

Creative Construct: Building for Culture and Creativity

Note-taking guide for session rapporteurs

METADATA

Session title: Digital Hubs

Presenter: Andrew Bullen – Director Media Guild in Amsterdam

Day: Tues. April 29

Time: 1:00 PM

NOTES

1. Short overview/summary of presentation

- Cross-discipline Creative Industry Hub or Incubator in the Netherlands, which operates on the principle of master and apprentice.
- Combines media, culture, society and entrepreneurship.
- Housed in a famous heritage warehouse in Amsterdam “Parkhuis de Zwijger” which has café/restaurant, several halls, radio and television studios and media workshops and federal cultural offices. De Zwijger also hosts exhibitions, debates, conferences, shows and festivals.
- Opportunities for representatives from SME's and larger Corporations to meet and exchange ideas.
- It is also a network operating at different levels: community, national and international.
- A program within De Swijger called “Het Mediagilde” (media guild) supports the development of creative talent and entrepreneurship in the field of ICT and new media. The program offers young entrepreneurs and artists workspace as well as advanced technological facilities and a program of activities focused on development of knowledge and innovation.
- Operates on the basis of creative teams of different cultural disciplines who work together to create unique products and services within the creative industry sector.

2. Key points and significant themes of presentation

Media Guild Program

- Strict and comprehensive selection criteria for participants due to functional working size limitations (30 people)
- Criteria selection ensures participants are not only highly creative and entrepreneurial but can work in a team environment effectively.
- Quality of participants determine the success of the program and willingness of banks to invest in product development

Setting in the Community

- Attributes of success are the building itself and its setting in the community which is a mixture of old and new and that it is a beloved landmark that appeals different social layers, international guests and it is open and accessible to the community
- Masters are volunteers from various industry sectors
- People also brought in from the street to work in “fab labs” (fabrication labs) to experience and work with high tech media lab equipment with the purpose of distributing knowledge to the people to encourage entrepreneurial opportunities

International Symposium 2008

Creative Construct: Building for Culture and Creativity

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Fairmont Château Laurier, Ottawa, Canada

www.symposium2008.ca

Financial Ramifications

- Gov't is generally hands off in return for funding
- Includes Banks as Sponsors
- Services are offered to offset expenses (e.g. workshops, networking events)

3. Notable examples and links to websites

-Concept of "Fablabs" and how they are used to train creative individuals with the purpose of spreading knowledge and developing a guild or craftsman entrepreneurial mentality in their society.

- How the Centre's program has contributed to Retail Software development

- Municipal Project – They are working with the municipality to develop a Passenger Transport Assistant. This is a huge project involving urban planning and social engineering to take people off the street onto public transport.

www.dezwijger.nl/index.php?nid=184

4. Interesting questions and/or comments from the audience

Q. Where was the inspiration from?

A. From Waag Society's whose mission is to research the impact of new media technologies on the quality of life by developing (technological) applications together with users. Waag Society is a renowned media lab where together with research & development there is room for experimentation with new technologies, art and culture. They founded this because there was no means of passing expertise on and decided to introduce a new form of education through the Guild.

Q. What is the ratio of master to apprentice?

A. 1:1 Top consultants do it for free

Q. What is involved in the rigorous evaluation process?

A. Involves a full-time position for scouting and recruiting, and a multiple step evaluation procedure. Basically they look for sustainability in people's business ideas. Based on pre-seed funding and not start-up. They wish to pick up on ideas no one else has evaluated as angel investors.

Q. Is there an optimum scale that would make the centre operate better?

A. Quality not quantity of individuals is what makes this centre a success. 30 people seems to be ideal. They are involved in the program for 1 year.

Note taker: Suzie Lanteigne