

Integrating arts into innovation districts

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Arts
NSW

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Innovation districts globally are faced with the challenge of creating an authentic 'sense of place'. To be successful these districts need to develop a place and brand that attracts global talent, fosters creativity and encourages exchange of ideas across multiple disciplines. Embedding arts and culture into innovation districts is integral to meeting this challenge.

This research paper examines the value of incorporating arts and culture across the early planning, construction and management of innovation districts. Arts-led placemaking methodologies help to create 'urban vibrancy' and drive social and economic impact. Strong place capital activates an innovation district by drawing key anchor tenants, the world's best global talent and local and international investment. Arts and culture also contributes to the 'sociability' of an innovation district, creating spaces where people want to linger and exchange ideas.

Truly incorporating arts into an innovation district is about much more than adding public art and superficial design features in the final stages of construction. Public art, while important, is only one way that sophisticated innovation districts globally are embedding arts and culture into their projects. Also included are artisan maker-spaces, cross disciplinary co-working spaces, affordable accommodation for artists, multi-purpose auditoriums and gallery and exhibition spaces. The integration of creative arts making and development is as important to these districts as the built environment. These innovation districts recognise the value of arts and culture to the creative process, and the role of artists and designers in science and technology businesses.

The NSW Arts and Cultural Policy Framework, *Create in NSW*, commits to developing partnerships across Government to promote the value of arts and culture in achieving whole-of-government objectives. Incorporating arts and culture into innovation districts helps to achieve the Government's broader urban regeneration and innovation agenda.

In its research paper, *Cultivating a Successful Innovation District June 2016*, UrbanGrowth NSW identified five core criteria for success. Understanding the role of arts and culture across four of the five criteria (economic, human capital, physical and virtual infrastructure and identity and brand) will not only help to achieve success, but also make the innovation district unique and truly distinctive from global peers.

CRITERIA FOR SUCCESS ⁱ	ROLE OF ARTS AND CULTURE
<p>ECONOMIC Diverse mix of economic activity that facilitates and benefits from the exchange of ideas, innovation and talent</p>	<p>Arts and culture are part of the STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Maths) group of workers an innovation district should aim to attract to optimise creativity and innovation.</p> <p>Artists, maker spaces and cultural venues also contribute to the diversity of people, businesses and activities. Arts practice often typifies innovation.</p>
<p>HUMAN CAPITAL The people and talent base needed to drive growth and innovation</p>	<p>Arts and culture attract global talent and the businesses which seek to employ them. People want to live and work in vibrant and creative spaces.</p>
<p>PHYSICAL AND VIRTUAL INFRASTRUCTURE Physical infrastructure to facilitate affordable connectivity and movement of goods, services and labour</p>	<p>Arts and culture contribute to the sociability and networking capability of an innovation district, creating spaces where people are inspired, want to linger and exchange ideas.</p>
<p>IDENTITY AND BRAND Brand which attracts investment, talent and demand</p>	<p>Arts and culture help to create an authentic 'sense of place' and build an attractive global profile and brand.</p>

STEAM – SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY, ENGINEERING, ARTS AND MATHS

Engagement with arts and culture is essential to inspiring creative processes that foster innovation. The relationship between the arts and innovation has a long history with notable examples from Leonardo Da Vinci to Steve Jobs. Steve Jobs regularly noted that the biggest difference between Apple and its competitors was that Apple always tried to integrate art and science, with the original Mac team having backgrounds in the arts.

Recognising the importance of artistic and creative skills to the traditional STEM education subjects, the arts are being added to create the acronym 'STEAM'. Like scientists, artists work with new concepts and ideas. They make observations, conduct research, pose questions and hypotheses and create bodies of work that articulate possible solutions and different perspectives. The reasoning behind incorporating the arts into STEM education programs can also be made for integrating arts into innovation districts.

An innovation district which incorporates artists, maker spaces and cultural institutions alongside its STEM businesses will encourage creativity and design. It also has the advantage of diversifying the workforce, attracting businesses of different sizes and industries which help to drive interest from investors. Furthermore, the arts add a layer of approachability and social interaction to STEM subjects, driving broader engagement across the innovation district.



Image courtesy of Here East, London, United Kingdom

LEVERAGING ARTS AND CULTURE TO DELIVER A SUCCESSFUL INNOVATION DISTRICT

Economic success – Arts optimises creativity and diversifies a district’s use and people

Creative thinking is the hallmark of many successful and innovative companies. There is a strong economic case for incorporating artists, maker spaces and cultural venues into an innovation district, given the role of art and design in fostering innovation across the traditional STEM subjects.

Arts and culture also encourage a dynamic, inclusive and engaging innovation district. Having artists and designers work alongside scientists and engineers adds to the social diversity of the area. Including cultural spaces, such as auditoriums, galleries and exhibition space, also diversifies the uses of the district, creating different reasons to visit and opportunities for activation during both day and night.

Human Capital success – Arts attracts global talent and companies

The link between great cities of culture and commercial centres with talented knowledge workers is strong. International researchⁱⁱ has shown that arts and culture are central to what makes a city appealing to global talent, and hence, to the businesses which seek to employ them. New York, London and Tokyo, for example, are great cities of culture as well as economic powerhouses.

In the globalised knowledge economy, having a well-educated workforce is the key to success, and these workers demand stimulating, creative environments. This not only applies at a city-wide level but also at a district-level. Large companies are locating themselves in liveable and vibrant districts with the workers they wish to attract front of mind. A key reason Google chose Chelsea for its New York headquarters was its proximity to the High Line, the cultural parklands built on an elevated section of a disused Railroad, and the Chelsea Markets.

Physical and virtual infrastructure success – Arts creates social spaces where people want to stay and share ideas

Incorporating arts infrastructure into the physical environment of an innovation district helps to foster a culture of creativity and innovation. Arts-led placemaking principles create liveable spaces which people are attracted to, inspired by, want to linger and share ideas.

Innovation districts need to consider both hard and soft infrastructure requirements from an early stage of planning. Hard infrastructure, such as

public art, maker spaces, multi-use cultural venues and events spaces contribute to a 'sense of place' and draw in a diverse group of people. Cultural venues, such as theatres, auditoriums, gallery and exhibition spaces, also have the added advantage of activating precincts and creating pedestrian traffic during both the day and night.

Event spaces provide a forum for 'deliberate' networking and professional development, but space is also needed for 'incidental' occurrences. This includes museums, galleries, cafes, bars and open green space such as quadrangles, where people meet by chance.

To attract people and keep a precinct activated, hard infrastructure should be accompanied by soft infrastructure such as festivals, events and programming. Activation can be easy and inexpensive to achieve by incorporating markets, busking or street theatre. It can also be about creating a destination by expanding the footprint of existing events, such as the Vivid Festival. Early consideration should be given to the types of events, both cultural and corporate, in the precinct and the hard infrastructure requirements to facilitate them.

Multi-use venues should be considered, for example a theatre or auditorium can have product launches during the day and performances during the evening. It is important that activation strategies and event programming policies are written alongside retail and commercial strategies. This will ensure collaboration and participation of all tenants. Engaging an Arts and Cultural Advisor at the beginning of the process will assist in growing a deeper understanding and facilitate the successful integration of activation strategies at the planning stages.

Identity and brand success – Arts creates a locally authentic 'sense of place' and global profile

Truly embedding arts and culture across the early planning, construction and management of innovation districts is an authentic way to build identity and place capital. This can be achieved through incorporating maker spaces, cultural institutions, public art, event space and cultural programming as well as engaging local artists.

Working with local artists to develop the precinct design and features is an authentic way to build a strong and distinctive identity. International researchⁱⁱⁱ shows the importance of 'continuity' in the development of innovation districts. It is easier, and more authentic, for districts to build on the existing identity of the community and its original urban fabric. Prior to the development of the Hunters Point Shipyard, San Francisco, a large community of artists lived in the area. To build on the existing culture of creativity and ingenuity, affordable housing and maker-spaces were included in the innovation district's design to ensure that the artists' community and history were retained.

CASE STUDIES

ACMI X, Melbourne, Australia

When the Australian Centre for the Moving Image (ACMI) moved to a new Southbank office in early 2016, it set aside 60 of its 140 seats to build a new co-working space called ACMI X. ACMI X is the first facility of its kind to be set up by a major cultural institution in Australia. It offers affordable accommodation to creative practitioners and small creative companies, across a range of disciplines including tech start-ups, games developers, filmmakers, choreographers, graphic designers and visual artists.

By increasing the proximity of creative industry workers, ACMI X fosters collaboration, experimentation and inspiration. The co-working space also provides ACMI with an opportunity to develop content and identify talent within its sector.

Industry collaboration is also fostered through ACMI X's shared event space and programming. The space regularly hosts a range of events during the year, from networking events and pitch nights, to industry training courses.

KEY LEARNINGS

- Incorporate co-working space into a cultural institution and innovation hub
- Diversify workforce and disciplines to encourage innovation
- Increase proximity to foster a culture of collaboration
- Effective method for ACMI to develop content and identify industry talent
- Increase 'sociability' and networking capability through shared events space and programming



Image courtesy of ACMI by Field Carr

Here East, London, United Kingdom

The London Legacy Development Corporation (LLDC) was formed in April 2012 to ensure the London 2012 Games and creation of Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park delivered long-term benefits to the community. The LLDC's task is to transform and integrate one of the most challenged areas in London into world-class, sustainable and thriving neighbourhoods.

On site, the former Olympic Press and Broadcast Centres have been transformed into the innovation hub, Here East. Developed by Delancey, a specialist real estate investment, development and advisory company, Here East will include a range of versatile spaces, bringing together global companies with innovative start-ups to collaborate and learn from each other. Here East has already attracted a diverse mix of organisations including BT Sport television studios, Infinity SDC Data Centre, SPACE Studios who will run the co-working space for artists, Loughborough University and University College London. It also includes Plexal, Europe's largest innovation centre.

Here East recognises the vital role arts and culture plays in bringing the community together and has incorporated cultural elements throughout the hub. The Gantry will be a studio space for artists, designers and craftspeople and will be managed by SPACE, a leading visual arts organisation. The Gantry will include a diverse range of fields such as digital media, ceramics, textile design, furniture, product design, print, and sculpture. Here East will also include a theatre and cultural event space for talks, film screenings, theatre productions and exhibitions.

Arts and cultural facilities are also being developed around Here East, including Olympicopolis, which is destined to be Europe's largest arts and culture district. Iconic institutions already committed to Olympicopolis include the V&A, London College of Fashion, University College London, Sadler's Wells and America's Smithsonian Institute.

KEY LEARNINGS

- Incorporate artisan maker spaces and co-working spaces
- Include a diversity of businesses (large and small), and a diversity of workers and disciplines
- Increase networking capability through shared events spaces, cafes and restaurants for meetings
- Incorporate cultural infrastructure, such as the theatre, to increase 'sociability', networking opportunities and footfall during the day and night

The SF Shipyard, San Francisco, United States of America



Image courtesy of FivePoint - The SF Shipyard

The Hunters Point Shipyard and Candlestick Point is a 700-acre development project that will transform the former military base into a thriving community of more than 20,000 people in San Francisco's southeast corner. The project is being led by a private developer FivePoint, and will include retail, market-rate and affordable housing, open space, a green science and technology campus and an Urban Innovation District.

The Urban Innovation District will be an incubator for new businesses and a space for artists and makers. FivePoint is encouraging arts and culture in the district through their education programs, providing affordable housing and incorporating artist and maker spaces. FivePoint has developed a partnership with San Francisco State University to bring innovation and the arts together in their education programs. The district will include 100 low cost artist-and-maker community spaces for the community's existing 300 working artists.

Prior to the Shipyard project commencing, the area was home to a large community of artists. The developer identified that not only should arts and culture be incorporated into their Urban Innovation District to foster creativity and collaboration, it was also integral to the development of their brand. The district's existing culture of creativity, ingenuity and community should be built on to create an authentic identity and brand.

KEY LEARNINGS

- Leverage local artisan community to build a locally authentic identity and brand
- Incorporate artisan maker spaces and co-working spaces
- Include affordable housing to encourage diversity
- Partnership with university to include arts and culture in education programming

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- ⁱ UrbanGrowth NSW – Cultivating a Successful Innovation District, June 2016
 - ⁱⁱ World Cities Culture Report 2014
 - ⁱⁱⁱ Project for Public Spaces – 8 Placemaking Principles for Innovation Districts, 2016