

## THE STRENGTH OF CONNECTIONS: INNOVATION ENGINES IN CREATIVE INDUSTRIES

*Drs. A.P. Drogendijk (MSUS)\* & Professor Dr. M. J. W. van Twist\*\**

\* ProjectManagement Bureau, city of Amsterdam, P. O. Box 1269, 1000 BG Amsterdam, The Netherlands, [ddrogendijk@pmb.amsterdam.nl](mailto:ddrogendijk@pmb.amsterdam.nl)

\*\* Department of Public Administration, Erasmus University Rotterdam, P.O Box 1738, 3000 DR, Rotterdam, The Netherlands, [vantwist@fsw.eur.nl](mailto:vantwist@fsw.eur.nl)

**ABSTRACT:** In the first decade of this century, cities have again become meeting points and market places that form the basis for urban innovation and new economic developments. Sun and shadow are essential conditions for innovation. Most innovations are born in the 'shadow' of attention and policy. The 'sunny side' offers opportunities for growth and harvesting of success. Between the sun and shadow side are organizations that create conditions for innovation: innovation engines. We will argue that innovating cities must create conditions for meeting between the sun-side and shadow.

**KEYWORDS:** Innovation, creative industries, urban economy, governance strategies, flexible organizations, entrepreneurs, connectivity

### 1 INTRODUCTION

Since early 2009 the media reports about a new virus, the Mexican flu has not been out of the news. Virologists from around the world warned from day one of a global outbreak. And indeed, the virus spread all over the world, first within North America spreading from Mexico to the United States, before moving on to Western countries and finally moving to all continents from country to country and city to city. Since June 6<sup>th</sup> 2009, there is officially a global flu pandemic. In the Netherlands, the National Institute for Health and Environment (RIVM) warned that within the Netherlands residents of the Amsterdam Metropolitan Area are most likely to be infected by the Mexican flu. The logical explanation is that Amsterdam is not only the largest city in the country, but also a place where millions of people – Dutch and foreign – meet and thus can be infected.

Fortunately as a global meeting point and marketplace Amsterdam offers more than the high risk of catching Mexican flu. It also provides opportunities for many other, more pleasant forms of 'infection' for example innovative ideas. This is a feature that certainly goes back to the 17th century. Initially, commercial fleets sailed the oceans with Amsterdam as home harbor. Later the tolerant climate of the city attracted new populations of Huguenots and Sephardic Jews and in the 1960's the hippies. Today Amsterdam is a global marketplace, for by example aviation, finance, Internet, but (unfortunately) also criminals, and drug trafficking. And as a rule for a marketplace, viruses like the Mexican flu spread around easily.

Cities are meeting points and market places which experience economic and social developments and are constantly changing. Urban areas are characterized by a high degree of social and economic complexity, coupled with multiple management issues, where new forms of cooperation (governance) emerge. Since the 90s of the last century, many cities have experienced a revival. After decades of suburbanization, cities are again becoming popular. Hereby, creative industries play an important role because they bring back economic activity and vibrancy into the heart of the city. The creative city is the opposite of the industrial city. New development also raises new questions (*new urban questions*). In which parts of the city will creative industries establish? Does displacement happen? Who are the representatives of creative industries?

Worldwide there is a lot of insight into these questions, also with regards to the Amsterdam Metropolitan Area. Creative industries are the focal point of spatial-economic policy in this region.

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Amsterdam is looking for opportunities to become a global meeting point and marketplace for creative industries. The underlying idea behind this policy is that competition with other European regions is becoming increasingly important. Amsterdam is part of the sub top of European regions. In Europe, the differences between the 'sub top' urban regions are very small. The challenge is to maintain this position and improve growing economic clusters. In this regard creative industries offer a good opportunity. The sector has a high profile in the region and is also a global growth industry. In fashion, the gaming industry, architecture, graphic design, Amsterdam plays an important role.

Economic growth depends on many factors, the price of oil, birth waves and catastrophes on a global scale to the opening of a new highway and nice summer weather at the local level. In this article we will focus on creative industries. For economic growth in this economic cluster innovation is above all else the crucial factor. *Creativity is innovation*. Worldwide cities are struggling with the question how innovations in creative industries are born and how creative entrepreneurs can be encouraged and supported. In this light it is interesting that in Amsterdam creative industries have grown even during the recession<sup>i</sup>. It's in the DNA of Amsterdam that the city is attractive for innovation and a global meeting point and marketplace for creative industries. This is remarkable because creative industries - in contrast to traditional economic sectors like industry - receive almost no financial support from the government. Many innovation programs are based on government involvement and significant financial support. In creative industries this is not the case. It raises the question if creative industries are growing *despite* or *because of* government support and involvement?

In this paper we address the question of innovation in creative industries. In spring 2009, research was done into the strength of connectivity of Creative Amsterdam through surveys, interviews and workshops. This paper is based on the result of this research. We will show that in this sector innovation occurs in an entirely different setting, where networking and new coalitions play an important role. It creates a context for new organizations, so called innovation engines. Case studies in Amsterdam show that quarrels, love and jealousy also lead to innovations. Emotional relationships have a positive effect on innovation. It does not mean that innovations in creative industries emerge spontaneously. As in traditional economic sectors, the development of an innovative idea is a matter of hard work, and investment in time and money. But creative entrepreneurs require different conditions for an urban working environment than technical whiz kids and professors. Casual encounters play an important role, as in the case of the spread of the Mexican flu. It leads to the (eternal) question how to stimulate luck (of innovation in the creative sector)? If connectivity between people and organizations is a precondition for innovation, how can connectivity be stimulated?

Before answering this question, we will first discuss new ways of innovation in creative industries. We will then go on to give an insight into the features (DNA) of the Amsterdam creative industries. In particular, we will focus on the contribution of an innovation engine to the creative industries. Finally we turn back to the question how innovation in creative industries can contribute to the new urban economy.

## 2 INNOVATION IN KNOWLEDGE ECONOMY

In a traditional (industrial) approach, innovation is an intellectual task performed by technical specialists in a laboratory-like setting. Innovation in this context is the result of clever whiz kids or brilliant professors. In the knowledge economy, other factors lead to innovation<sup>ii</sup>. Of course, whiz kids and professors are still important, but far more relevant for innovation are people who are making connections and creating new coalitions. Innovators in the knowledge economy have extensive networks from various disciplines. Innovations are often, the result of new, spontaneous coalitions and cooperation between people. The biggest threat to innovation is that parties only make contact with their existing network. This will not lead to new ideas, because many as yet unseen solutions and original ideas will not be thought of. People remain within their own group or network. In city development it leads to the situation where by a once original idea is copied all around the world, despite the unique features of every urban area. See for example the concepts of Central Business Districts or waterfront city. They can be found everywhere in the same appearance. How to think about so called Brain Clusters and Science Parks? In little more than a decade, these concepts have spread all over the world in almost identical form. The reproduction of best practices is usually the maximum achievable for many cities. Higher quality, more original ideas, remains out of sight.

Innovation is essentially developing a good idea (invention, discovery, performance), and drawing together a network that could help the idea to grow. For innovation, networks and new alliances are of great importance. Innovation requires new connections, crossovers of private corporations, government and

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research institutions. There are many examples of successful innovation of border crossing behavior. A well-known success is the alliance between Philips and Douwe Egberts, which resulted in a totally different concept for coffee, the Senseo. The Connection between McDonalds and Disney cartoon characters gave us 'Happy Meals'. It proved to be a very profitable combination. More recently, cooperation between Heineken and Krups, has led to the beer tender. But also in the public domain examples can be found of innovation being generated through new connections. In the Netherlands, a meeting between a real estate developer and a waste processor led to the concept of skiing on waste. In a similar way a kindergarten was founded in an old elderly persons home by a smart teacher looking for a new location. Another example is the combination of education and neighborhood development by restaurants that are run by students. The English cook Jamie Oliver had even molded it in a format: 'Fifteen'. The success of innovation in the knowledge economy comes not from regular processes and repeatable project management, but from sudden ideas and creative chaos. The challenge is to search for new concepts, new organizations that can facilitate this kind of innovation. On the one hand these new organizations need to offer space for innovation and new allies whilst at the same time they also protect public interest and offer a framework to avoid abuse of public funds.

The creation of innovation engines is a recent development in response to this need. In the Netherlands, in 2003, the national government established the national Innovation Platform, a think tank of directors in public administration, top scientists and captains of industry. The most remarkable and (sometimes painful) experience in the first years of the Innovation Platform was the organizational and political struggle surrounding innovation<sup>iii</sup>. It led to a series of lessons for conditions for innovations. One of which is to have a common purpose or vision on which to fall back on. Another is the creation of a cluster of businesses, educational and research institutes and government. Cooperation within such a cluster can launch a flywheel. Modern history shows various examples of flywheels, such as the chip industry in Taiwan, wind energy in Denmark and mobile telephone technology in Finland. In the United States, Silicon Valley would never have become a world leading IT-district without the presence of Stanford University and the continuous flux of contracts (money) from the Pentagon.

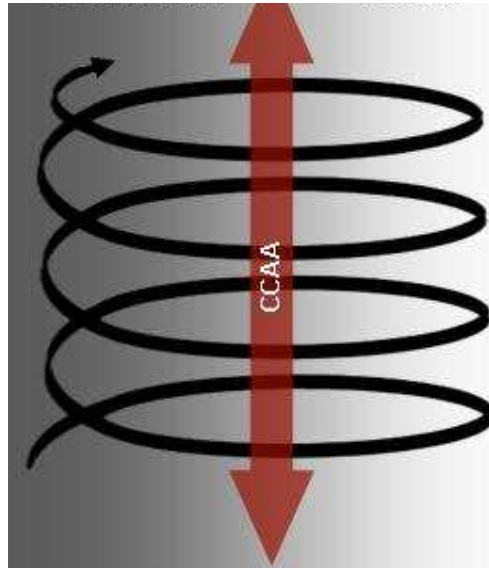
Innovation systems arise not only by chance, but may actually be stimulated by the creation of 'fertile ground'. Components are physical proximity, the development of 'same language' and the availability of funds and venture capital. Also with these conditions innovation depends to a large extent on 'luck' and spontaneous development of meaningful relationships between people<sup>iv</sup>. To increase the likelihood of luck, organizations can be created that foster innovation.

## **2.1 Innovation between sunlight and shadow**

"Let's put a little Van Dijck brown where this small tree is growing." Bob Ross painted his mystical landscapes in front of millions of viewers. He had exceptional talent. Most artworks are created in cluttered workshops on remote locations. Most art is born in 'the shade'; places outside the immediate focus of decision makers, businesses, media and regulation. It is the on the edge of policy and the unknown. The shadow side of policy is a fertile place for new ideas and innovations. Usually they occur by accident, it is almost always a conscious decision to seek the shade.

But innovation can not remain in the shadow forever. Outside the shade and in the sun, new ideas get attention and they can find a commercial market. With the help of others, innovations can also be enriched into interesting products. At the same time ideas in the sun get confronted with issues that may undermine their innovative character, such as subsidy-dependence, regulation, bureaucracy, and such like. Take for example Amy Winehouse: too much fame, money and attention has harmed her talent as singer-songwriter. The challenge is to find a balance between the shadow where innovations can be born and the sun side where ideas can grow further.

The area where sunlight and shadow find their balance can be referred to as the 'in-between-land', see figure 1. It offers space where new connections can be made, which usually do not pop up in everyday life. 'In-between-land' is not closely regulated so new forms of collaboration and innovation can grow. It gives space to form new connections and try new things, regardless of daily obligations and corporate obligations. It gives freedom and is a place to share ideas and knowledge. In-between-land offers a humus layer where new products and services grow. It consists of networks that can produce unexpected opportunities. Failures are part of the game and should be accepted and even cherished.



**Figure 1** innovation in between shadow and sun side

## 2.2 Innovation engines and the strength of connections

An important feature of ‘in-between-land’ is that it has no center of power. The organizer of such a network is a facilitator and does not impose his will on to the participants<sup>v</sup>. Innovation engines are ideally suited for this role. They form a link between different parties, each with its own characteristics, needs and background. To describe the way these intermediary organizations promote cooperation and interaction we talk about the ‘strength of connections’. This goes further than crossovers between parties. Strength of connections is a strategy aimed at connecting the shadow and sun side of innovation. On one hand, innovation engines must create conditions for bottom-up innovation. On the other hand they have to pay attention to securing visible results. Expertise, independence and integrity are essential preconditions for an innovation engine. Other requirements are persuasion<sup>vi</sup> and the ability to connect to parties (Teisman, 2005). In the next section we will look how an innovation engine in the Amsterdam Metropolitan Area has fulfilled this role.

## 3 INNOVATION ENGINE ‘CREATIVE AMSTERDAM’

The emergence of creative industries illustrates the transformation of the industrial age into a knowledge economy. In this economy production and thinking are increasingly separated. Apple (iMac, iPod) has shown that a large proportion of the value of products is no longer the product itself, but the symbolic meaning and design of it. The importance of this symbolism is increasing in a society where people are searching for identity. Creative entrepreneurs are the producers of these symbolic goods. In the knowledge economy they take a more prominent position.

However, creative industries are not an isolated economy. They are part of larger value chains. For example, the fashion industry is dependent on textile producers, distribution centers, sewing workshops, retail etc. These sub-sectors are not covered by the definition of creative industries, but are indispensable to it. The gaming industry, a booming industry, is not even referred to in the current definition of creative industries in the Netherlands.

Creative industries are probably the most distinct form of the knowledge economy. Traditional growth patterns are hardly applicable, because employment is not a good indicator of success. Creative entrepreneurs are often not interested in quantitative growth, because it brings bureaucracy and managerial issues. More often increasing production is outsourced, so entrepreneurs can focus on creativity. The number of start-ups is a better indicator. The problem here is that independent entrepreneurs are poorly registered and their role in traditional economic terms is constantly changing. For example, a person who is *graphic designer* during the day can become an *artist* at night when performing as a VJ to earn some more money. Another problem with pinpointing creative entrepreneurs is that their market can not be unequivocally linked

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to one region. In the Netherlands cities compete with each other for their creative identity. Amsterdam is the centre; other cities with a creative cluster are Eindhoven, Arnhem, Utrecht and Rotterdam. For creative entrepreneurs the hierarchy of creative cities is a theoretical discussion. They continually switch between a daily urban system and (inter)national networks. Creative entrepreneurs are thus typical examples of 'glocalization': think global, act local.

Creative industries bring economic development back into the heart of the city, and there they leave their traces. Compared with the externally oriented industrial sector, creative entrepreneurs are literally and figuratively standing in the center of urban society. They give new perspectives on urban areas that were long hidden: old working class neighborhoods, abandoned docks, vacant offices and other fringes of the city. In places where the creative industries locate, they create dynamic environments for both businesses and residents. The added value in property or social attraction by this type of development is still insufficiently recognized.

### **3.1 The DNA of creative industries Amsterdam**

On a global level, Amsterdam is known for its 17th century canals. For creative entrepreneurs the city centre as business-location is much too expensive. Start-ups and small businesses are looking for the fringes of the city. On a local scale it leads to new meeting points and marketplaces for creative industries. For example in the 80s and 90s, the 19th century neighborhood 'De Pijp' has underwent a metamorphosis into a yuppie district. A more recent development is that of the NDSM shipyard, on the northern IJ-riverbank. Less than ten years ago this area was a forgotten corner of the city where city nomads, junkies and seedy businesses were in charge. Now it is a hotspot for creative industries, including MTV Europe and IDTV. The success of the NDSM shipyard is indicative of the DNA of Amsterdam. The tolerant climate, history of trading, multilingualism and more make the city attractive to international creative entrepreneurs. The presence of the Amsterdam internet exchange (AMS-IX), the financial center and Schiphol Airport contribute to a high degree of connectivity. At the same time the authenticity and attractiveness of the Amsterdam city centre gives the city the right profile for its further development as a creative global marketplace.

The dynamics of the creative industries and the relatively new nature of them, means that there are no proven instruments for development and innovation. Copying a concept like 'Waterfront city' or 'Science Park' is not possible. New concepts, new ideas had to be found. In 2007, this led to the establishment of Creative Amsterdam, a program office for creative industries in the Amsterdam Metropolitan Area. In general, the center offers support to young and developing creative entrepreneurs. The sixteen founders consist off seven local councils, three provinces, three development companies, two chambers of commerce and the national government. The Amsterdam Innovation Motor, Task Force Innovation Utrecht and the development corporation Flevoland are responsible for implementing the programs. Today Creative Amsterdam is working for 14 different (sub) sectors in creative industries. The organization has an almost impossible task: each sub sector has its own dynamics, development, characteristics and entrepreneurial climate. A 'handbook for the creative industries' does not exist.

### **3.2 Innovation engine Creative Amsterdam**

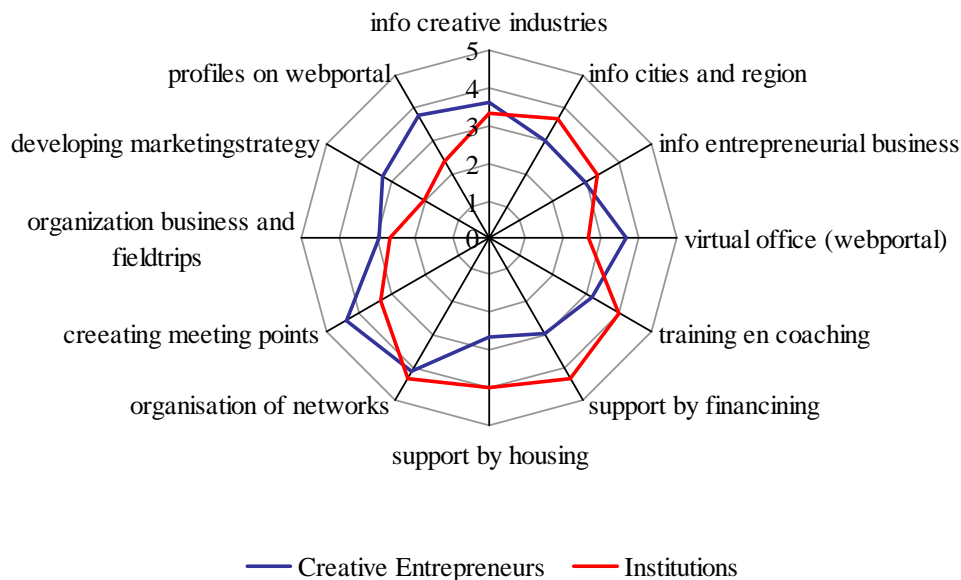
Creative Amsterdam has focused on three activities: the pooling of knowledge, services and promotion of the region. In figure 2, the estimation by entrepreneurs and institutions of these activities is scored in twelve measurable indicators. It provides some interesting insights.

First, there is a mismatch between the measurement by entrepreneurs of the virtual office (web portal) and the focus on it by Creative Amsterdam. Since its foundation in 2007 Creative Amsterdam has invested a lot of time in building a website and a knowledge portal. With 9000 hits a month the website attracts a lot of users. The website is also a good communication tool for the 16 partners. However, creative entrepreneurs are critical about the commercial opportunities of the site. In an interview one entrepreneur had the following comment to make: *A beautiful website alone does not generate revenue.*

Another interesting insight is the difference between creative entrepreneurs and institutions on services. Institutions (government and education) highly measure activities as the delivery of services and the coaching of starting and growing businesses. It's their daily work. But unfortunately it does not match the need of creative entrepreneurs. Interviews showed that these activities fulfill a need, especially for smaller companies.

The need and desire of creative industries centers on creating meeting points for networking and business-to-business activity. Providing opportunities for connecting ideas, people and practices in an open environment, is essential to being able to discover and take advantage of new opportunities. This is the strength of the innovation engine Creative Amsterdam. Above all, creative entrepreneurs want meeting points and market places in a non-committal way. The range of meeting activities for creative industries - whether or not organized by Creative Amsterdam - is great. The challenge is to continue to monitor whether the diversity meets the actual needs of creative entrepreneurs. Innovation in the kind of meeting activities and commercial possibilities is an absolute must. The Amsterdam Fashion Week is a prime example. This annual festival of Amsterdam fashion gets a lot of media attention, but commercial partners do hardly participate. For creative entrepreneurs the Amsterdam Fashion Week is commercially of little interest.

Creative Amsterdam can stimulate innovation if the organization pays attention to the need of creative entrepreneurs. They can do it this by creating an in-between-land, a humus layer of information and services, where creative entrepreneurs can engage with each connection. This increases the chances of the emergence of interesting crossovers and innovation.



**Figure 2** Measurement Creative Entrepreneurs and Institutions of Innovation engine Creative Amsterdam

### 3.3 Added value and coincidence

The use of economic models to measure the added value of creative industries is subject of fierce debate. It is not for nothing that Richard Florida's book 'The Rise of the Creative Class' attracted so much attention. Florida showed a crucial link between urban growth and the presence of a creative class. In general, government authorities as sponsors and financers need economic models for measuring added value of creative industries. The problem is that simple economic models do not exist. As we described before, is not possible to put creative industries into current frameworks with simple models. Small businesses and start-ups are a particular blind spot. The social value gets underestimated and although increased values are more often being established in locations where creative industries locate they don't get taken account when calculating the added value in economic terms.

Our point is that discussions on economic models distract from the question how innovation can be stimulated. Curiosity must come from both sides: creative entrepreneurs are stimulated to visit industry and traditional business in search of business, but established economic clusters don't seek out the creative industries. Captains of industry stay in their offices and factories. More or less the same can be said about government organizations and knowledge institutions. They expect creative entrepreneurs to visit them and

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on their terms. In this situation lots of opportunities to add economic value will be missed because all worlds (business, government and knowledge) are of importance for innovation.

Innovation engines, such as Creative Amsterdam, have as part of their assignment the task of bringing these different worlds together. An interesting initiative of Creative Amsterdam are the so called 'black box' projects. You won't find these projects in any program as they emerged spontaneously (by chance). These activities have been very successful. The black box projects have demonstrated that innovation depends on drawing together different worlds. A particularly good example of this is the Business of Design Week in Hong Kong. In December 2008 more than 300 Dutch creative entrepreneurs attended the Business of Design Week in Hong Kong. This largest trade delegation in Dutch history was an unprecedented success. Not only a new market could be tapped, at least as important were the meetings between the creative entrepreneurs themselves. As a direct result, architects and game designers have invented new forms of 3D visualization in architecture. Another black box –project was the 'Do-not-do-it - yourself gatherings'. These were meetings where start-up entrepreneurs got to meet informally and were able to gather basic information for their start-up. Since its launch, the meetings are very busy and popular.

It is important to make innovation tangible. Creative industries ask for new ways of looking and measuring added value, compared to traditional economic models. Knowledge institutions can play a role in finding these new models. In the Amsterdam Metropolitan Area, universities and knowledge institutions do not participate the innovation engine. The creation of a triple helix of government, industry and education and knowledge institutions can be the next step. Brainport Eindhoven and Innovation Taskforce Utrecht are examples in the Netherlands of innovation engines that are based on the concept of triple helix.

Finally, the case study of Creative Amsterdam has showed that a small office and limited budget contribute to the general goal of innovation. Creative Amsterdam is bounded by the government but operated independently. Out of sight of politics, Creative Amsterdam was able to work on building up the confidence of business partners. A small organization offers flexibility and strength.

### **3.4 Innovating between branches and scales**

Creative Amsterdam is active in a field of innovation engines, branch organizations, governments and local institutions. There is much overlap in activities between these organizations. This raises the question about the distinctive character of Creative Amsterdam. So far, Creative Amsterdam has showed that it can create new networks and new connections between partners in creative industries, traditional industries and institutions. They are more easily accessible than their counterparts which means that for start-ups and small businesses it can fulfill a useful role by serving as a service counter for different organizations.

Creative Amsterdam has the Metropolitan Area as principal sponsor. The network approach implies that innovation is not bounded by any geographical demarcation. The innovation engine Creative Amsterdam does not stop at the border of the Metropolitan Area. In the interest of economic growth, Creative Amsterdam must have space to move along the borders of the region. Even if as a result, it indirectly stimulates creative industries in other regions in the Netherlands. It is logical that a young fashion designer from Arnhem, a city near the German border, presents himself in foreign countries as 'an inhabitant of a city near Amsterdam'. On a global scale Amsterdam is by far the most important meeting point and marketplace for creative industries in the Netherlands. This is deeply rooted in the DNA of the city. Creative Amsterdam should not be bounded by any geographical border to stimulate innovation in creative industries in Amsterdam. In fact the organization is an innovation engine for the whole sector in The Netherlands. Therefore overlap between Creative Amsterdam with other organizations is inevitable. Making restrictions for innovation would harm the effectiveness of the organization.

## **4 MEETING POINTS AND MARKETPLACES FOR INNOVATION IN CREATIVE INDUSTRIES**

In the first decade of the 21st century, cities are again a basis for economic development, not at least because of the rise of the creative industries. For the first time in decades, cities are growing in importance as a location for people and businesses. Creative industries and its representatives, creative entrepreneurs and start-ups are carriers of these exciting developments. The economic cluster is 'young', undefined and not fixed in patterns. It also means that there are no standard concepts and patterns how innovation in creative industries can be encouraged. Although the language in the creative industries suggests a predictable way of

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working, in the use of terms like *urban factories* and *city labs*, innovations in creative industries seldom come about in laboratories and factories.

For creative entrepreneurs, innovation is much more a social and interactive process. An idea or prototype that is born in the shadow of an atelier or studio can grow through interaction in the sun. To describe the space between the shadow and sun side we have introduced the idea of ‘in-between-land’: a difficult definable playing field of creative entrepreneurs, financiers, governments and research institutions.

Innovation engines operate between extremes: between the sun-side and shadow side of policy between business and government, between commerce and innovation. They function between organizations with different aspirations, expectations, language, cultures and objectives. Innovation engines can help by building new networks and promising coalitions. Nobody denies that government, business, knowledge institutions and creative entrepreneurs have different work methods and operating instructions. An organization that can create connections, translate and mediate between these different worlds has a distinct value. It is the task of innovation to bridge the gap between the different blood groups without removing the differences.

Creative Amsterdam is an innovation engine for the creative sector in the Amsterdam Metropolitan Area. A comprehensive exploration of other innovation engines in the Netherlands has shown that they work towards innovation in a similar manner as Creative Amsterdam. They facilitate members, promote the sector and organize meetings. They also work in in-between-land: between shadow and sun-side of policy and attention. We will conclude this paper with ten factors that should determine the work of innovation engines in creative industries:

1. The organization should have a clear vision of how to strengthen the creative economy in a sustainable way. Founding an innovation engine is one possible instrument for achieving this vision but is never a goal in itself.
2. Innovation engines should have a broad mission which leaves space for new ideas and flexibility. Strict definitions of objectives and focus on economic added value prevent the spontaneity of the innovation process.
3. An innovation engine is a small, flexible and temporary organization, which functions outside bureaucracy and line-management. Once innovation engines feel the need to organize and manage and/or become part of an existing (bureaucratic) structure, they lose their value.
4. Innovation engines need to operate in the shadow. The objective (innovation) and the target audience (creative entrepreneurs) are supposed to shine in the sun. The innovation engine should be secondary to the goal.
5. Innovation engines in creative industries should focus on start-ups and small businesses. Large and established companies find their own way and are often facilitated by other branch organizations.
6. It is impossible to define geographical boundaries for innovation engines. Accept blind spots and overlap of activities and organizations.
7. The most important instruments for innovation engines are creating space for meeting and making coalitions and networks which enable entrepreneurs to do business, build new coalitions and enlarge their network.
8. For innovation engines ‘trust’ between partners is of great value. They should invest a lot of time and energy into building up trust. This can take time.
9. As a basic condition for innovation, innovation engines must create a humus layer. Components of this are practical everyday services, judicial and financial know-how and (the way to) housing and workspace.
10. Innovation engines are the link between natural partners of innovation: entrepreneurs, government and education and knowledge institution.

Innovation doesn’t only depend on ‘luck’. It is possible to create conditions, which increase the likelihood of spontaneous innovations. In this paper we have examined the role of innovation engines in creating meeting points and market places for innovation in creative industries. These meeting places most often don’t arise in upper class areas or Central Business Districts, but on the fringes of the city: in former port areas, warehouses and old city districts. These spots are hidden gems for creative industries. The tragedy of the sector is that once these breeding grounds come to stand in the spotlight, it is extremely difficult to



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maintain the innovative climate. If the masses discover the location, the prices rise at the expense of the innovative character.

So, where ever you are in the world, if you know an exciting meeting point and marketplace for creative industries, keep it a secret within your local area. In that way you will be able to prolong its appeal.

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