

CREATIVE CITIES NETWORK

How can cities and city leaders achieve competitiveness, more and better jobs, growth, sustainable development, and innovation using their 'creative capital' in the present global economy?

The term coined as 'creative cities' refers to cities that use their creative capital and their creative-edge in this knowledge economy not only to enhance their socio-economic performance but also to have a more cohesive society in the process.

Creative cities can be a powerful means for generating high value communities, both building upon and fostering:

- talent;
- connections - encouraging knowledge sharing, ideas exchange and the ability to transform ideas into knowledge and creative capital;
- distinctiveness - as competitive advantage and as expression of identity;
- diversity - both of opportunities for participation and of economies with better alignment to contemporary societal and economic drivers;
- and of 'course creativity and innovation.

While they are certainly no quick-fix panacea, these factors can help a city develop or maintain a competitive edge.

That's why CEOs For Cities is developing a Creative City Network composed of urban leaders from U.S. metro areas who will work together to understand of the opportunities associated with creative city concepts and develop and apply strategies to take advantage of these opportunities in their communities.

Although there is a growing literature on creative cities, there remains a lack of clarity around the concept. Defining and clearly articulating the concept, let alone applying it to the complex, intricate and constantly shifting entity that is a city, is a difficult task for many a city leader.

The Creative Cities Network will seek to more clearly understand what creative cities mean in real terms. It will develop tools of analysis to uncover creative assets in local communities. It will identify the components of creative cities, their impact, understand the factors that lead to their increase, and demonstrate strategies to create and strengthen these factors. The Network, then, will result in far more user-friendly insights that can be applied to enhance cities and their future prospects.

The Network will use the combined expertise and ideas of city leaders and city development professionals who are ready to grapple with these concepts locally. Simultaneously it will provide a support forum for those member cities to discuss issues, share experience, and exchange knowledge and skills with leaders working in similar circumstances, forming a network of peers for exchange and collaboration. The process for delivering this program will be refined in collaboration with the Network members involved.

The program is intended for people actively involved in programming, policy-making or research in this field and who are members of CEOs for Cities. The Network will act as both learning network and 'working group'.

Although the program will be refined in collaboration with the Network, the program will begin with a

workshop forum on 14 and 15 May in association with the National Meeting. Subsequently, 2 to 3 further meetings will be held, spaced to give participants the opportunity to apply concepts to their own communities between these.

If you are interested in learning more about this program, please contact Rebecca Eggleston, reggleston@ceosforcities.org