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Europe's Creative Hubs
Who they are, what they do



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European Creative Hubs Forum 2015 has now finished.

Many thanks to all those who contributed with such passion to ECHF Lisbon '15.

See below for images, videos, and social media coverage of the event, plus some blogs by participants. Attending Organisations: Click [here](#) for a list of attending hubs and other delegates. Join the ECHF '15 [LinkedIn Group](#) to stay in contact with those who attended.

Speakers' presentations are now online. Go to the [Programme](#) page, select a day, and view PDF files of the majority of the presentations.

ECHF Lisbon '15 Report

The ECHF Lisbon '15 Report is authored by the Forum Chair, Catherine Docherty.



The Creative HubKit

Authored by Janine Matheson (Creative Edinburgh) and Gillian Easson (Creative Dundee), with the support of Creative England



Mapping Europe's Creative Hubs

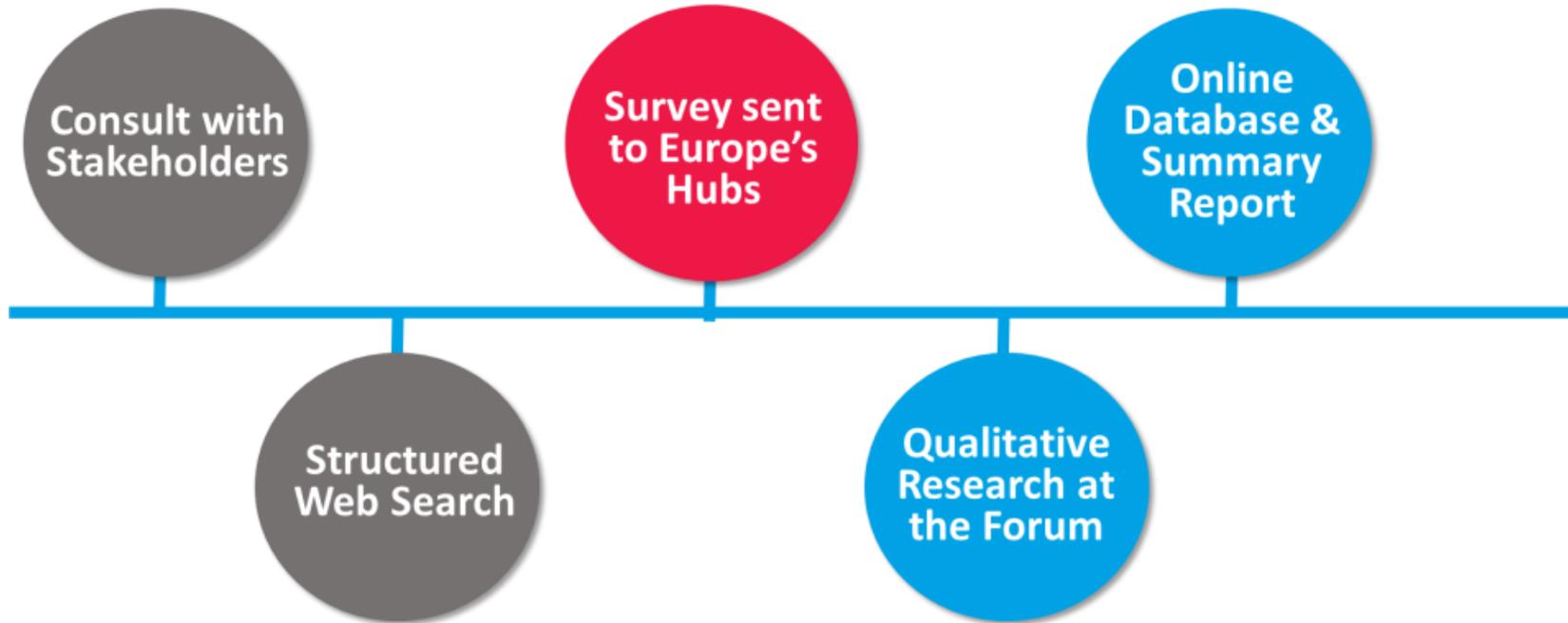
ADDICT Creative Industries Portugal and the British Council invite you to explore the diverse and important role played by Creative Hubs in European cities and regions.



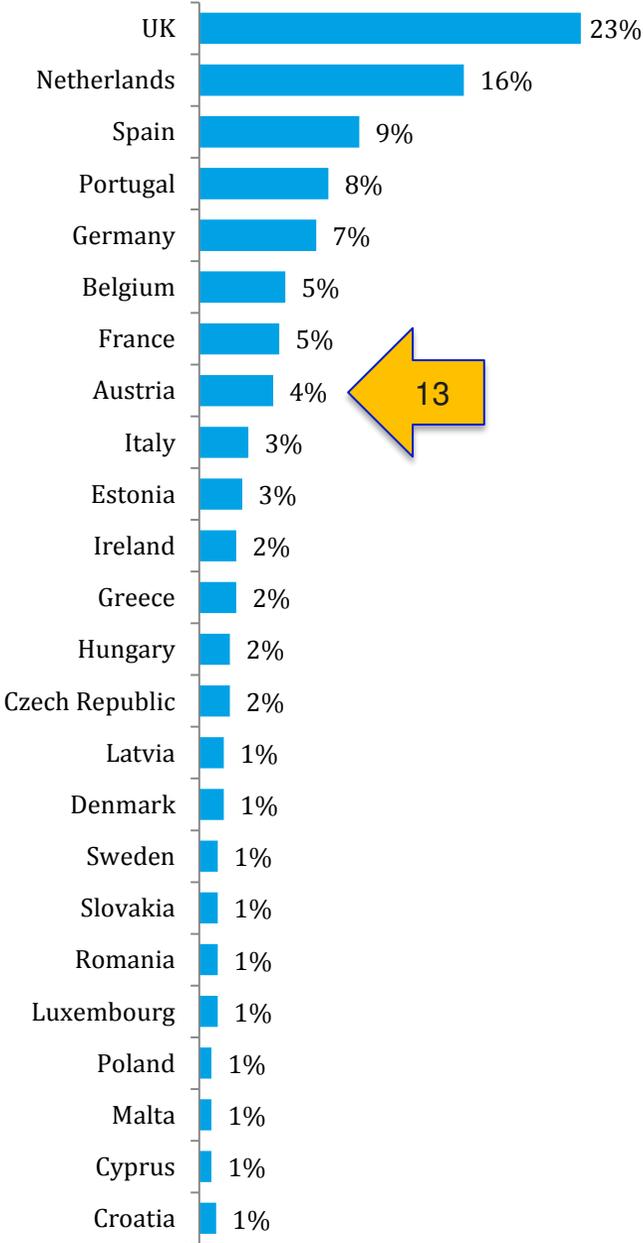
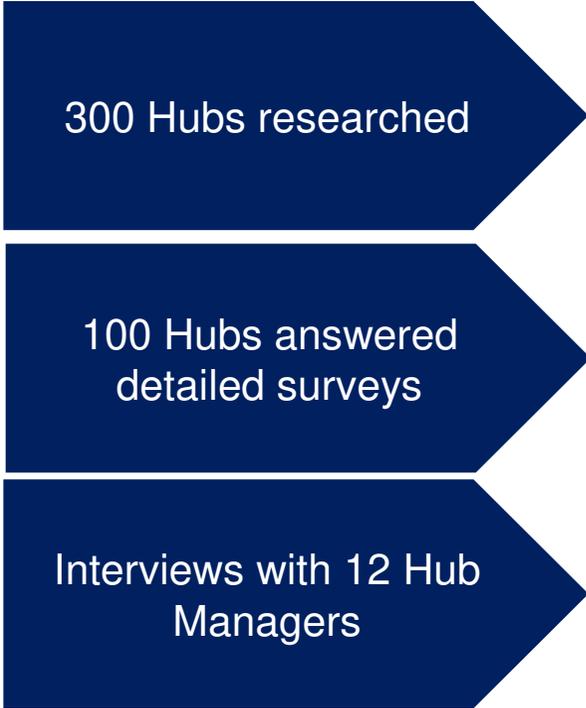
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In summary

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1. There is a huge variety of Creative Hubs.
 2. One common thread is that all Creative Hubs aim to make a difference – to businesses, economies, and communities. Interviews identified evidence of impact as a research gap, however.
 3. To help reach their potential, Hub Managers need support.
 4. They are also hungry for investment. But EU funding programmes may not yet work for them.
 5. Hubs are optimistic about the future – they feel their time has come.

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Our approach



Our sample



1. There is a huge variety of Creative Hubs

Using the data, we identified four distinct types of Creative Hub

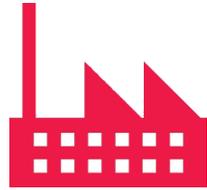
HUBS BASED AROUND SPACES



STUDIO

Smaller, niche creative spaces, supporting fewer than 20 businesses, like Coworking Salzburg in Austria.

18%



CENTRES

Larger, physical spaces, supporting more than 20 businesses, like Strijp-S in the Netherlands.

47%

On average, these have:
20 Businesses
3.5 FTE staff



HUBS BASED AROUND PLACES

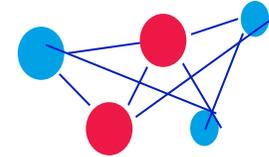


CLUSTERS

Halfway between a Factory and a Network. These include both big networks and physical spaces, like Brighton Fuse in the UK.

16%

On average, these have:
40 Businesses
9 FTE staff



NETWORKS

These Hubs don't run physical spaces (although they may use them) but they are often based on a geographical area, like Portugal's ADDICT.

19%

1. There is a huge variety of Creative Hubs

Hubs have a wide range of funding models

Organisation type

A non-profit (e.g. Community) 42%

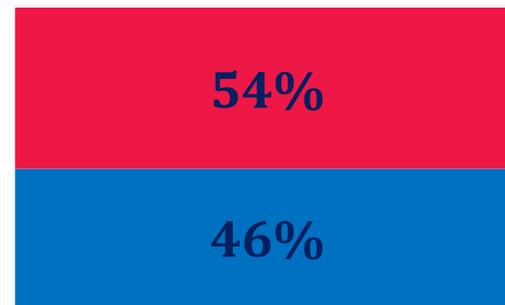
Part of government 27%

A business (i.e. Profit making) 24%

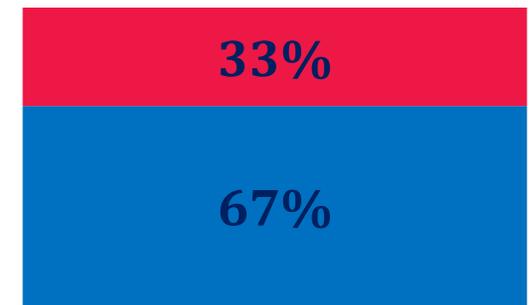
Part of a University 7%

Source of revenue funding

■ Earned Income ■ Public Funds



SPACES



PLACES



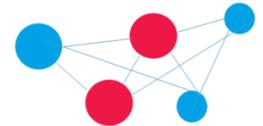
STUDIO



CENTRES



CLUSTERS



NETWORKS

2. One common thread is that all Creative Hubs aim to make a difference

Creative Hubs feel they make a difference in three main ways

#1 Helping businesses to connect

“We help freelancers & location independent workers be more socially connected, productive and happy”

84%

of Hubs said they did this

#2 Supporting the local creative economy

“Bringing artists & residents together – supporting the areas creative environment whilst promoting it as vibrant, creative, socially engaged and welcoming.”

76%

of Hubs said they did this

#3 Supporting the local community

“We invest part of our income from rent into making the building into art-work and into creative projects in neighbourhoods”

74%

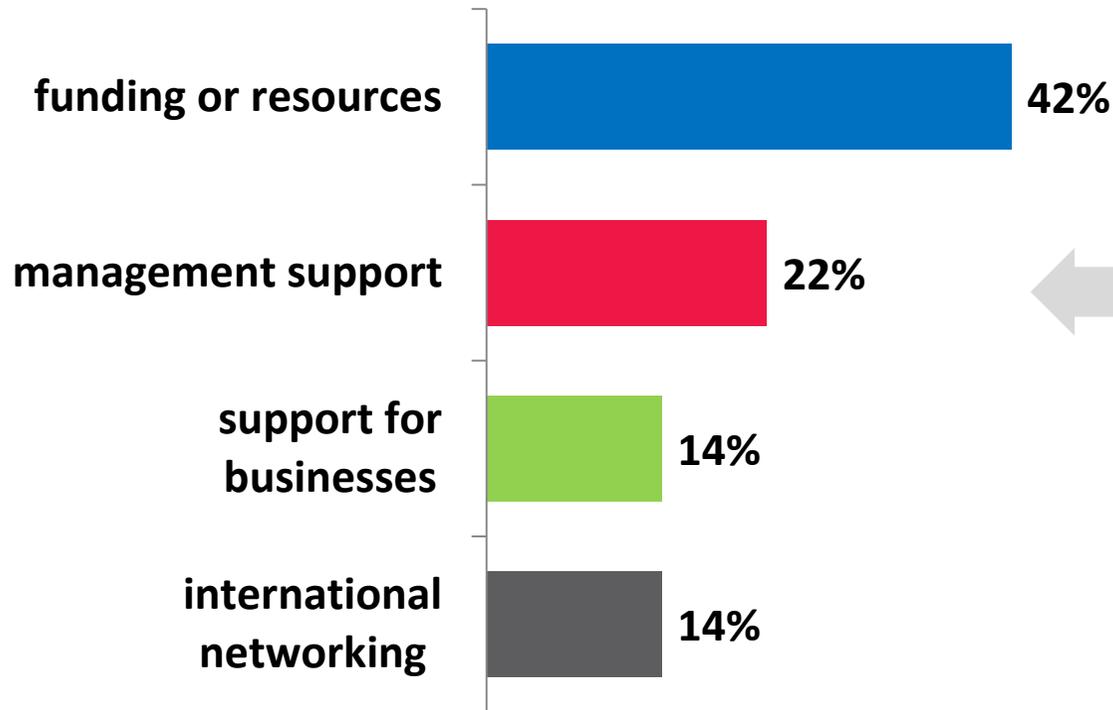
of Hubs said they did this

... But interviews with Hub Managers suggested few have robust evidence of their own impact

3. To help reach their potential, Hub Managers need support

Hubs ask for funding and resources, but also management support

As % of total requests for support



Our interviews suggest Hubs are run by passionate, committed and entrepreneurial individuals.

But many recognised gaps in their expertise and lacked resources to address them (overleaf).

The British Council have developed a HubKit for Hub Managers

3. To help reach their potential, Hub Managers need support

Hub Managers asked for management support in three main areas

“Help me with Hub management”

- **Growth management** to support scaling up, or in reaching new markets.
- Bureaucratic or **governance issues** to support relationship with funders or government.
- **Business model** or cash flow issues, such as operating without subsidy, maximising economic return.
- Establishing a collective **vision**.

“Help me improve the services I offer”

- Delivering an effective **programme** of activity.
- **Effective collaboration** with local universities.
- **Best practice** for my situation, such as creating a rural hub.
- Enabling **cross innovation**.
- **Meeting partners and collaborators**.
- **Market research** to understand the context that they work in.

“Help me with advocacy or communications”

- **Marketing and branding**.
- **Advocacy** to promote the creative and digital sector, or national lobbying for the creative industries
- **Changing the mindset of entrepreneurs** in the area to understand the value of these support services.

4. Creative Hubs are also hungry for investment

The one major reason for pessimism is lack of funding

Managers want to invest in:



“better salaries, on operating costs, better security, accommodations for guests, as well as more lecturers.”

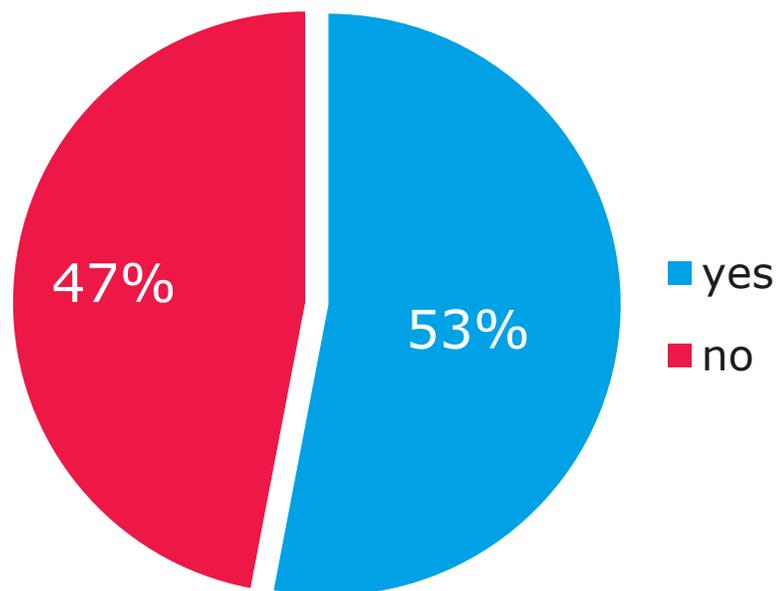
“funded business residencies to encourage more small businesses to engage with the University in a meaningful way through buying out some of their time. We are in a developing economy and we need to incentivize investment in research and development.”

“better equipment, better training, and also bring people from abroad to provide a different insight.”

4. Creative Hubs are also hungry for investment

Money is an issue yet few have won the EU funding that is directed at the cultural and creative sectors

Applied to EU funding



	Applied for funds	Won funding
Creative Europe	17%	13%
ERDF	23%	13%

Interviews suggested the funds were not suitable for many – but more research is needed here.

5. Creative Hubs are optimistic about the future

Creative Hubs feel their “time has come”

90% of Hubs are optimistic about the future, for three main reasons:

**1. Enthusiasm
& support of
members**

**2. Growing
recognition of the
Creative Industries**

**3. Growing
recognition
of Hubs' role
in the local &
national
economic
context**

– **Conclusions**

- 1. Hubs are optimistic about the future – they feel their time has come.
2. One common thread is that all Creative Hubs aim to make a difference – to businesses, economies, and communities. Interviews identified evidence of impact as a research gap, however.
3. To help reach their potential, Hub Managers need support to manage the range of challenges they face.
4. They are also hungry for investment. But EU funding programmes may not yet work for them.
5. There is a huge variety of Creative Hubs.

This research offers a baseline.

Further research would help stakeholders and policy-makers to understand the full range of impacts of creative hubs and how to support them.

What does the future hold for Creative Hubs?

1. Apparent growth in number of Hubs
2. 'Doughnutification' – more Hubs in city fringe locations, away from expensive city centres
3. New designs – especially those with separate spaces, not open spaces
4. New business models – new cooperatives, public/private partnerships, investments
5. More research is needed around specific “value added” and impact: What do Hubs do that other interventions cannot?
6. More European engagement and the development of a Hubs network, probably led by the British Council

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- Thank you -

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