



Joint Action Plan for the Creative Industry

Local Action Plan

for the Gdansk Metropolis

Agnieszka Meller

Marta Tyborska

GDANSK ENTREPRENEURS' FOUNDATION



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Introduction

Joint Action Plan for the Creative Industry is a document that has been worked out by the partners of the international project „Creative Cities“ cofinanced by the European Regional Development Fund within the Central Europe Programme.

The main goal of the Joint Action Plan for the Creative Industry is designing within 5 pillars:

- a) Networking
- b) Education and employment
- c) Transfer of knowledge
- d) Marketing
- e) Infrastructure and financial support

actions, which effect in assistance and support for the creative companies and their integration around idea of launching and developing the creative industry cluster. Areas of intervention indicated above have been acknowledged by all 11 project partners as the most important for the creative industry potential use and as those which lead to their constant social and economic development. EU strategic documents substantiate importance of the creative industry by indicating that “companies from the cultural and creative industries have the potential to contribute to the success of the Europe 2020 strategy, including its key initiatives, such as the Union of Innovation, Digital Agenda, a program for new skills and employment and industrial policy in the globalization era. Creative sectors attract high quality human capital, affecting the formation of an attractive living space for residents and businesses”.¹ Despite all attempts to draw a legible demarcation line between each action plan pillar, in fact all areas intermingle and together create a complex combination of the most important dimensions for the creative industry.

Taking into account conclusions from the research on the Gdansk Metropolis creative industry done within the „Creative Cities“ project, worth underlining is that “the creative industry sector is a new phenomenon in the European economy and knowledge about its development and drivers is still small. Therefore, development activities in this sector should be based pri-

¹ Koszarek M., Diagnosis of the creative industry in the Gdansk Metropolis. Final report, page 3.

marily on regional specificities”.² Assistance and support for the creative industry should be always tailored to meet the regional needs and expectations.

The Local Action Plan is a compilation of the most important actions, which should be implemented on the Gdansk Metropolis to facilitate the creative industry cooperation and be a trigger for the creative industry cluster launching. Actions included in the Local Action Plan relate to all 5 pillars indicated in the Joint Action Plan. Goals for each intervention area and actions leading to their achievement have been chosen as the most important relying on the creative industry research conclusions (quantitative, qualitative and SWOT analysis carried out in 2010) and meetings with the industry representatives organised within the „Creative Cities“ project.

According to the creative industry research respondents, strengths of the creative industry in the Gdansk Metropolis include “the great creative potential, high quality of products and services, skilled workers and the use of new technologies in creating innovative products”³. “Weaknesses of the sector in the Metropolis are related to the implementation of the creative potential in the context of business activity. This is mainly due to the structure of companies – domination of the micro-enterprises- as well as weak access to capital and organizational problems related to the implementation of large, complex projects. Companies in this sector do not lack exceptional, innovative products and services, but rather the strength in development of specific know-how, e.g. in the context of modern business models suited to implemented products and services”.⁴

Implementation of the Local Action Plan for the Creative Industry worked out within the “Creative Cities” project essentially could increase the chance of the creative industry potential use to change the Gdansk Metropolis external image and strengthens it economically on both regional and international level.

Pillar „Networking” contains plans for identification of structures existing in the creative industry of the Gdansk Metropolis. In the framework of the pillar internet platform dedicated to the creative industry was designed. This social network service, which would gather local

² Ibidem, page 4.

³ Ibidem, page 4.

⁴ Ibidem, page 5.

creative community should also enable development of business relations among the creative companies operating in the region. The pillar also contains description of effective networking meetings organization and building local product/service/partner recommendation system. The main goal of the pillar „**Networking**” is designing tools and actions that would improve integration of the creative industry community in the Gdansk Metropolis, establishing new business contacts and triggering potential partnerships.

Pillar „Education and employment” contains propositions for organization training programmes dedicated to the creative industry of the Gdansk Metropolis and educational calendar creation, which would facilitate access to educational offer. The pillar presents actions aiming at increasing chances for achieving market success by creative companies from the Gdansk Metropolis thanks to mentors support. Referring to employment matter, the pillar describes creation of practices and internships programme and creating an effective offers exchange system for the creative industry. The exchange system would support effectiveness of the creative industry from the Gdansk Metropolis by facilitating establishing contacts between clients and executors or entrepreneurs looking for business partners. Another proposition within the pillar is creation of supporting programme for the creative industry start-ups, operating within the Gdansk Business Incubator “STARTER”. The main goal of the **“Education and employment”** pillar is indicating solutions for facilitating access to educational offer for the creative industry from the Gdansk Metropolis and increasing their professional competences. The pillar aims at describing possible ways of creating chances for professional development of creative faculties graduates and ways for improving effectiveness of local creative industry.

Pillar „Transfer of knowledge” contains e-platform construction. The platform would enable users to benefit from others knowledge and experience, share experience, jointly work out solutions, and elaborate common projects. In the framework of the pillar **“Transfer of knowledge”** study visits (on different levels) and thematic conferences/seminars with exhibitions, workshops and discussion panels would be widely available based mostly on interactions between participants. The main goal of the pillar **„Transfer of knowledge”** is to improve the quality of the Gdansk Metropolis creative industry projects by providing the creative industry companies with a real chance for knowledge and experience exchange.

Pillar „Marketing” contains actions aiming at preparation of marketing strategy for promoting and integrating the creative industry from the Gdansk Metropolis. The pillar emphasizes the importance of increasing the creative industry cluster idea acceptance and the crucial role of building positive relations with the local surrounding. The pillar also contains recommendation to analyse the demand for products and services of the creative companies from the Gdansk Metropolis, what would allow for broadening of knowledge about the creative market needs in local dimension. The main goal of the **“Marketing”** pillar is designing vision and mission of activities for the local creative industry promotion and increasing the creative industry cluster idea acceptance.

Pillar “Infrastructure and financial support” contains the Gdansk Business Incubator “STARTER” support - specially tailored for the creative industry needs, a barter exchange system based on available resources and constant research on financial resources for the creative industry companies to diversify projects financing and the industry development and cooperation, including launching, coordinating and developing cluster initiatives. The main goal of the **“Infrastructure and financial support”** pillar is increasing effectiveness and efficiency of actions of the creative industry from the Gdansk Metropolis by providing it with infrastructure and financial support consistent with articulated needs enabling its development in different dimensions.

“CREATIVE CITIES” PROJECT

“Creative Cities” project lasts from the 1st of January 2010 to the 31st of December 2012 in 5 European Union member states – Italy, Hungary, Germany, Slovenia and Poland. **The main goal** of the “Creative Cities” project is using of the creative industry potential to increase the competitiveness and attractiveness of the cities involved to its realization. To the main goal achievement leads working out rules for the creative industry cluster launching and development (connecting micro, small and medium enterprises, public bodies and research institutions) and wide promotion of the creative industry clusters potential. The project serves for the use of the creative industry potential as a factor of development, a magnet for potential investors and a tool for new work places creation.

The Gdansk Entrepreneurs’ Foundation task within the project is carried out on the Gdansk Metropolis the creative industry research, including quantitative, qualitative and SWOT anal-

ysis. Supporting the Creative Industry Cluster creation, the Creative Industry Contact Point coordinated by specially employed Manager is launched. The Contact Point collects information enabling entrepreneurs and their employees development of their competences and transfer of knowledge, enabling creative industry companies acquirement of resources for cofinancing ongoing projects and those yet in a planning process, and enabling business contacts initiation. Additionally the Gdansk Entrepreneurs' Foundation is engaged in working out the tactical marketing programme for the Gdansk Creative Industry Cluster and its members. In cooperation with City of Gdansk the campaign Creative Gdansk! is conducted. The campaign promotes City of Gdansk as the place accurate for the creative industry companies cooperation and eager for supporting their development and market competitiveness in all dimensions.

The Gdansk Entrepreneurs' Foundation uses for the Local Action Plan preparation the creative industry definition of the UK Department of Culture, Media and Sport. According to the definition creative industry are “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.” Creative industry comprises advertising, architecture, arts, crafts, (communication) design, film, photography, television and radio, software, computer games, (electronic) publishing, music, visual and performing arts but do not include those cultural offers provided by public bodies (e.g. opera).

Creative Industry Contact Point

Gdansk Entrepreneurs' Foundation

Grunwaldzka 238 D street

80-266 Gdansk

Contact persons: **Ms. Marta Tyborska**
Creative Industry Cluster Development Specialist
Email: m.tyborska@gfp.com.pl
Mobile: +48 661 309 309

Mr. Marek Banach
Creative Industry Support Specialist
Email: m.banach@gfp.com.pl
Mobile: + 48 693 604 604

More on the Gdansk Entrepreneurs' Foundation webpage www.gfp.com.pl and on the official "Creative Cities" project webpage www.creativecitiesproject.eu

Networking

Introduction

The main goal of the “**Networking**” pillar is designing tools and actions that would improve integration of the creative industry community in the Gdansk Metropolis, establishing new business contacts and triggering potential partnerships.

The creative industry in the Gdansk Metropolis is dominated by one-man and micro businesses – this conclusion comes from the analysis of the number of entities that belong to the creative sector and the number of persons employed in the industry. Due to insufficient own resources: human, technical and financial, both one-man and micro businesses hardly ever have a chance to implement large or significant projects. The execution of relatively complex projects requires various skills and competences. Moreover, for the final result to be valuable, every such competence should be at least present during the creation process.

Social transformations require increasingly high specialization. This fact demands cooperation and having contacts that provide the suitable fulfilment of tasks in spite of the lack of knowledge or experience in a specific area. However, due to the impeded (for various reasons) processes of exchanging information about other partners, the shortage of mutual support or granting mutual recommendations, the potential of the creative entities in the Pomeranian Region is not fully utilized.

Only cooperation of various partners involved in the creative industry will make it possible to implement projects that cannot be executed without creating a formal cooperation group. Owing to the operation and cooperation in a group, micro and small businesses will get sufficient force to affect the environment.

Local businesses in the Gdansk Metropolis are aware that changes are necessary; therefore, they declare their inter-sectoral openness and making relations with the world of science. However, a small number of cooperation experiences in the region is a hurdle for starting cooperation, which results from e.g. insufficient knowledge about such businesses and their

competences.⁵ Therefore, favourable conditions should be created to facilitate the implementation of the networking idea. The networking idea would allow to achieve the rapid development of the creative industry in the Gdansk Metropolis.

In spite of numerous limitations, the businesses of the creative industry from the TriCity “co-operate with partners from across Poland, often subcontract tasks and strive to build effective relationships with other entities”.⁶ Numerous creative and cultural initiatives are often implemented informally or semi-formally, which shows the high potential of networking and a strong will for cooperation.

ACTION #1

Identification of structures existing in the creative industry of the Gdansk Metropolis

Specific goal

Identification of existing structures in the creative industry of Gdansk Metropolis for increasing awareness of potential and services offered by local creative sector.

Steps towards goal achievement

An important step should be to identify the members of the creative community, to determine their structure and force and possibilities of development and business cooperation. This identification would allow to take the advantage of local creative companies potential and could result in creating new quality of services.

The main actions should be observation of events, phenomena and trends on the Metropolis level in the environment related to the creative industry – e.g. within participant and non-participant observation, encompassing events organised formally and informally (notwithstanding their size) and creative initiatives; collecting at one place the relationships and conclusions from all the local projects to deepen the analysis and to create mechanisms that build and strengthen the creative community in the Gdansk Metropolis. The site research is to be conducted with a support of local academic and R&D centres and universities that educate not only in creative specialties. Observation, free-form interview and questionnaires prepared with co-operation of academic representatives could be used. Interviews, surveys could be distributed directly to local creative sector representatives but it could also be conducted in

⁵ Based on SWOT analysis, in: Koszarek M., Diagnosis of the creative industry in the Gdansk Metropolis, Final report, Gdansk 2010.

⁶ Ibidem, page 59.

electronic form. On base of surveys cyclic reports from environment/creative background in the Gdansk Metropolis should be prepared at least twice a year.

Target groups

- representatives of local businesses from the creative industry,
- individuals interested in starting a business in the creative industry in the Gdansk Metropolis,
- businessmen interested in cooperation with local creative industry.

Schedule

Starting point: 3rd quarter of the 2011 with at least one thematic survey/report in 6 months intervals

Responsible

Gdansk Entrepreneurs' Foundation/Gdansk Business Incubator „STARTER”

Budget

- “Creative Cities” project (ERDF within the Central Europe Programme): Creative Industry Contact Point staff cost,
- Other sources: EU grants for the local market research/sponsoring.

ACTION #2

Internet platform dedicated to the creative industry from the Gdansk Metropolis

Specific goal

Enabling the exchange of business contacts and creative industry cooperation development by creating internet service focusing on the creative companies from the Gdansk Metropolis.

Steps towards goal achievement

Internet service focused on the Gdansk Metropolis would enable starting and developing business relations among the creative companies operating in the region. Additionally to e-platform construction, the action aim should also be creating a social network service that would gather in one place the whole community of the creative industry from the Gdansk Metropolis. Next steps should be finding individuals interested in participating in creating internet platform (local IT specialists, graphic designers, editors), and creating the concept of the platform: list of bookmarks (e.g. the creative companies base, virtual map of the creative industry representatives in the Gdansk Metropolis, base of conferences, workshops, job opportunities etc.), its content, and layout. The platform would be connected with other pillars, like **“Transfer of knowledge”**, because it would enable to exchange contacts, knowledge

and experiences. That is why the platform should provide software that facilitates contacts among people and companies with services / projects / businesses. The system should operate non-stop, making it possible to collect data needed to develop a local creative community and transfer such data into tangible business contacts. The way of launching relations could be newsletter providing information that are not only up-to-date but most valuable for the creative sector as well, e.g. about different events or possibilities of establishing new co-operational relationships.

Target groups

- representatives of local businesses from the creative industry,
- individuals interested in starting a business in the creative industry in the Gdansk Metropolis,
- businessmen interested in cooperation with local creative industry,
- individuals interested in creating an internet platform (local IT specialists, graphic designers, editors).

Schedule

Starting point: 3rd quarter of the 2011 – after choosing work group members, the first step should be preparing the platform concept. 1st quarter of the 2012 – launching the e-platform

Responsible

Gdansk Entrepreneurs' Foundation in cooperation with local creative industry representatives

Budget

- “Creative Cities” Project (ERDF within the Central Europe Programme): Creative Industry Contact Point staff (coordination of the concept preparation), Creative Gdansk! Campaigne (promotion),
- Other sources: advertising incomes/subscription fee.

ACTION #3

Networking meetings organization

Specific goal

Explaining the nature of networking, while providing the creative industry with examples of its practical use.

Steps towards goal achievement

Networking explanation is needed because many people in the Gdansk Metropolis still can not define the “networking” topic and even less are actively involved in networking activi-

ties. Another objective of networking meetings should be integration of local creative community and establishing new business contacts, which will lead to professional skills development of creative industry from the Gdansk Metropolis. First step will be organization of semi-formal networking meetings, in a form of business breakfast/lunch or afternoon coffee, during which representatives of local creative industry would have a chance to present their profile of activity or share experiences or problems. Thanks to wide thematic scope, each of creative sub-branches could have a chance to find during each meeting new information, useful from the business point of view. The process of participants recruitment for each meetings should be based on the chosen subject (e.g. design sector, jewellery sector, architects), which the whole meeting is dedicated to. Participants would be selected and chosen according to a specific but clear key. Every participant of such meetings should be obliged to have business cards that can be distributed among other participants. Leaving a card for the meeting organiser would make it possible to identify and develop the creative community and to verify the number of the persons present. Meeting should be organized around '60 sec. presentation'. The number of participants should be limited to 45. At the initial phase, each of the participants would have 60 seconds for presenting the business/operation/idea/project. After the presentation, the actual part would commence, i.e. making contacts and developing relationships among partners.

Target groups

- representatives of local companies from the creative industry,
- businessmen interested in cooperation with local creative industry,
- local media.

Schedule

Starting point: 4th quarter of the 2011

Responsible

Gdansk Entrepreneurs' Foundation in cooperation with local creative industry representatives

Budget

- "Creative Cities" project (ERDF within the Central Europe Programme): meeting organization/staff cost (coordination/technical issues of meetings organization),
- Other sources: Gdansk Entrepreneurs' Foundation input by locating meetings in the Gdansk Business Incubator "STARTER",
- Other sources: participants registration fee.

ACTION #4

Building and developing the local product/service/partner recommendation system for the Gdansk Metropolis creative industry

Specific goal

Building recommendation system based on IT tool that could support promotion of local business activity of the creative industry from the Gdansk Metropolis, establishing new contacts or searching for reliable executors.

Steps towards goal achievement

Action would include giving references to the business partners and subcontractors or clients. References in a form of letter of appraisal could be published in internet platform as a base of trustworthy and highly professional companies either for clients or executors. Every partner who has cooperated with a specific entity could give letter of reference with basic data allowing recommended and recommending entity identification. The system construction and user verification process would prevent creating fictitious recommendations. Additionally it could create an easy way of executor or business partner verification. Clients would have access to the base of the creative companies and would be able to familiarize with given recommendation before choosing executor and the same way round, because executors also will have an opportunity to rate cooperation with each client. Rated companies and freelancers could have a chance not only to create professional image in similar background but also reach new clients giving them a warranty for provided services or goods. Ranking of the most frequently recommended local creative companies would be created in each creative sector. Recommendation system can be also operated by the Creative Industry Contact Point, helping in verifying references and matching clients or executors.

Target groups

- representatives of local businesses from the creative industry,
- individuals interested in starting a business in the creative industry in the Gdansk Metropolis,
- businessmen interested in cooperation with local creative industry,
- local foundations and associations connected to the creative industry,
- local business environment institutions.

Schedule

Starting point: 1st quarter of the 2012

Responsible

Gdansk Entrepreneurs' Foundation/Gdansk Business Incubator „STARTER”

Budget

- “Creative Cities” project (ERDF within the Central Europe Programme): Creative Industry Contact Point staff (creating concept and criteria for the recommendation system), Creative Gdansk! Campaign (promotion),
- Other sources: Donation from local creative businesses, technical support of Pomeranian ICT cluster, subscription fee for access to the system.

Education and employment

Introduction

The main goal of the **“Education and employment”** pillar is indicating solutions for facilitating access to educational offer for the creative industry from the Gdansk Metropolis and increasing their professional competences. The pillar aims at describing possible ways of creating chances for professional development of creative faculties graduates and ways for improving effectiveness of local creative industry.

Pomeranian Voivodeship is characterized by significant level of entrepreneurship initiatives among young people, starting their professional life. Despite young age this group has considerable branch knowledge, but their business skills demand improvements. This tendency is especially vivid by great interest of creative community in participating in business training programmes, designed for supporting start-ups, e.g. „Business on Start” or „Gdansk Academy of Entrepreneurship”. Searching for consultative and training support can represent insufficient cooperation between economic, technical and artistic universities. It can also mean, that educational programmes are incongruous with market needs. In connection with increase of co-operative connections among different sectors and dynamic growth of innovative economy, the co-operation between the world of business and science is essential. At the same time, with regard to dynamic changes on the job market, it’s necessary to gain both general and highly specialist skills. It will allow reacting on market needs in flexible way. Nowadays long life learning becomes more and more popular. Experiences of innovative companies from the TriCity show that required strategy and organizational support can help in developing the market and achieving success. However, significant amount of companies is afraid of making a big step forwards development, because of the lack of business competence in marketing, law or management field. Moreover, the educational offer diverges from current needs and trends. This situation relates mainly to such specialized creative branches like design or computer games.⁷

One of the problems is disregarding the importance of gaining first professional experiences through participating in internships and practices programmes. Refer to PwC report on human

⁷ Based on Koszarek M., Diagnosis of creative industry sector on the area of Gdansk Metropolis. Final report, Gdansk 2010.

capital in the TriCity, the main weakness is the low level (in comparison with the capabilities) of agglomeration growth as an academic centre. Probably it can result from insufficient support of relations establishing and co-operation between local universities. It's easy to notice the lack of co-operation between artistic schools, economic and technical universities, despite signing the intention letter in May 2009 for Cluster of Pomeranian Voivodeship Universities. „It's worth of emphasizing how important it is to create the encouragement for setting up own businesses by local citizens and influence educational policy in existing in TriCity knowledge centres”⁸

Education

ACTION #1

Organization of training programmes dedicated to the creative industry of the Gdansk Metropolis

Specific goal

Increasing competences of the Gdansk Metropolis creative industry staff in the range of business and social skills.

Steps towards goal achievement

Increasing professional competences of creative industry representatives would secure their competitiveness growth and visibility on the market. However the high efficiency of proposed training offer could be achieved by accurate adjustment of the educational offer to the creative community needs. Conducting the surveys would allow for preparing various packages of training. It would also facilitate the recruitment process for the specific training, because detailed preparation of subjects and their range could define each target group in advance. Training programmes should give an opportunity for participating both in selected modules with concrete leading subject and in the full cycle of educational activities. Varied organizational form of the training programmes (standard training, e-learning, blended learning) could broaden the group of recipients from local creative industry interested in educational development.

Stages of training organization:

- 1) identification of training needs in the Gdansk Metropolis,
- 2) preparing training subjects:

⁸ Report on great Polish cities, TriCity, www.pwc.com.pl, 11/01/2011.

- creativity training – related to the professional competences and market needs,
- legal training – i.a. copyrights, intellectual property,
- business training – i.a. marketing, project's management, creative company management,
- training in the range of social skills– i.a. time management, dealing with stress, interpersonal communication.

Target groups

- the creative industry companies, especially start-ups (up to the third year of existence) from the Gdansk Metropolis,
- businessmen interested in cooperation with local creative industry.

Schedule

Starting point: 4th quarter of the 2011 (identification of educational needs), trainings organized in two months intervals, beginning from the 2nd quarter of the 2012

Responsible

Gdansk Entrepreneurs' Foundation

Budget

- „Creative Cities” project (ERDF within the Central Europe Programme): Contact Point staff costs (training coordination and organization),
- Other sources: Admission fee for training participants/sponsors.

ACTION #2

Creation and actualization of educational calendar

Specific goal

Facilitating access to educational offer for representatives of creative industry from the Gdansk Metropolis.

Steps towards goal achievement

Despite availability of various forms of education, the main problem of the creative industry is access to current schedules of educational events. Creation of constantly actualizing data base with information about educational offer would allow employers from the creative sector for planning their employees participation in this kind of events. The Local Action Plan has already mentioned how important the possibility of competences increasing and improving the knowledge in professional field is. Educational calendar should be placed in internet plat-

form dedicated to local creative industry. It should be based on available software or specially dedicated one, created in co-operation with the creative industry companies, e.g.: programmers or graphic designers. Calendar should be provided with result's filtering tool, according to specific criteria – e.g. subject, duration, recruitment fee. In the calendar, the most important educational events for creative industry should be tagged and extra promoted. Selection would be made by Contact Point staff, regarding their knowledge in creative community educational demands field. It could be also based on the most popular tags in result's filtering tool. It would be also essential to establish relations with educational institutions, training centers, academic community, etc. for gathering as exhaustive educational offer as it is possible.

Target groups

- individuals interested in educational offer connected with the creative industry (students, graduates, unemployed),
- the creative industry companies, especially start-ups (up to the third year of existence) from the Gdansk Metropolis,
- businessmen interested in cooperation with local creative industry,
- academic centers and other educational entities.

Schedule

Starting point: 4th quarter of the 2011

Responsible

Gdansk Entrepreneurs' Foundation

Budget

- „Creative Cities” project (ERDF within the Central Europe Programme): Contact Point staff costs (coordination),
- Other sources: workforce for internet calendar preparation (cooperation with representatives of local creative industry).

ACTION #3

Mentoring for creative companies from the Gdansk Metropolis

Specific goal

Increasing chances for achieving market success by creative companies from the Gdansk Metropolis by mentors support.

Steps towards goal achievement

If we consider increasing chances for achieving market success, the essential factor would be creation of the mentor support model, directed to representatives of local creative industry. This model would be based on professional support given by experienced entrepreneurs to business “beginners”. Mentor support is a fundamental value for entrepreneurs, who are in the initial and the most risky stage of developing their own business. Beside sharing knowledge and experiences, the role of the mentor would be ensuring the professional support in critical moments of business activity, by comforting achievement of designed goals.

Stages of mentoring process organization:

- 1) forming mentors/experts team with various business and scientific experiences,
- 2) selecting mentor by creative company on the basis of its business activity scope and interview with potential candidate,
- 3) adjusting support offer to entrepreneurs needs,
- 4) providing mentors with possibility of knowledge intensifying, e.g. on market trends, development tendencies or technological novelties

Very important for the effectiveness of mentoring process would be constant broadening the mentors team. Experts should represent different business branches and derive not only from business world, but also from science and culture field. Science experts would provide support in the range of e.g. technical solutions, whereas cultural experts would support realization of typical creative ideas. Priority in benefiting from mentoring support would have creative companies, characterized by dynamic growth and poor market competences. Mentors team could be appointed within Gdansk Business Incubator “STARTER”.

Target groups

- the creative industry companies, especially start-ups (up to the third year of existence) from the Gdansk Metropolis,
- individuals interested in starting a business in the creative industry in the Gdansk Metropolis,
- freelancers connected with local creative industry.

Schedule

Starting point: 4th quarter of the 2011 (creating base of mentors/mentoring process standardization), 2nd quarter of the 2012 (mentoring processes starting point)

Responsible

Gdansk Entrepreneurs' Foundation/Gdansk Business Incubator „STARTER”

Budget

- „Creative Cities” project (ERDF within the Central Europe Programme): staff costs (coordination),
- Other sources: Subscription to cyclic consultations with mentors/EU grants for start-ups and SME support.

EMPLOYMENT

ACTION #1

Creation of practices and internships programme in creative sector of the Gdansk Metropolis

Specific goal

Practical verification of knowledge gained by graduates of faculties connected with the creative industry.

Steps towards goal achievement

Graduates of Pomeranian universities have slight chance to verify gained knowledge, especially if they meet obstacles in finding dreamed job. Moreover, one has to remember that in job market, especially in the creative industry, the matter of experience and competences have a great value. In result the first stage of this action should be designing programme frames and rules of participation in practices or internships programme. The next step would be gaining employees interest in such a programme. Recruitment process should be continuous, but what is more important, relevant to employers' needs.

Recruitment process could be coordinated by the Contact Point for the creative industry, as a mediating entity between companies offering practices and creative faculties graduates valuable for creative sector. On the basis of criteria and requirements of concrete employee, the initial selection of candidates could be made by the Contact Point. The final choice of intern or trainee would be made by each employer. Tool supporting the programme would be the offer exchange, described in Action #2.

Target groups

- graduates of faculties connected with the creative industry,
- representatives of local businesses from the creative industry,

Schedule

Starting point: 4th quarter of the 2011 (creating the base of employers offering internships or practices, each programme realized according to individual arrangements with employer)

Responsible

Gdansk Entrepreneurs' Foundation in close cooperation with employers from local creative industry

Budget

- „Creative Cities” project (ERDF within the Central Europe Programme): staff costs (coordination of the programme),
- Other sources: cost of internships or practices covered by each employer.

ACTION #2

Setting up the creative industry offer exchange.

Specific goal

Increasing effectiveness of creative industry from the Gdansk Metropolis by creating the offer exchange facilitating establishing contacts between clients and executors or between entrepreneurs looking for business partners.

Steps towards goal achievement

Regarding considerable flexibility of work in the creative industry, setting up the exchange combining clients with executors would allow taking advantage of existing potential of human resources in very effective way. The exchange could be a tool for associating potential business partners, and enabling realization of more complex projects. Otherwise competences of single entrepreneurs could be insufficient.

The creative industry exchange should be settled on the basis of the internet platform. Such an exchange could be similar action to the platform related to a job market. Both, clients and executors would have a chance of putting announcements related to realization of specific task in the creative industry field, as well as putting virtual business card presenting their scope of activity. This would surely help potential client in making decision, which executor will be suitable for the task. The exchange would be additionally connected with recommendation system, what would help in verifying quality of services provided by concrete entity or ways of cooperation with each client (more info - Networking pillar - Action #4). What is

more, the offers exchange should include the tool that allows to put jobs announcement and internships offers.

Target groups

- individuals interested in starting business in the creative industry in the Gdansk Metropolis,
- employers from outside the creative industry sector interested in employing specialists from the creative community,
- creative industry companies,
- freelancers connected with local creative industry.

Schedule

Starting point: 1st quarter of the 2012 (creating concept for the exchange and principles of operations)

Responsible

Gdansk Entrepreneur's Foundation

Budget

- „Creative Cities” project (ERDF within the Central Europe Programme): Contact Point staff costs,
- Other sources: Advertising incomes/subscription for access to the offers exchange.

ACTION #3

Creation of supporting programme for the Gdansk Metropolis creative industry start-ups

Specific goal

Promotion of self-employment among individuals connected with the Gdansk Metropolis creative industry by programme dedicated to their needs.

Steps towards goal achievement

Supporting programme for the creative industry start-ups would operate within the Gdansk Business Incubator “STARTER”. Main goal would be providing chances for safe business start and convincing that self-employment could be great alternative for regular post, especially in the creative industry.

Within support provided for start-ups, the offer package would be created, offering in monthly subscription package: legal-accountancy support, consultations with experts or possibility of participating in training dedicated to the creative industry. Individuals interested in starting their own business in the creative industry and looking for future company location,

would have a chance to rent office space on preferential terms. For reducing rental costs, creative companies would be offered co-working space, e.g. desk for hours or rooms for meetings with potential clients. Co-working space would also enable greater integration of entrepreneurs from the creative industry and would result in realization of common projects. Each creative start-up would have a chance to make use of the Incubator's technical resources (i.a. access to the internet, rooms for business meetings, office appliances).

Target groups

- individuals interested in starting a business in the creative industry in the Gdansk Metropolis,
- freelancers connected with local creative industry.

Schedule

Starting point: 1st quarter of the 2012 (preparing offer for the creative industry)

Responsible

Gdansk Entrepreneur's Foundation/ Gdansk Business Incubator "STARTER"

Budget

- „Creative Cities” project (ERDF within the Central Europe Programme): Contact Point staff costs,
- Other sources: Incomes from purchasing selected offer.

Transfer of knowledge

Introduction

The main goal of the **Transfer of knowledge** pillar is improving the quality of the projects executed by the creative industry from the Gdansk Metropolis by providing companies with a plan-based chance for knowledge and experience exchange.

Knowledge and experience transfer is a catalyst for not only creative industry actions, but for business surrounding institutions activities as well. It lets avoid mistakes and increases a chance for projects success. Possibility to exchange experience and business knowledge positively influences the effectiveness of the creative industry, making them more competitive in local, regional, national and even international context. Indicated effects have been proved by the creative industry research results carried out within the “Creative Cities” project in 2010.

According to the research conclusions, both the increase of the knowledge transfer and its internationalization are important for the regional creative potential.⁹ This kind of cooperation enables the evaluation of own achievements in relation to the level seen in the world (benchmarking). Additionally supporting the development of sectorial cooperation platforms and increasing interaction and communication between business helps to raise the necessary experience and form a network of cooperating companies that will have the skills to effectively manage diverse projects.¹⁰ Knowledge transfer help to obtain information on conditions and potentials of foreign markets and information on the institutions supporting the operation on international markets. “Support for companies entering new markets also involve facilitating access to consultancy services in terms of benefits, risks, specialization and niches in foreign markets as well as implementing quality systems and standards”¹¹, what is possible in traditional form (conference/seminar/study visit), as well in virtual one (e-platform). “Customers seeking creative services in the region should have better access to information and awareness of the extremely competent creative companies in the region, so that commissioning projects to those companies will become a standard. The optimal solution would be to centralize the information system in the form of a uniformly developed and updated database of information compiled from various sources, mainly data from businesses, institutions, industry, local gov-

⁹ Based on SWOT analysis, op. cit.

¹⁰ Ibidem.

¹¹ Koszarek M., op.cit., page 61.

ernments, etc. One of the key elements of an efficient information system is a comprehensive online service through which one can connect to the selected subject. To ensure maximum functionality of this site, it must be constantly updated”.¹²

The research results indicated that informal channels of information are insufficient to provide full market offer. They confirm that there is also no information sharing platform or an institution serving as an integrator or a contact point in an area of potential development opportunities.¹³

The knowledge of clusters and the benefits for companies related with cluster activities is weak. The creative industry companies from the Gdansk Metropolis are however aware of the untapped potential of cooperation and open to collaborate within the industry and with other sectors.¹⁴ What is more, in connection with the worldwide trends the creative industry notices that in a world in which the various sectors of economy increasingly cooperate there are potential benefits from the exchange of knowledge and specialist know-how with other sub-sectors and other industries.¹⁵

Actions aiming at knowledge and experience transfer would be also based on the constant exchange among project partners, creative industry from all partner cities, creative industry experts, institutions supporting and surrounding creative industry, public administration responsible for economic development strategies, and people interested in starting-up creative company or finding employment in the creative companies. Representatives of local creative companies would be given a chance to exchange knowledge and experience abroad while their participation in the project events and meetings.

ACTION #1

E-platform creation

Specific goal

Strengthening the creative companies from the Gdansk Metropolis by e-platform enabling remote knowledge and experience transfer.

¹² Ibidem, page 61.

¹³ Based on SWOT analysis, op.cit.

¹⁴ Ibidem, page 57.

¹⁵ Ibidem, page 17.

Steps towards goal achievement

Actions aiming at strengthening the creative industry from the Gdansk Metropolis would be focused on creation of the efficient system collecting knowledge and exchanging information in the area of management/legal aspects/technical issues/financial resources gaining/protection of intellectual property among and for creative businesses. It would cover establishing and operating e-platform adjusted to the creative industry needs. The platform would be a response to articulated needs of a centralized information system in the form of unified and constantly updated information base binding different data resources. The e-platform would be a tool serving for sharing experience and knowledge of numerous people and entities.

E-platform for knowledge and experience transfer would be based on:

- moderated forum;
- advanced search engine with periodically updated search criteria based on users inquiry;
- knowledge base catalogued according to search criteria covering different cases description, closed projects description, good and bad practices, action scripts, register of problems with adopted solution description and their efficiency assessment;
- wiki documents editable for numerous authors;
- on-line conferences with experts based could actively participate in conference by asking questions and making comments;
- thematic electronic meeting system (EMS) facilitating brainstorming, voting and holding discussions with feedback option.

The e-platform would enable remote access to all uploaded resources from every place on the earth and in every time. It would give a chance for minimalizing the amount of mistakes and positively increase a chance for projects success, especially serving the creative industry start-ups and freelancers. User-friendly layout would let easy navigation and fast access to all resources collected on the e-platform. The e-platform could be a tool of mutual learning and knowledge sharing for all users. It would give a chance for good practices identification which afterwards could be promoted and disseminated with the platform functionalities use. The e-platform universality would ensure possibility of uploading information by all registered users and possibility of using uploaded information by all registered users. The quality of the uploaded material would be supervised by the platform administrator.

The e-platform could be as well a tool serving for projecting tailored assistance for the creative industry, including the creative industry cluster facilitation as one of the most effective way for knowledge and experience transfer. It would give a chance for business contacts, business partners or subcontractors/clients winning or for common projects realization (networking/marketing). Description of owned experience and knowledge connected with visible economic activity could be an excellent way for potential project partners/business partners verification or choosing subcontractors for planned projects.

Target groups

- creative industry companies, especially start-ups (up to the third year of existence) from the Gdansk Metropolis,
- creative freelancers from the Gdansk Metropolis,
- institutions supporting/surrounding creative industry from the Gdansk Metropolis,
- creative industry experts.

Schedule

Starting point: 4th quarter of the 2011

Responsible

Gdansk Entrepreneurs' Foundation in cooperation with the creative industry

Budget

- „Creative Cities” project (ERDF within the Central Europe Programme): external expertise costs (content), campaign Creative Gdansk! (e-platform construction/promotion), Creative Industry Contact Point staff (administration/promotion)
- Other sources: subscription for access to resources collected on the e-platform/advertisement

ACTION #2

Study visits organisation

Specific goal

Increasing effectiveness of the Gdansk Metropolis creative industry market activity by domestic and foreign study visits enabling knowledge and experience transfer

Steps towards goal achievement

Increased market effectiveness of the creative industry would be enabled by access to knowledge and experience during domestic and foreign study visits. Study visits would give access to tools and business models used by the host companies and would enable personal face-to-

face contact with more experienced market players. Study visits would be organized periodically according to participants needs and expectations (taking into account creative industry subbranches/companies area of interests/companies missions and goals). The main goal of the study visit would be shaping relations and building contact base with the creative industry companies, ready to share experience and positively tested solutions. Selection process would be planned (application forms and tools/selection criteria and members of the recruitment committee) and described (place of the study visit and its agenda) to provide all interested candidates with complete information and in result choose adequate participants. Study visit conclusion would be report with good practices, worth sharing experiences and good solutions used by the host companies. The report would be available for those who could not take part in the visit (especially organized abroad), but are truly interested in its effects.

Target groups

- creative industry companies, especially start-ups (up to the third year of existence) from the Gdansk Metropolis,
- creative freelancers from the Gdansk Metropolis,
- institutions educating potential employees for the Gdansk Metropolis creative industry.

Schedule

Starting point: 2nd quarter of the 2012

Responsible

Gdansk Entrepreneurs' Foundation/Gdansk Business Incubator „STARTER”

Budget

- „Creative Cities” project (ERDF within the Central Europe Programme): staff costs (administration),
- Other sources: Contribution of the study visits participants/EU funds for personnel development.

ACTION #3

Profiled conferences/seminars accompanied with workshops/fairs/exhibitions

Specific goal

Increasing access to knowledge, which is essential for the Gdansk Metropolis creative industry market success by thematic conferences and seminars.

Steps towards goal achievement

Access to knowledge gathered in one place in the same time would be enabled by the profiled conferences and seminars with experts participation. The merits of the meetings would be based on needs of the creative industry and industries cooperating with the creative industry, and on current market trends catalysing new business ideas. Needs would be analysed using interviews with the representatives of the creative industry, standard and online surveys, telephone or email questionnaires. Events would be organized quarterly in the conference halls that permit combining experts presentation with informal knowledge transfer. They would consist of panels and workshops giving the maximum interactivity between participants. Simultaneously conferences and seminars would promote creativity as the 21st century business value and the creative industry as industry with one of the highest development potential. Events would be organized on the regional level with guests from abroad. Events would be accompanied by exhibitions with ongoing and closed projects results, what could give a trigger to numerous interactions among participants. Each year conference/seminar would have an international range and would be based on foreign networks of the creative industry or creative industry clusters as entities with the biggest accumulation of knowledge and experience ready for transfer. Other thematic clusters (including foreign) would be invited to give the Gdansk Metropolis creative industry a look from a wider perspective and experience another point of view. During seminars/conferences creative fairs would be organized.

Target groups

- creative industry companies, especially start-ups (up to the third year of existence) from the Gdansk Metropolis,
- individuals interested in starting a business within the Gdansk Metropolis creative industry,
- creative freelancers from the Gdansk Metropolis,
- institutions supporting/surrounding creative industry from the Gdansk Metropolis,
- businessmen interested in cooperation with local creative industry,
- creative industry experts.

Schedule

Starting point: 1st quarter of the 2012

Responsible

Gdansk Entrepreneurs' Foundation/Gdansk Business Incubator „STARTER”

Budget

- „Creative Cities” project (ERDF within the Central Europe Programme): staff costs (administration), meeting costs (catering, speakers, lecture space renting),
- Other sources: Admission fee for conference/seminar participants/EU funds (knowledge transfer projects, including projects enabling international cooperation)/sponsoring related directly to the event subject (eg. by marketing agencies/creative agencies)

Marketing

Introduction

The main goal of the “Marketing” pillar is designing vision and mission of activities for local creative industry promotion and increasing the creative industry cluster idea acceptance.

“The consumers very often do not search for products, but for a brand that is related with concrete values. In the framework of the new paradigm, marketing is equally important as production.”¹⁶ Therefore, the key qualifications for companies become among other the marketing skills, including in the scope of marketing communication. In spite of the awareness, the micro- and small entities operating in the area of the province limit expenditures on marketing, first of all on promotion, considering effective marketing activities as too cost-consuming. Additionally, there exists a belief that customers recommending a company and its offer to other customers is sufficient.

As a result thereof, it turns out that companies in the Gdansk Metropolis provide services to improper group of customers, they cannot identify the customers’ needs nor prepare an offer directed to a selected market. Moreover, they not necessarily build distribution channels allowing for a thorough penetration of the market.

Many a time, insufficient marketing skills constitute an obstacle for a local company development, including expansion on the foreign markets, which is important from the creative industry point of view. Therefore, it is also important to create a recognizable trade mark of the local cluster, which would allow for reduction of the marketing expenditures of its particular members, and at the same time would allow for carrying out promotion at a high level. Additionally, the cluster initiative in the Gdansk Metropolis requires promotion and finding a support of the surrounding entities. Many local companies skeptically approach the cluster idea, due to which the time of establishing and further development of cluster extends. Thus, communication becomes so important so as to make people aware of the benefits of becoming a cluster member.

¹⁶ Koszarek M., op. cit., page 15.

ACTION #1

Preparation of the marketing strategy for promoting and integrating the creative industry from the Gdansk Metropolis

Specific goal

Creating the vision and mission of marketing activity and preparing long term aims for the Gdansk Metropolis creative industry cooperation.

Steps towards goal achievement

To strengthen the creative industry, it is necessary to formulate the vision that would indicate the direction in which the Gdansk Metropolis creative industry network is heading. Additionally, the vision should point out to what the creative industry cluster is all about and what characterizes it, what the sense of its operation is and upon which values it is based.

The planned actions should be:

- 1) analysis the market trends in the creative industries area of interest,
- 2) determination of the potential obstacles in the local surroundings and identifying the internal factors that could adversely influence development or slow down local creative industry development,
- 3) elaboration of marketing methods and tools dedicated to local creative industry,
- 4) elaboration of methods and tools of promotion and public relations, guarantee reaching representatives of local creative industry,
- 5) elaboration of the communication and promotion plan for creating loyal and long-term interest and participation in the industry cooperation,
- 6) elaboration of the concept of methods and tools building activity in networking and marketing business etc. field among local creative industry representatives,
- 7) elaboration of the concept of establishing potential creative partnerships,
- 8) preparing cost calculation and schedule for marketing strategy implementation.

Target groups

- representatives and companies of local creative industry,
- people planning to set up their own business in the creative industry field,
- the Gdansk Metropolis and Pomerania Region citizens,
- students and graduates from the “creative” faculties,
- creative branches of local industry freelancers.

Schedule

Starting point: 3rd quarter of the 2011

Responsible

Gdansk Entrepreneurs' Foundation/ Gdansk Business Incubator "STARTER"

Budget

- "Creative Cities" project (ERDF within the Central Europe Programme): external expertise (strategy preparation), Creative Gdansk! campaign budget (strategy tools preparation/strategy execution), Contact Point staff (strategy implementation),

ACTION #2

Promotion of the creative industry cluster idea

Specific goal

Increasing the creative industry cluster idea acceptance and building positive relations with the local surrounding.

Steps towards goal achievement

Exposing and deepening cluster advantages in the Gdansk Metropolis requires a collective effort that is often not easy to launch. Trust among local companies is often weak, and it takes some effort to convince them of the benefits of collective action. The important step is elaborating and determining the cluster's offer and the possible strategic ways for the cluster development. The promotion of the creative industry cluster initiative and its offer should be based on the modern marketing communication channels helping to reach target groups. Thanks to social media platforms and creating profile, discussion groups on Facebook or GoldenLine current informing what is going on in the framework of the cluster initiative would be more effective. It would not only provide the creative industry representatives with information but also would allow for integration of the creative community. Promotion of the cluster idea should also take place by traditional tools among other: information meetings/workshops, promotion materials or interviews in media. It is important, from the point of view of the local client, to indicate benefits that would appear together with the cluster launching and due to participation in the cluster initiative. Additionally, the cluster area of operation should be determined, that is the market and its segments. In the further step the cluster's marketing aims should be determined, corresponding with the presented vision and mission together with providing method of aims achievement.

The essential part of the promotion should be Public Relations activity supporting local creative industry and the cluster initiative that aim at increasing public knowledge and recognition of the creative industry cluster initiative in the Gdansk Metropolis. The PR activity should provide information to the general public and target groups to promote acceptance for the cluster initiative. PR activities should also contribute to making various groups of local stakeholders interested in the cluster idea, building beneficial relations therewith (local government, citizens, local institutions surrounding the business, local entrepreneurs and the persons interested in the cluster actions). The PR activity could be supported by internet platform dedicated to local creative industry. At the same time lobbying among the local authorities and institutions significant for the cluster development should be carried out for the cluster and its development.

Target groups

- creative industry companies from the Gdansk Metropolis,
- local institutions surrounding the business,
- the Gdansk Metropolis and Pomerania Region citizens,
- students and graduates from the “creative” faculties,
- creative branches of local industry freelancers,
- local and central public authorities,
- potential employees of the cluster companies,
- local media.

Schedule

Starting point: 4th quarter of 2011

Responsible

Gdansk Entrepreneurs' Foundation/ Gdansk Business Incubator “STARTER”

Budget

- “Creative Cities” project (ERDF within the Central Europe Programme): Creative Cities staff (PR activities), Creative Gdansk! Campaign (promotion), external expertise (elaboration of PR methods and tools).

ACTION #3

Analysing the demand for products and services of the creative companies in the Gdansk Metropolis

Specific goal

Broadening the knowledge on the creative market needs in local dimension.

Steps towards goal achievement

The knowledge is necessary for the creative industry development. Representatives of creative industry in the Gdansk Metropolis should be provided with analysis identifying the needs, tastes and desires of the consumers. Because of the unique nature of the “creative” products, there are trends in the market that drive the demand of some products up while sometimes it would affect demand quite opposite. The goal of analyzing demand for products and services of the creative companies in the Gdansk Metropolis should be providing surveys and reports, which would improve offered service and lead to decreasing individual expenditures on market researches. Additional aim would be increasing competitiveness and creativity of local creative industry representatives, because local companies would improve their knowledge about various factors, which influence the buying habits of the consumers on the creative market. Carrying out a common analysis of the demand for products and services of local creative companies and analysis of trends on the markets should allow for limiting the costs of the research, which every company would incur separately. Information would be collected from local creative companies based on questionnaire concerning expenditures on marketing activities. The last step would be preparation of annual reports with result of the research available to all cluster members.

Target groups

- creative industry companies, especially start-ups from the Gdansk Metropolis,
- local institutions surrounding the business,
- the Gdansk Metropolis and Pomerania Region citizens,
- creative branches of local industry freelancers.

Schedule

Starting point: 3rd quarter of the 2011 with at least in 4 months intervals actualization of the demand for products and services

Responsible

Gdansk Entrepreneurs' Foundation/ Gdansk Business Incubator “STARTER”

Budget

- “Creative Cities” project (ERDF within the Central Europe Programme): Creative Industry Contact Point staff (coordination), external expertise (research costs).

Infrastructure and financial support

Introduction

The main goal of the “**Infrastructure and financial support**” pillar is increasing effectiveness and efficiency of the creative industry from the Gdansk Metropolis actions by providing it with infrastructure and financial support consistent with articulated needs and enabling its development in different dimensions.

Results of the research conducted within the “Creative Cities” project on the Gdansk Metropolis have showed that one of the most important barrier for the creative industry growth is obtaining financial resources. “Companies face specific problems connected with searching for potential investors such as lack of information and understanding for conditions and rules of each particular financial resource, difficulties in preparing convincing business plan presentation or depending on business models that are not adapted to market reality. Furthermore according to research results, companies often base their advantage on prototypes or design. They are to a large extent dependent on a flagship product or service and largely depended on individual talent. Many creative firms do not have sufficient knowledge about the sources of funding and access to them”.¹⁷ “Another step in overcoming barriers of development of creative businesses are activities towards formation of specialized financial services market. Currently, financial institutions do not support companies operating in high-risk sectors or seeking a relatively small financial outlay. Funding mechanisms should be “tailored” and meet the specific needs of companies i.e. in form of facilitating the contact with managers of venture capital funds. Opportunities for financing projects include support for the development of “investment readiness” in companies by developing the skills of providing investors (but also banks) with a feasible development strategy and a business model to achieve a high return on investment”.¹⁸

Respondents of the creative industry research which presented a negative view of the Gdansk Metropolis as a location for creative industries, besides the periferial location which make communication process difficult, often lacked efficient use of cultural infrastructure, lack of

¹⁷ Ibidem, page 56.

¹⁸ Ibidem, page 61.

access to space for creative activity, high rents in the city's municipal premises.¹⁹ Cooperating creative companies should analyse their needs of infrastructure and financial support. Such analysis could mark resources that are urgently needed and on that base prepare strategy of their obtaining.

ACTION #1

Diversification of the creative industry financial resources

Specific goal

Increasing scope of the Gdansk Metropolis creative industry actions by diversifying resources used for projects financing.

Steps towards goal achievement

Increasing scope and amount of the creative companies projects would be based on diversified financial resources. To reach diversification alternative options for obtaining financial resources would be searched. The resources would depend on the creative companies requirements, time needed to obtain it and financial resources needed amount.

Obtained financing would result from i.a. such resources as:

- membership fee connected to the creative industry formalized or semi-formalized cooperation,
- local government grants,
- EU funds – for financing investment/ research projects/ trainings/ conferences/ fairs/ experience and knowledge transfer/ export initiatives,
- the „creative fund” by networking institutions owned available resources and enabling access to loans/micro credits/credit guaranty based on preferential terms,
- venture capital funds/business angels/private investors,
- business activity formalized in the form of the creative industry cluster.

The first step would be preparation of a report with resources enabling the creative industry financial support, including facilitating cooperation in the form of the creative industry cluster. The report would be periodically updated. It would be crucial for finding strategic partners, e.g financial institutions offering the creative industry preferential terms which depend on the creative industry identified needs and each planned by creative company project re-

¹⁹ Based on SWOT analysis, op. cit., page 54.

quirements. Additionally diversified financial resources could serve for the cluster initiative, enabling to obtain financial resources for the creative industry network administration.

Target groups

- creative industry companies searching for external financial resources, especially start-ups (up to the third year of existence) from the Gdansk Metropolis,
- financial institutions searching for a chance of investment in the creative industry from the Gdansk Metropolis,
- financial agents searching projects of the creative industry from the Gdansk Metropolis for their clients,
- business angels/venture capital funds/private investors searching for a possibility to invest in the Gdansk Metropolis creative industry.

Schedule

Starting point: 4th quarter of the 2011

Responsible

Gdansk Entrepreneurs' Foundation

Budget

- “Creative Cities” project (ERDF within the Central Europe Programme): Creative Industry Contact Point staff (report preparation and update).

ACTION #2

Barter exchange system launching in the frame of the creative industry cooperation

Specific goal

Increasing the number of projects accomplished by the Gdansk Metropolis creative industry which are based on the barter exchange system enabling nonfinancial access to required resources.

Steps towards goal achievement

Increasing the number of projects accomplished by the creative industry from the Gdansk Metropolis would ensure barter exchange system. Many companies do not use in 100% their technical potential, so they could share it. Barter exchange system would limit unnecessary expenditures on infrastructure and would be based on the creative industry cooperation idea. It could be based on the idea of sharing permanently or temporarily unused resources, especially infrastructure. Barter exchange would start with identifying free resources owned by cooperating companies and describing possible level of its usage by others. Resources identi-

fication process would be based on an electronic survey located on the e-platform. Collected information would be gathered in a catalogued form divided into available resources part (offers) and searched resources part (needs). The catalogue would include storage place, maximal time of sharing indication, price in accepted barter currency and owner data. Resources would be gained mostly according to the identified needs of each project. In case of specific resource lack, its alternative would be searched (considering possibility of alternative finding). Barter system would be based on pricing with commonly accepted system of payment. Barter currency would enable its exchange for needed goods or services.

Target groups

- creative industry companies, especially start-ups (up to the third year of existence) from the Gdansk Metropolis,
- institutions supporting/surrounding creative industry from the Gdansk Metropolis.

Schedule

Starting point: 1st quarter of the 2012

Responsible

Gdansk Entrepreneurs' Foundation in cooperation with the creative industry

Budget

- „Creative Cities” project (ERDF within the Central Europe Programme): Creative Industry Contact Point staff preparing barter exchange rules (competing companies interests protection),
- Other sources: subscription for access to the e-platform resources/advertisement.

ACTION #3

Preparing tailored offer for the Gdansk Metropolis creative industry by the Gdansk Business Incubator “STARTER”

Specific goal

Developing potential of the creative industry from the Gdansk Metropolis by tailored preferential offer prepared by the Gdansk Business Incubator “STARTER”.

Steps towards goal achievement

The creative industry potential for the Gdansk Metropolis development would take into account by the Gdansk Business Incubator “STARTER” special offer. The Incubator would offer the creative industry office space on preferential terms, including co-working space that gives a chance to rent a room or desk with full equipment only for some hours. The Incubator

assistance would include conference halls and rooms for business meetings. It would be possible to use virtual office covering company address, reception/secretariat services and customer office services.

To increase the level of the Incubator offer attraction for potential customers, the profits from its cofinancing would be pointed out for public bodies, sponsors and financial institutions. Cofinancing could have direct and indirect form. Indirect form would mean bail or credit/loan, especially on preferential terms. Involving third parties could decrease the costs of the Incubator offer for the creative industry.

Additionally within the Incubator “solutions laboratory” would function, what means space where the creative start-ups could test/subject their ideas to criticism of more experienced entrepreneurs or experts. Creative companies can use also the Incubator training offer (standard/e-learning/blended learning), advisory and consultancy services, mentoring, networking and account services.

Target groups

- creative industry companies, especially start-ups (up to the third year of existence) from the Gdansk Metropolis,
- individuals planning to set-up a company in the creative industry in the Gdansk Metropolis.

Schedule

Starting point: 4th quarter of the 2011

Responsible

Gdansk Entrepreneurs' Foundation/Gdansk Business Incubator „STARTER”

Budget

- „Creative Cities” project (ERDF within the Central Europe Programme): staff costs (consumer service offered by creative industry contact point/ administration/ promotion), tactical marketing programme for the creative industry/Creative Gdansk! campaign (promotion),
- Other sources: Gdansk Business Incubator „STARTER” project (ERDF within the Pomeranian Regional Operation Programme): construction work and equipment.

Conclusions

The Local Action Plan implementation process will start within the “Creative Cities” project and will continue after its closure date. Actions planned within all 5 pillars will be adapted to the creative industry needs so they can be a real response to the market expectations. The creative industry plays an important role in regional economy and influences crucially regional development. Focus on the Gdansk Metropolis creative industry is based on analysis carried out within the project “Creative Cities” which showed that “creative industry contributes significantly to the economic potential of the Gdansk Metropolis and the whole region. In 2006 over 63 thousand people were employed in 28 thousand companies operating in the region in sectors defined as the creative industry. They accounted for a total of 13 percent share of entities and 8 percent share of total employment in enterprises in the province. Within 5 years the sector recorded more than 17 percent increase in the number of firms, despite the crisis at the beginning of the decade”.²⁰

Actions within **Networking pillar** prepare creative companies for cooperation by organizing safe environment for building trust and confidence in business relations. Actions within **Education and employment pillar** prepare creative companies and their potential employees for efficient and effective activities by teaching processes with diversified tools use and widely perceived recruitment assistance. Actions within **Transfer of knowledge pillar** prepare creative companies for high quality projects execution by sharing knowledge and experience. Actions within **Marketing pillar** prepare creative companies for the market success by professionalizing the process of the identifying the customer, satisfying the customer, and keeping the customer. Actions within **Infrastructure and financial support pillar** prepare creative companies for increasing business activity with tailored offer for start-ups, exchanging not fully used resources and financial resources diversification.

²⁰ Ibidem, page 4.