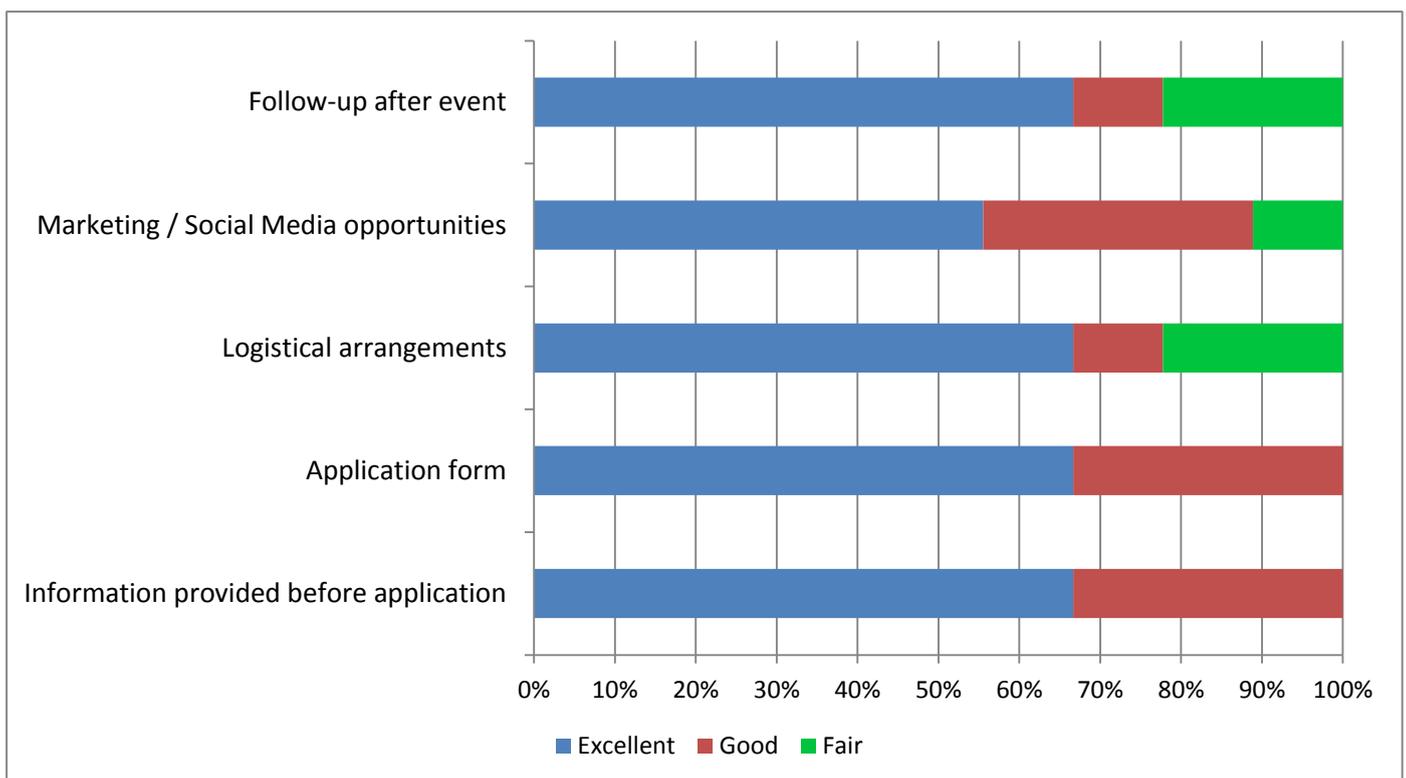
'I will show again at ... hopefully this coming season as I feel it is a good fit for my brand. There are also other Shows in Paris that could be suitable – so I am trying to carry out market research currently to see which would be best for me.' Participant at Trade Fair

5.4 ORGANISATION

The final question related to the attitude of the respondents to the organisation of this activity by the project. They were asked to rate a number of aspects of the organisation of the support from Excellent to Very Poor (Fig. 3). No Poor or Very Poor ratings were given for any aspect of the organisation.

The two areas which scored most poorly (with 2 Fair responses) were logistical arrangements and follow-up after event. As noted above, the logistical arrangements proved quite complex in several cases and this is among the most challenging aspects of this Model. At the same time, 6 respondents ranked the logistical arrangements as Excellent. Follow-up after the event may be an area to consider more carefully in any future iteration of this Model, in terms of how to engage with the pilot enterprises after the Fair and gain insights on the longer term impact. The marketing/social media opportunities received the fewest Excellent responses and again may be an area that could be enhanced.

FIG 3: SURVEY RESPONSES ON ORGANISATION OF MODEL



MyCreativeEdger doing business on a global scale through 'a creative momentum project'

by Northern Ireland (published on MyCreativeEdge.eu on 16 November 2017)

One of the supports that has been made available to members of MyCreativeEdge.eu was the competitive opportunity for creative businesses to attend international trade fairs. This was available as 'a creative momentum project' activity.

Through this support Killeel based design agency David Henderson Design was able to send two staff members to the Web Summit in Lisbon, Portugal in 2016. This opportunity allowed David and Paul from DHD to glean new potential avenues of business while developing a strong international contact list of potential clients and partners.

One such contact was Laurie Stach from LaunchX. LaunchX is a prestigious program which has been running for 5 years and brings together high school entrepreneurs from all over the US and world in a 4-week program each summer to grow their entrepreneurial skills and mindset while launching real startups. Following a very productive meeting over a coffee in Lisbon, Laurie invited David to MIT in Boston to deliver a series of branding workshops.



"After speaking at MIT in June and July and meeting the team behind LaunchX we were very excited about being commissioned to design the new logo, new website, the marketing materials and animating the logo. To deliver workshops to students from all around the world and be exposed to the resources available at MIT was a great experience for us as a business," says David.

"Thanks to the Council-led support through 'a creative momentum project' here in Northern Ireland, our attendance at the Web Summit in Lisbon has been incredibly fruitful. It is once in a lifetime opportunities like this that allow us to continue to grow the business internationally while justifying our ambition as a design agency capable of competing on a global stage," he adds.

Having attended the Lisbon Web Summit last year through 'a creative momentum project' support David Henderson Design have now just returned from this year's 2017 Lisbon Web Summit which promises to continue to bring in fresh transnational work.

6.0 LESSONS LEARNED

The experience of developing and testing the 'Model for Accessing International Trade Events' resulted in a number of insights on supporting creative enterprises to access international Trade Shows as a route to expand their export markets. These insights are divided into two sections: 1) tips and advice for creative businesses planning to attend a Trade Fair; 2) lessons for organisations/agencies interested in implementing a similar business support solution.

6.1 ADVICE AND TIPS FOR PARTICIPATING IN A TRADE SHOW

A number of the pilot enterprises provided written feedback reports on their experience at the Fairs. Some of their tips and advice for other creative enterprises, from these reports and the case study interviews, are summarised here:

6.1.1 BEFORE THE SHOW

- Engage with Trade Fair organisers as early as possible in order to try to secure a good position at the Show.
- As exhibiting at some Shows is 'invite only', it is important to ensure that your work is 'out there' to be discovered by curators.
- Find your market. Find the right Show to fit your product/service.
- Accommodation can be a challenge and very expensive, especially if it is a very large event and/or high season. It is important to book accommodation as early as possible, and to consider alternative options.
- It is critical to consider and plan very carefully in advance how to display your products and which products to display. Show your best sellers and edit what you display. For example OLYART emphasised the importance of preparing a good display: *'We've showcased all our product range, designing the stand in a clean and contemporary way that could also show how our products can be displayed in the shop. We've designed wall and floor (spinning) displays for our most popular product – double sided coasters. We've shown our postcard range together with racks we supply to the retailers; we've showcased our shopper bags and fridge magnets.'* While Ciara Silke says: *'I had a rail/stand at the side with my scarves draped on it. I also had a large table and I had all the scarves displayed on this carefully curated. I spent a few hours steaming the products when I arrived at the gallery.'*
- It is important to ensure that what you bring to the Show is suited to that Show. This may involve considering a new range of products. It is important to bring a range of work in different price ranges.
- For Trade events for services, which do not have 'stands', research how other companies make their presence felt e.g. at some events a company will rent a house or hotel suite as a 'base' to meet clients.
- For Trade events with no 'stands', it is important to research speakers, themes and attendance in advance. Some events have specific formats to facilitate networking and business connections and it is important to capitalise on these. *'Cannes Lions has kind of a Tinder application; you can log in, tell who you are and make matches with other people. Organizer has made this possible... Cannes Lions is a meeting place for production and advertisement companies. You can meet there also marketing directors behind big brands.'* Maria Gullsten
- It is important to clarify insurance cover and organise appropriate cover. Some Fair organisers provide an insurance option, others require exhibitors to take out their own Public Liability insurance. Investigate options for insurance cover that may be

supported by public agencies. Maria Connolly says *'I took out the insurance cover that is supported by the DCCOI (Design and Craft Council of Ireland). This is an annual insurance cover and covers me for all shows in Ireland and the UK.'*

- Pre-show marketing is key. It is a good idea to send invitations to previous and potential clients inviting them to your stand (if relevant), offering special discounts for orders placed during the Show and perhaps attaching some samples if possible. Reaching out to new and existing buyers you want to meet, arranging meetings etc.
- When promoting your presence at the Show in advance, through your social media and website, it is critical to include your Stand number as the Shows/Fairs can be very large and it can be difficult to find an individual business without the Stand Number. Remember to update your website with details of the Show.
- It is important to develop high quality marketing material to bring to the Show. Engage a professional photographer and graphic designer. Visually appealing, professional marketing material that provides information on your work and (if relevant) some insight to your inspiration is important to build brand identity and provide contact details.

6.1.2 DURING THE SHOW

- Depending on your product/service, it can be a good idea to give away a little goodie bag with a few samples or some other type of branded promotional gift.
- New clients may not make a commitment at the Show. They may need more time to go through your details and offers and get back to you later. It is important to follow up very soon after the Show with any potential clients.
- Networking is very important at the Show. Also walking the Show and gathering ideas from the way in which other exhibitors display their Stands. It is an opportunity to see first-hand the variety of work being promoted and sold as well as to pick up some inside knowledge which can be incorporated in your own practice.
- If you are at an early stage in business, a Trade Show can give you direct access to other, more experienced entrepreneurs/makers who are often happy to share their experience. It can be a good opportunity to gauge how your work compares with others in your field and to get feedback from attendees as well as other exhibitors.
- Using social media throughout the Show is useful to promote your presence and connect with others at the Show.
- Having some type of activity or demonstration at your Stand can attract people. Andrew Cooke for example *'Throughout the Show I demonstrated by making a new mug design, this brought people over which lead to conversations.'*
- If there are talks/seminars during the Trade Show, these can be a good chance to network and meet collaborators/competitors, also to get an idea of emerging trends in the sector e.g. Virtual Reality.
- If at all possible, get someone to help/ work with you at the Show. Trade Fairs are very intensive events and it is advisable to have at least two people at your Stand. One option is to hire somebody local to that area.
- Take the opportunity to do some more market research on that city/country while you are there, if possible.

6.1.3 AFTER THE SHOW

- It is recommended to send a follow up e-mail to every visitor to your Stand (whose contact details you get) on the same day as they visited your Stand. This can simply be a thank you for visiting your Stand, but is a chance to get your contact details to them. A few weeks later, you can follow up with more detail and information.

- Important to follow/connect with them on social media immediately during the event.
 - It is important to invest in relationships you start to develop at a Show as they often take time to grow and develop and do not always happen after just one meeting. It may be necessary to travel again to meet in person with potential new clients.
- Maria Connolly says *'As a direct result [of the Fair] I have been invited to exhibit in a leading craft gallery next April. I have been offered the exclusive Box Gallery within the Ropewalk Gallery at Barton upon Humber, where I will take part in a solo show for a month. This invitation went beyond my expectation for the Fair and gives me a unique opportunity to sell myself within an established ceramic/craft platform that sells itself directly to the general public but also is a recognized arts centre with prestige within the UK.'* Maria Connolly

6.2 LESSONS FOR IMPLEMENTING THE 'MODEL FOR ACCESSING INTERNATIONAL TRADE EVENTS'

6.2.1 LESSONS FOR ADMINISTRATION

1. The requirement from the funders that project partners needed to pay service providers (e.g. event organisers, hotel, etc) directly in advance, rather than refund the pilot enterprises the costs upon production of receipts, created considerable administrative challenges:
 - a. Negotiation to agree what costs would be covered by the project and what costs would be covered by the pilot enterprise could be time-consuming and complex. This needed to be done so that payments could be made in advance, whereas if costs were refunded based on receipts, no division would have been needed to be agreed.
 - b. It required a high level of trust on the part of the project partner organisations that the pilot enterprises would meet their commitment to pay their 50% of the costs.
 - c. Payments had to be made in advance of receipts being submitted, which was contrary to internal financial procedures
 - d. If agreed that the project would cover part of the costs for Stand rental e.g. a percentage of the rental, the electrics, Trade Fair organisers were not always willing to split the invoice. Also some Trade Fair organisers were not willing/able to issue an invoice in the name of an organisation other than the actual company that would be exhibiting at the Show. This led to the need to re-negotiate which costs the project would cover in several cases.
 - e. Where the partner organisation was paying an external service provider e.g. a hotel, graphic designer, the issue arose whether responsibility for procurement fell to the partner organisation or the company. Partner organisations had varying procurement rules. It would be preferable to make the companies responsible for procurement.
 - f. The process of this Model – direct payment by the organisation – was difficult to explain to the enterprises as it was unlike any other support of this nature they had received (based on presentation of receipts).
 - g. The level of understanding / appreciation of the administrative requirements which partner organisations had to meet varied among the enterprises and caused some difficulties.
 - h. One of the companies that did not proceed, did so because they felt the administrative requirements placed on them to avail of the support made the opportunity not worthwhile for them.
 - i. It is important to get the Agreement, State Aid *de minimis* statement and 'Not in Difficulty' statement signed before any payments are made, as it proved much more difficult to get them signed after payments were made.

2. If implementing this Model again (under a different funding source), payment should be based on refunding the enterprises for 50% of their costs (to maximum €2,500) based on production of receipts. This procedure would address many of the administrative challenges, meet internal financial procedures, be more robust in terms of evidence of payment and present a far smaller administrative burden.
3. Selection of the pilot enterprises needs to begin very early and bookings/arrangements made very early.
 - a. As these Trade Fairs can often be very large and/or take place during high season it is important to book early to get value for money for accommodation, transport and also a good Stand placement at the Show.
 - b. Some companies selected ultimately did not attend the Trade event. This was due to a number of factors including not being accepted to exhibit by organisers or being offered a poor Stand location that made participation not worthwhile. In this scenario, beginning the process very early means that partner organisations can consider whether to offer support to the next highest scoring applicant (if they exceeded the minimum threshold).
 - c. The timeline for processing / approval of payments in a public organisation can be considerable and this needs to be factored into the planning schedule.
4. The application form should be more specific and force applicants to illustrate more detail on the research they have done on the suitability of the Fair.
5. The funding was complex (50% of eligible costs to a maximum of €2,500). This left a lot of room for negotiation and trying to get clarity on costs e.g. what rates to use to 'value' car transport. It would be better to have simpler funding e.g. support of €2,500.
6. It is important to follow-up on the longer term benefit of participation in the event e.g. a year later, but it can be difficult to get this information. Need a better way to capture the longer term benefit to the enterprises.

6.2.2 LESSONS FOR FACILITATING CREATIVE ENTERPRISES TO ACCESS TRADE EVENTS

1. This Model was particularly useful for early stage companies. Some reported that their selection to be supported by an EU co-funded project gave them confidence and enhanced profile. Some found this was a positive marketing message for clients in advance of, and during, the Show.
2. Some enterprises suggested a collective insurance deal/preferential rates for members of MyCreativeEdge.eu as a useful support.
3. Advance research really pays off. Enterprises that put in a lot of research and advance planning for the Trade Show reaped the benefits.
4. Future iterations of the Model could incorporate some mentoring for the enterprises on making the most of the Trade Show, to include a capacity building element together with the financial support.
5. It is important to maintain ongoing contact between the partner organisation and the enterprises to learn of the longer term impact/results of their participation. Build up a positive mutual relationship.

Jump The Hedges attend Wanderlust in Germany

by Northern Ireland (published on MyCreativeEdge.eu on 20 October 2017)

Having attended the Wanderlust festival in Germany, Siófra Caherty has been able to meet, network with and sell to an international market first hand. After successfully applying through the competitive opportunity for assistance to attend an international trade fair Siófra has been looking forward to the opportunity to sell her products abroad.

Jump The Hedges has designed and produced a unique yoga bag that includes design features to accommodate yoga's ever present yoga mat. With Wanderlust being the biggest yoga event in the world this was a great opportunity for Siófra.

While in Germany Siófra was able to sell twelve bags during Wanderlust with a further eight sold shortly afterwards as a result of successfully impressing her market. The experience has taught Siófra some valuable unexpected lessons:

"I came back from the festival with a fresh motivation to source new clients and manufacturing contacts, I feel more than ever that the key to success is hard work and it feels more attainable than ever" says Siófra.

Siófra also mentioned that the experience was a huge lesson in social media. She believes now that her resources that she dedicates to social media should be almost exclusively applied to Instagram. Wanderlust clearly demonstrated that this was an ideal platform for her to both showcase her product while connecting directly with potential international clients. Her new enthusiasm has also motivated her to develop her product range after developing a better understanding of who her potential clients are and what their needs are with a further understanding and appreciation for their various tastes.



ANNEX 1: TERMS AND CONDITIONS FOR APPLICANTS TO ‘A CREATIVE MOMENTUM PROJECT’ MODEL FOR ACCESSING INTERNATIONAL TRADE EVENTS

- By completing this application form you are confirming your availability and capacity to participate in the Trade event specified in your application.
- Applicants must be registered members of the MyCreativeEdge.eu website and be businesses operating in the Advertising & Publishing, Architecture, Arts, Crafts, Design, Digital Media, Fashion & Jewellery, Film & Video, Music & Theatre, Photography, Software & Gaming or TV & Radio sectors.
- Applicants must be based in the West of Ireland (counties Donegal, Sligo, Leitrim, Roscommon, Mayo, Galway or Clare), Northern Finland (Lapland, North Ostrobothnia) or Northern Ireland (Armagh City, Banbridge & Craigavon Borough Council, Ards & North Down Borough Council, and Newry, Mourne & Down District Council areas) only.
- Applicants must not have received more than €200,000 in direct state aid in the previous three fiscal years (this being the current fiscal year and the previous two fiscal years). State aid is given to the undertaking on a selective basis and does not include subsidies granted to individuals or general measures open to all enterprises. State aid can e.g. have the format of grants, interest and tax reliefs, guarantees, government holdings of all part of the company, or providing goods and services on preferential terms. State aid refers to aid received from all public sources.
- Selected applicants will be required to complete a State Aid *de minimis* declaration.
- Applicant enterprises must not be in difficulty.
- Selected applicants will be required to complete a Not in Difficulty declaration.
- Applications will be assessed by a panel of experts including ‘a creative momentum project’ partners and independent evaluators. Where demand exceeds supply, applicants scoring highest will be awarded support under ‘a creative momentum project’ Model for Accessing International Trade Events. The decision of the selection panel is final and non-negotiable. If the top three scoring applicants in a region in a call do not exceed a minimum of 50%, the project partner organisation reserves the right to support fewer than three pilot enterprises under that call.
- Written feedback on your application will be available on request, however no discussion regarding the score or the outcome can be entered into.
- The purpose of exhibiting at the Trade event must be to increase export sales and the event must be a Trade (and not consumer) event.
- If your application is successful, ‘a creative momentum project’ will subsidise up to a maximum of 50% of the cost of: Economy return airfare, ferry or land transport (for up to 2 members of staff); Stand costs (rental, build & electrics); Product transport/freight costs; Accommodation (for up to 2 members of staff and for up to 1 day either side of the show (max)). Maximum support per Trade event is €2,500.
- The exact costs to be supported will be discussed and agreed between the ‘a creative momentum project’ partner organisation in your region and each supported enterprise on a case by case basis.
- Selected enterprises will be required to sign an agreement with the ‘a creative momentum project’ partner organisation setting out the details of the support and the responsibilities of both.
- The ‘a creative momentum project’ partner organisation will pay directly for any costs to be supported.

- Selected enterprises must have adequate insurance cover.
- Persons travelling must be in possession of a passport valid for at least 6 months after the date of the Trade event.
- If unavoidable circumstances arise that prevent you from attending, after bookings have been made, you are required to notify the 'a creative momentum project' partner organisation as soon as possible, and no later than five days prior to departure.
- A short report on participation in the Trade event must be submitted following the event. This is for internal use by 'a creative momentum project' partners and funders. A summary of the report will be made publicly available and any commercially sensitive information should be highlighted and it will not be included in the published summary.
- Selected businesses must agree to participate in any reasonable requests to support the promotion of 'a creative momentum project' or to share the results. For example, be quoted in a press release.
- Selected businesses may be required to share their experience at a future Creative Exchange information event in their own region organised by 'a creative momentum project'.
- A business receiving support must be in possession of a valid tax clearance certificate.
- Any conflicts of interest must be fully disclosed to 'a creative momentum project' partners.
- 'a creative momentum project' partners reserve the right to cancel 'a creative momentum project' Model for Accessing International Trade Events offer unconditionally.
- The selection panel will assess applications, and applicants will be notified of results, before the end of XX.



ANNEX 2: SAMPLE AGREEMENT

AGREEMENT BETWEEN [PROJECT PARTNER ORGANISATION] AND [ENTERPRISE] FOR 'SUPPORT TO EXHIBIT AT AN INTERNATIONAL TRADE FAIR' FUNDED UNDER THE NPA CO- FUNDED CREATIVE MOMENTUM PROJECT

This agreement sets out the conditions under which the [project partner organisation] will support [enterprise] under the Northern Periphery and Arctic (NPA) Programme co-funded Creative Momentum project [‘a creative momentum project’] to exhibit at [Trade event].

1. [PROJECT PARTNER ORGANISATION]

The [project partner organisation] is ...

2. A CREATIVE MOMENTUM PROJECT

‘a creative momentum project’ is a three-year (2015-2018), transnational project co-funded by the EU Interreg Northern Periphery and Arctic Programme (NPA)¹ with a total budget of €2m. Its aim is to support the development of the creative industries sector in regions across Europe’s Northern Edge.

The [project partner] is a partner organisation for ‘a creative momentum project’. The project is being implemented by [project partner] and five other partner organisations who each implement the project in their own country/region.

‘a creative momentum project’ supports individuals and enterprises working in the creative and cultural industries. The activities covered are Advertising & Publishing, Architecture, Arts, Crafts, Design, Digital Media, Fashion & Jewellery, Film & Video, Music & Theatre, Photography, Software & Games and TV & Radio.

It is being implemented in the following five regions:

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

Individuals and enterprises working in the creative sector in these regions are being supported through ‘a creative momentum project’ to:

- develop their creative and business skills and innovate new product/service ideas by providing mentoring, new online knowledge resources and supporting collaborative product, service and organisational innovation;

¹ For more details on the NPA, see www.interreg-npa.eu

- 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' is also conducting 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.

3. MODEL FOR ACCESSING INTERNATIONAL TRADE FAIRS

The 'Model for Accessing International Trade Events (Fairs/Shows/Festivals)' is an Activity funded through 'a creative momentum project'. The Activity will:

- a) Create a database of existing Trade Fairs/Shows/Festivals which take place in each partner region. This will be uploaded to the MyCreativeEdge.eu website.
- b) Develop a Model (guidelines) for a new business support solution to facilitate creative sector enterprises to access new export markets by exhibiting their work at an international Trade Fair, Trade Show or Festival. The focus of the event must be on gaining Trade business in export markets.
- c) Test this Model by supporting a minimum of 18 pilot creative sector enterprises from three of the partner regions in 'a creative momentum project' (Northern Finland, South East of Northern Ireland and West of Ireland) to exhibit at a Trade Fair/Show/Festival in Europe. The pilot enterprises will receive 50% funding (up to a maximum of €2,500 each). The pilot enterprises will be selected through transparent, competitive calls for applications.
- d) Refine a final replicable Model of the business support solution, based on the experience of the pilot enterprises; that will be widely disseminated to organisations interested in supporting the development of the creative and cultural sector across the NPA area and wider Europe.

A strategic aim of 'a creative momentum project', and the NPA Programme, is to increase internationalisation among SMEs and micro-enterprises based in peripheral and remote locations, to compensate for lack of critical mass and small local markets. While online routes to market are very important, a physical presence at a Trade event is the most effective route to export markets for many creative sub-sectors (e.g. craft, film) and in particular for sourcing distributors. However the cost of exhibiting at such Trade events can be prohibitively high for some creative enterprises, especially those based in remote and sparsely populated areas across Europe's Northern Periphery.

This Activity will develop a business support solution to facilitate creative enterprises – that have the capacity to supply export markets and a high degree of export readiness, but who face constraints due to their peripheral location – to exhibit their products or services at an international Trade event. The purpose of exhibiting at the Trade event must be to increase export sales. The event should be a Trade focused rather than consumer event, though consumer events which also have well established Trade opportunities may be considered, if appropriate for the applicant. It will contribute to achieving 'a creative momentum project'

objective of increasing market reach and realising market potential.

The business support solution developed under this Activity will be widely disseminated to transfer knowledge across the NPA and wider Europe. The Activity will be of benefit to the pilot enterprises but also the wider creative economy of their home regions because of the contacts made in the target market and the networking and learning opportunities arising from entering a new export market.

4. SELECTION OF PILOT ENTERPRISES

Three project partner organisations based in three regions

- Western Development Commission in West of Ireland;
- Lapland University of Applied Sciences in Northern Finland; and
- South East Economic Development/Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council in South East of Northern Ireland

will together, select and support a minimum of 18 pilot creative enterprises from their three regions to exhibit at Trade events in order to test and demonstrate the Model.

Selected pilot enterprises must be established, export-ready, creative sector enterprises who can demonstrate their supply capacity. The support is aimed at more developed creative enterprises that face barriers in taking their next step into international markets due to their peripheral location. Pilot enterprises must demonstrate that they have the required capacity to supply export markets and are ready to take full advantage of exhibiting at the Trade event.

Pilot enterprises will be selected through at least two open, competitive calls – one for Trade events in 2016 and one for Trade events in 2017/2018. Each of the three participating partner organisations will support a minimum of three enterprises in each call (3 regions x 3 enterprises x 2 calls = 18 enterprises) but may support a greater number.

The open calls for applications will operate online and applicants must publish a Profile on MyCreativeEdge.eu. The evaluation criteria and Terms and Conditions for support are included with the online application form to ensure transparency and let applicants know how their application will be assessed and what will be required from them if selected.

Each open call is widely advertised and promoted (social media, MyCreativeEdge, newspaper ads, Press Releases, industry associations etc) in the three regions.

Common selection criteria are used by all partner organisations to select the pilot enterprises from their region. An evaluation panel in each region evaluates the applications received based on the following selection criteria:

- | | |
|--|-----|
| • Current level of development of applicant's business | 30% |
| • Future marketing plans and export readiness/capacity | 30% |
| • Appropriateness of the Trade Fair/Show/Festival | 30% |

- Potential to disseminate experience to others in region 10%

The top scoring applicants will be selected as the pilot enterprises by each of the three partner organisations in each of the two calls. The project partner organisations reserve the right to support fewer or more than three pilot enterprises in each call.

5. CONDITIONS OF SUPPORT

This agreement sets out the conditions under which the [project partner] will provide support to [enterprise] to attend [Trade event] as a pilot enterprise funded through the 'Model for Accessing International Trade Events' Activity of 'a creative momentum project'. The purpose of the support is to test and demonstrate the effectiveness of the business support solution and to generate learnings which can be used to further refine the Model.

Prior to receiving support [enterprise] is required to:

- Complete a State Aid *de minimis* declaration stating they have not received more than €200,000 in direct state aid in the previous three fiscal years (this being the current fiscal year and the previous two fiscal years). State aid refers to aid received from all public sources.
- Complete a 'Not in difficulty' declaration as outlined by the NPA <http://www.interreg-npa.eu/for-project-managers/programme-manual/>.
- Research and fully cost their participation in [Trade event], value for money on travel and accommodation must be a priority.
- Discuss and agree with the [project partner] the exact costs which will be covered by both parties. The support to be provided by 'a creative momentum project' will be equal to approximately 50% of the total eligible costs (or a maximum of €2,500, whichever is lower). Eligible costs are limited to:
 - Economy return airfare, ferry or land transport;
 - Stand costs (rental, build & electrics) and/or Registration fee;
 - Promotional material designed specifically for the event (the material must display the logos for a creative momentum project and the EU/NPA);
 - Product transport/freight costs;
 - Accommodation.
- Provide proof of adequate insurance cover and a valid tax clearance certificate.
- Disclose any conflicts of interest to the [project partner].
- If unavoidable circumstances arise that prevent [enterprise] from attending, they are required to notify [project partner] as soon as possible.

During and following [Trade event], [enterprise] is required to provide the following services to [project partner]:

- Clearly display and promote the support received from 'a creative momentum project' / Northern Periphery & Arctic Programme at their stand during [Trade event].
- Participate in media and publicity opportunities related to the support received including a case study story for the

MyCreativeEdge.eu website.

- Provide a short report on their experience at the event and any outcomes or contacts made. This is for internal use by 'a creative momentum project' partners and funders. A summary of the report will be made publicly available. Any commercially sensitive information should be highlighted and it will not be included in the published summary. The summary will be disseminated to other creative enterprises across all the partner regions.
- Provide evidence of the full eligible costs of participation in [Trade event], including those costs covered directly by [enterprise] to illustrate that the support provided by [project partner] does not exceed 50% of total eligible costs.
- Complete a feedback evaluation questionnaire on their experience of the support.
- Speak at a Creative Exchange event organised by [project partner] in [home region] to share their experience and advice with other creative enterprises.

The [project partner] will:

- Pay directly for the eligible costs which are agreed with [enterprise] to be covered. The [project partner] cannot refund/reimburse [enterprise] for any costs incurred.
- Provide standard display material to be publicly displayed during [Trade event] to promote the support received from the Northern Periphery & Arctic Programme co-funded 'a creative momentum project'.
- Issue a media release on the support provided to [enterprise].
- Publish a case study story about [enterprise] on MyCreativeEdge.eu and undertake other promotional and social media activity.
- Organise a Creative Exchange event for creative enterprises based in [region], which may also be recorded and/or live streamed to provide access to creative enterprises in other partner regions, where [enterprise] will share their experience of attending [Trade event].
- Publish a report on the experiences of all the pilot enterprises supported under this Activity to disseminate their learnings with other creative enterprises across the partner regions.
- Provide a State Aid Statement outlining the value of the State Aid [enterprise] has received from 'a creative momentum project'.
- The [partner organisation] reserves the right to cancel the offer of support unconditionally.

6. BREAKDOWN OF COSTS

The total eligible costs for [enterprise] to participate at [Trade event] are as set out in Table 1 below. The costs to be covered by the [project partner] and those to be covered by [enterprise] are indicated.

	Covered by [project partner]	Covered by [enterprise]
Travel		
Stand costs		
Product transport/freight costs		

Accommodation		
Promotional material		
Total		

The total value of payments to be made by the [project partner] is XX.

Signed: _____
[enterprise]

Date: _____

Signed: _____
[partner organisation]

Date: _____



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