

Need of innovative and suitable education for the Cultural and Creative Industries



Viktoria Heinzl
Stuttgart Media University,
"Generator" Startup Center



Lizett Adelaida Samaniego Rivera
Stuttgart Media University,
"Generator" Startup Center

Meaning of Creative Industries as drivers of innovation for the economy and society

The Cultural and Creative Industries (CCI) are considered a crucial sector that drives economic and social innovation in all areas of the economy and society. It is also a pioneer of digital transformation and innovation. The CCI has been forward-looking regarding entrepreneurial activities by realising new business ideas and work scenarios. Though individual companies are

relatively small, and the labour and employment situation is often specific (incl. entrepreneurs, freelancers, part-time work, sometimes unstable work situations), various innovative approaches and methods in different fields such as business, education, technology, working style have been established and promoted through their positive influence.

The actors of the CCI, concerning their concepts for work organisation and cooperation, have an influence beyond their industry boundaries, known as spill-over effects. They are in a unique position for open innovation processes with short innovation cycles because of their deeply rooted willingness to cooperate, use of the latest technologies, and outsider position in cooperation with other industries. The term innovation includes both technical innovations like product and process innovation, as well as non-technical or hidden innovations like design innovation (improvement of product features), business model innovation (development of new business models), and work innovation (change of established work processes).

Increasing technological advancements have amplified the innovative capacity of creative professionals. The launch of new information technologies has significantly reduced the costs of production, distribution, networking, and marketing. However, SMEs, which are characterised by traditional research-oriented innovation activities, have difficulty developing substantial new innovations during ongoing operations. Short-lived developments pose major challenges for companies in all sectors.

Actors of the CCI, who often work in independent structures, could provide valuable impetus in various areas, such as education and training, working methods, prototyping, and cooperative process and product development. Compared to other sectors of the economy, digitalisation is crucial for all actors of the CCI, as digital services open up new markets and target groups. The artistic and social demands that creative actors place on their services promote a special dialogue in digital change, which integrates cultural identity, the discussion of values in the economy and society, and the social framework of togetherness.

Collaborative work with actors in the CCI promotes **creativity** and creative skills among company employees. According to the P21 study in 2018, these skills are essential for the future and are described as one of the four key learning skills, along with **critical thinking, collaboration, and communication**. **By targeting the promotion of these four work skills, individuals can effectively deal with new and complex educational structures and work processes in the future while also improving their personal innovation capability.**

A reflection on current needs for professionalised education in the CCI

In today's world, the CCI have emerged as one of the most significant contributors to economic growth and social development. However, to ensure this growth is sustainable, it is essential to invest in higher education. **The pivotal role of education in fostering sustainable development within the CCI is indisputable. Through education, we can equip the future workforce with the necessary skills and knowledge to innovate, adapt and positively impact society.**

The European Commission is, therefore, already deeply committed to promoting innovative and suitable education for the CCI through established specific funding and research programmes (e.g. Erasmus+, Horizon Europe) to achieve this goal. By fostering innovation in education for the CCI, the Commission aims to drive economic growth, create employment opportunities, and empower the next generation of artists, designers, and creators with the necessary skills related to the current needs of society, economy and ecology.

Establishing educational systems that need creative, innovative, and entrepreneurial skills has become even more important nowadays. This is why it is also imperative to closely scrutinize individual submarkets within the CCI to tailor existing educational strategies better and develop novel teaching methods that meet this dynamic industry's future needs and demands. By analysing current trends and conducting thorough research within specific submarkets such as design, software and games, advertising, and architecture,

it would be possible to provide a more personalised and comprehensive education to individuals within the CCI, enabling them to excel in their respective fields.

In today's rapidly evolving Creative Economy, where new technologies, sustainability efforts and changing market demands are constantly shaping the industry landscape, it has become essential to provide an education that fosters student development and equips them with the necessary skills to navigate this dynamic environment. As such, innovative forms of education that prioritise adaptability and creativity should increasingly become the norm.

To create a fair and inclusive education environment for the CCI, it is also crucial to prioritise diversity efforts that target gender, ethnicity, and socio-economic inequalities. By doing so, we can ensure that all students have equal access to educational opportunities and are empowered to achieve their full potential regardless of their background or circumstances. Despite ongoing efforts to increase inclusivity and diversity in higher education, access to creative fields remains unequal, contributing to significant disparities in the creative workforce. This imbalance affects individuals seeking to pursue careers in creative fields and limits the potential for innovation and progress within these industries. Educational institutions and employers alike must prioritise diversity and equity to create a more just and thriving creative sector.

The following needs for action and recommendations can, therefore, be stated:

- Higher education should develop curriculum and didactics tailored to the needs of the specific submarkets in the CCI, focusing on green, digital and entrepreneurial skills.
- Education of the CCI should be market-oriented to cultivate creative talents and meet industry demands.
- Increase inclusivity and diversity in higher education to enable everyone to have access to all creative fields.
- Strengthening collaboration between education and research with the industry is necessary to better align educational and research outcomes with industry needs.
- Incorporating 21st-century skills, digital education, and lifelong learning to prepare students for the fast-evolving CCI landscape.

As the needs of CCIs' sectors continue to evolve, educators and researchers must create models that can adapt to the ever-changing landscape. These models should be flexible, transversal, and intergenerational, allowing them to cater to diverse student profiles. Additionally, the models should incorporate a hybridisation of formats, incorporating the latest technologies and techniques to provide students with the best possible learning experience.

UGD HUB – Best Practice Example for education of the CCI

The University Green Digital (UGDHUB) project was initially conceived by the University of Split in Croatia and aims to establish a university education system that prioritises sustainability. To bring this idea to fruition, the Media University of Stuttgart and four other institutions have been invited to partner in the project's implementation in 2022. The project's primary objective is to promote the development of sustainable and digital businesses that contribute to reducing the impact of climate change and creating a sustainable economy in the long term.

To achieve this goal, the project currently conducts various activities that train students and university staff members in essential topics such as SDGs (Sustainable Development Goals), Green Competencies, and Sustainable Business Development. By providing such training, the project seeks to encourage the creation of a workforce equipped to meet the challenges of a rapidly changing world and positively impact the environment and society.

The main expected outputs of the project are:

- Developed and implemented DGE education program with target groups.
- Developed and implemented DGE Knowledge Factory, a web platform for e-learning, knowledge exchange and dissemination of project results.
- Developed and implemented the Greenpreneur startup factory program, a support program for university startups in green and digital innovation.

One of the key goals of this project is to establish an **international University Green Digital HUB that supports students, staff, and university startups in developing digital, green, and entrepreneurial skills** after the project ends. The HUB should provide various services, including an education program and a web platform for e-learning, knowledge exchange, and dissemination of project results. As of April 2024, this HUB is in its testing phase.

The UGDH Hub programs are designed to be utilised annually to enhance the skills of students, staff, and university startups at three prestigious universities: the University of Malaga, the University of Split, and Stuttgart Media University. In addition to these higher education institutions, non-higher education institutions such as PCST, Preneurz, and IHS will remain project partners in the developed programs. These partners will act as mentors, trainers, co-creators, and co-organizers of various university events and will also join the Digital Green Entrepreneurial Advisory Board of the University Green Digital Hub. This Advisory Board will be formed by the project partners as well as other industry partners and associations upon the completion of the project. It will support and guide the project partners in regularly updating their programs to align with technological development and green practices. They will be able to strengthen their partnerships and international programs with HEIs and use the developed programs to work with different groups.

The journey towards achieving project goals/ outputs has been relatively smooth so far. This is mainly because there has been a significant increase in academic interest in sustainable business practices and the project has been able to tap into this. As a result, it has been less of a challenge to engage the target groups to participate in the project's activities. However, the project has not been entirely exempt from the usual problems that arise when working in multicultural teams. The project team has had to navigate cultural differences and overcome language barriers to ensure everyone is on the same page. Despite these challenges, the project has made steady progress towards its objectives.

This article is part of the series **Education in the Cultural and Creative Industries** created by KSIgune - Higher Education and Research Cluster for CCIs in the Basque Country, in the framework of the Creativity World Forum 2024. The experts, authors of the articles, have participated in the thematic area "Education in CCIs" coordinated by KSIgune.

The complete series is available at www.ksigune.eus

