Developing creative industries in northern Australia: a report on key developments and outcomes in the city of Townsville, North Queensland

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Introduction

• Defining creative industries
  • “…those industries which have their origin in individual creativity, skill and talent and which have a potential for wealth and job creation through the generation and exploitation of intellectual property” (DCMS – UK)

• Australian context: $86 billion to GDP and 5.3% of workforce (ABS, 2011)

• Focus on northern Australia

• Role of creative industries towards this vision?
### National Contribution to GDP

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sector</th>
<th>Contribution</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Finance, insurance</td>
<td>$121b</td>
<td>10.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rental, hiring, real estate</td>
<td>$119b</td>
<td>10.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mining</td>
<td>$114b</td>
<td>9.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manufacturing</td>
<td>$109b</td>
<td>9.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction</td>
<td>$89b</td>
<td>7.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural, creative</td>
<td>$86b</td>
<td>6.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture, Fisheries, &amp; Forestry</td>
<td>$51b</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: ABS
David Throsby model (2008)

Core creative arts
- Literature
- Music
- Performing arts
- Visual arts

Other core cultural industries
- Film
- Museums, galleries, libraries
- Photography

Related industries
- Advertising
- Architecture
- Design
- Fashion

Wider cultural industries
- Heritage services
- Publishing and print media
- Television and radio
- Sound recording
- Video and computer games

Figure 1. The concentric circles model of the cultural industries.
CI and Northern Australia

- CI research has tended to focus on large cities and cluster methodologies
- Emerging body of work looking at CI beyond the metropolis
- Importance of looking at idiosyncracies of locations
- Darwin the subject of a major ARC funded study
- Emerging body of work relevant to Cairns, Townsville
  - Daniel et al (2013) found several sectors of Townsville’s CI declined across 2006-11 census period
  - These included photography, design, architecture
Townsville Study (2014-15)

In partnership with Council, we:

• Investigated Supply and Demand
• Explored options for growth (via regular consultation)
Supply and Demand

Supply:
• 69 fully completed surveys (architecture, design, film/tv, advertising/marketing, software, photography)
• 29 follow up interviews

Demand:
• 156 fully completed surveys (matched to ABS stats)
• 22 follow up interviews
Supply

• Majority are micro businesses
• Many based in home offices
• Engaging in professional development is costly due to distance from capitals
• Cost escalation due to inability to hire specialist equipment
• Access to specialists generally good
• Location benefits (climate, networking, livability)
• About 75% of income generated locally
• Strong competition within the sector
• Some awareness of design thinking and co-creation
“In regional cities we have to be a bit more generalist. If I only do something very narrow I have less professional opportunities.”
inspiration in Townsville
Demand

Use of services:
• 53% Townsville provider
• 31% non-Townsville provider
• 16% embedded creative
• Average spend $18k on most important creative service
• Expensive projects disproportionately provided by externals
• 70% higher spend
• Import leakage estimated at $209 million in 2013-14
Impact

• The formation of three innovation hubs in the city (Innovation North Qld, The Hive Townsville Business Development Centre, MixHaus)
• The development of a creative industries cluster including the release of a targeted marketing campaign to promote the cluster
• The formation of a screen locations guide
• The formation of a film cluster
• The hosting of a festival of ideas in November 2016
Impact

- Film projects are currently under development including two feature films – in addition “The wrong kind of black” 4 x 15-minute stories for ABC iView were filmed in early May 2017
- Music videos, television commercials and documentaries have been created
- City council has formed an innovation and business advisory group
- A Creative Industries and Young Entrepreneur Mentoring Program was formed and run successfully in late 2016
- A program of thinkers in residence is currently being formed
Current research

- Cairns Regional Council
- New 5-year Culture Strategy
- Research project aligned to the 5 years
  - People
  - Place
  - Productivity


Research in process


Questions?