

From a creative economy to sustainable growth and welfare

The development of business activity within the creative industries is being promoted in response to the structural reform related to production and the economy. This has seen the focus of production shift from the material to the immaterial. Such a change requires new types of competence. This is the message of the development programme for business growth and internationalisation in the creative industries.

THE PROGRAMME REPRESENTS AN IMPORTANT INITIATIVE designed to strengthen Finland's creative economy. This development programme finances 16 ongoing projects, which promote the viability of self-employed persons, budding entrepreneurs, current entrepreneurs and SMEs operating in the creative industry sector. It does so by supporting, for example, innovation activity, demand-driven product development expertise and leadership skills. Such cooperation also helps to create new operating models, partnerships and client contacts between actors in various industries. This promotes continuity and boosts employment rates, while strengthening internationalisation and cultural export activity.

The development of business activity in the creative industries sector also increases the growth and competitiveness of other industry and service sectors. In turn, this impacts favourably on the growth and competitiveness of the entire national economy. The development programme provides a powerful kick-off in terms of strengthening both the cultural and creative industries. However, new initiatives are also required elsewhere. By the end of 2009, 930 people and 268 enterprises had participated in the projects. New enterprises had also emerged.

Creative Industries Finland coordinates the development programme

Creative Industries Finland (CIF) is strengthening the creative industries by increasing awareness, in various reaches of society, of the significance of, and opportunities within, the creative economy. The CIF offers an information base, opportunities, events and communication services which help to embed cooperation-based operating methods into a nationwide network-oriented operating model. The CIF website has become a key access point for information, opinions and news on the creative industries. In the autumn of 2009, for instance, the CIF coordinated a wide-ranging international conference, Creative Economy and Beyond (CEB), in cooperation with the Ministry of Employment and the Economy, the Ministry of Education and Culture and various key actors and experts within the sector.

Exporting culture – the TAIVEX training programme

The TAIVEX programme offers further education and export-related training, tailor-made for the creative industries and targeted at various cultural intermediaries operating in the field of art exchange. In particu-



PHOTO: EMIL BOBYREV

Hanna Hirvonen's business idea for Hañhi Design has taken wing, despite the challenges faced by aspiring entrepreneurs.

lar, producers of art operating internationally play a key role in increasing the productivity of art. TAIVEX is a cooperation project, carried out by five Finnish art information centres and the cities of Tampere, Turku and Helsinki.

Sillanrakentajat – training programme for agents and export professionals in the creative industries

The Sillanrakentajat project ('bridge builders') aims to attract a new trade to Finland: creative industry agents with an operating culture of their own. By improving competencies, a new operating environment is being created for micro enterprises and SMEs in the creative industries sector. This will encourage the expansion of markets both in Finland and abroad. These agents will also challenge the authorities, such as providers of funding, business advisors and labour authorities, to adopt new operating cultures.

The development programme for business growth and internationalisation in the creative industries

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